

**Testimony of Shelby Kiss**  
Before the House Higher Education Committee  
Representative Tom Young, Chair  
**March 11, 2025**

Chair Young, Vice Chair Ritter, Ranking Member Piccolantonio, and members of the Ohio House Higher Education Committee, thank you for allowing me to provide written testimony against SB 1.

My name is Shelby Kiss, and I am a first-year student at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM) majoring in Clarinet Performance. I am testifying today in jointment with my fellow students to oppose SB 1.

I am not from Ohio. This is my first year living in Cincinnati and navigating this new place has been stressful but rewarding. When I first came to CCM, I was concerned that it would not be the school for me, but I was relieved to have been met with a supportive, encouraging, and diverse community of students at CCM. My colleagues come from numerous backgrounds, some being from 10 minutes away to out of state to from another country. The diversity at UC has been the reason for the beauty found on this campus.

As these decisions start to come out, I am appalled that the college and state I have entrusted with my education has decided I no longer matter. I am upset that my own professors had to be the ones to break the news that they can no longer be our advocates. I never would have thought I should have considered the government first in my college decisions, and that the program and my own interests should have been second. With this bill, our campus and its students can not thrive. We can not thrive without the unconditional support from our faculty, peers, and administration under diversity and inclusion efforts.

Down the line, Ohio universities will lose the communities that we have built for years. Who will come to a university that does not care for its students? A university has degrading programs? A university that succumbs to injustice? We will lose communities years in the making due to this bill, programs that only are meant to support students, not to "indoctrinate" us. You will lose millions of dollars worth of those potential students' tuition. Without students coming to Ohio universities, whose money will you use to swindle?

By approving SB 1, you will be throwing away the education of millions of students who have trusted it to you. SB1 goes much deeper than revising college admissions and courses; it actively infringes on our first amendment rights to free speech. Our freedom to explore, create, and learn will be restricted. The future of our country lies in the youth, but it now lies in your hands. Restricting our education will only set your successor's lives aflame. I urge you to do the right thing, not what is easy. Be brave and be courageous for the millions of lives in your hands. I urge you to reject SB 1.

Thank you for your time.