

TESTIMONY OF ANDREA R. YAGODA OPPOSING SB 1

Chair Young, Vice Chair Ritter, Ranking Member Piccolantonio and Members of the House Work Force & Higher Education Committee, my name is Andrea Yagoda. I have been a resident of Ohio for approximately 50 years. I am testifying in opposition to SB1.

SB 1 is based on a false and fear mongering premise that our young adults are being indoctrinated towards a specific agenda in our institutions of higher education. Funny, that this claim is coming from this legislative body when the sessions of the Senate commence with a prayer to Jesus Christ. In the people's house. The house which is comprised of many religions, not all pray of whom pray to Jesus. And a bill has been introduced which orders all public schools to display certain documents and one of the choices is a religious document to wit, the Ten Commandments. Talk about efforts to indoctrinate and controversial ideas in public spaces. .

SB 1 proposes to micromanage state institutions of higher education by usurping the authority of boards of trustees and administrators who oversee the daily operations of these institutions by requiring changes to mission statements, faculty workload policies, and syllabi requirements. This bill will eliminate the institutional flexibility to meet the needs of students enrolled in various education programs in favor of government one-size-fits-all state mandates. These topics are best addressed at the local level with institutions determining systems that work for their students and campuses.

SB 1 is an exercise in the denial of free speech at institutions of higher education including, but not limited to, banning mandatory programming or

training courses on DEI, preventing colleges from using diversity statements, withholding public funding unless institutions declare that they will not require students, faculty, or staff to take part in diversity training, prohibiting colleges and universities from commenting on any current public controversies, and requiring “intellectual diversity” guide for course approval. Unlike when I was growing up, students today have grown up in a diverse atmosphere. They have grown to be more tolerant of those that are different and yet the government wants to destroy that comfort with diversity.

I oppose mandates that would require institutions to annually provide the state with faculty performance/evaluation policies and include specific elements in faculty workload policies. The administrations of these institutions are in the best place to make these determinations without having to answer to the state.

I oppose the elimination of the right to strike for employees of state institutions of higher education. The right to strike is a final dispute resolution process expressly authorized under Ohio’s public employee collective bargaining law, which the public has shown support for. The purpose of the right to strike is to ensure hard working, dedicated public employees have a meaningful voice in negotiating fair compensation and working conditions that help them provide high-quality services to Ohioans. History has shown that the actual occurrence of strikes is extremely rare due to the well-balanced bargaining framework and dispute resolution structure in Ohio’s collective bargaining law.

My understanding that this Bill would increase administrative costs. At a time when the Speaker of the House is talking about cutting funds for public

education I do not want my taxes spent to support this Bill.

I would respectfully request that this committee vote no on SB 1.

Andrea R. Yagoda