

Testimony of Lori Vincent, Ph.D., BCBA-D
Before the House Workforce and Higher Education Committee
Rep. Tom Young, Chair
March 11, 2025

Chair Young, Vice Chair Ritter, Ranking Member Piccolantonio, and Members of the Higher Education Committee:

My name is Lori Vincent, and I am an Assistant Professor of School Psychology at University of Cincinnati, where I have taught for 5 years. I do not represent the University of Cincinnati, but rather am submitting testimony as a private citizen. I am submitting my strong opposition to Senate Bill 1. I believe strongly in intellectual diversity. I challenge my students to examine research and evidence and come to their own conclusions. Higher education is a place where we encourage different ways of thinking and perspective. The current bill does not increase intellectual diversity- it stifles it. It creates a classroom environment where faculty and students alike are afraid to share their perspectives. This bill is an attempt to silence those who do not agree with the current legislators and encourage others to not consider the perspectives of people of diverse backgrounds, to question the equity- or lack there of- within our current society, and not consider the inclusion of ALL people regardless of race, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, ability, politics, etc. The outrage and opposition to this bill from students, faculty, and staff within higher education has been tremendous. Voting for this bill is not the will of the people, it is the will of a small few who are not even within public higher education in Ohio. You were elected to pass legislation that helps Ohio and the people of Ohio. This bill will harm our public higher education in this state. I transitioned 5 years ago from practice to higher education, because I wanted to help train future school psychologists, of which we desperately need in our state. This legislation seeks to limit my rights as a public higher educator- limited what we can do within higher education related to DEI and take away my rights to strike- however unlikely that is- which limits my ability to demand fair work conditions. I am a disabilities researcher, and this legislation has caused me to question my value within our state. Passing this legislation will likely result in my consideration of going back to practice and possibly leaving a state and community that I love. I know I am not alone in those thoughts- as students and faculty will leave our institutions knowing that they are no longer welcome in Ohio public higher education. I absolutely agree that reform in higher education is needed. Please do this work with those of us in higher education rather than making decisions that impact us without considering our perspectives, needs, or policies that actually increase intellectual diversity and make higher education safer for all students to come to their own conclusions and form their own opinions. Thank you for considering my testimony and I am hopeful that you will consider the people you were elected to represent- those who think as you do and those who do not.