

March 9, 2025

Chair Young, Vice Chair Ritter, Ranking Member Piccolantonio, and members of the House Workforce & Higher Education Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Kristin Bowes. I am a graduate of Ohio State University, a public school employee and parent of high school students who are exploring college options. I urge you to vote NO on Ohio's proposed Senate Bill 1/ House Bill 6 in order to support Ohio's future.

Senate Bill 1 will have a major negative impact on Ohio's economy. This bill will drive away current and prospective college students and professors from the state's higher education institutions. This will result in significant economic impact on the state from lost tuition dollars, lost tourism dollars and decreased patronizing of local businesses by college students, visiting family and university faculty. Professors will seek employment in other states which will result in additional funds lost through research grants. Countless jobs will be lost as a result of decreased student enrollment.

Unnecessary barriers to workforce development will be created by Senate Bill 1. Fields such as medicine, law, education, social work, among many others, require training in diversity, equity and inclusion practices for professional licensure, thereby reducing the number of qualified professionals in Ohio. This would be particularly damaging in fields already experiencing critical workforce shortages, such as healthcare and education and will lead to a multitude of shortages across many additional professions.

Senate Bill 1 will also harm Ohio's ability to attract and retain businesses and workers. Many industries rely on a diverse workforce to remain competitive. Companies seeking to expand or relocate will look past Ohio in favor of states that support inclusive hiring and training practices. This bill will deter students from pursuing higher education in Ohio which will reduce our future talent pool and drive skilled workers elsewhere.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on the destructive Senate Bill 1/House Bill 6 in order to allow continued economic growth for Ohio.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Kristin Bowe