

March 8, 2025

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

My name is Ghazy Padmakoesoema and I am employed by McGraw Hill, a company that is dedicated to promoting equity and inclusion in the learning process. I am writing as a private citizen, not as a representative of my company. I am deeply concerned about Senate Bill 1's (SB 1) impact on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs in Ohio's higher education institutions.

At McGraw Hill, we believe that learning is most effective when everyone feels heard, valued, and supported in their environment. Our DEIB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging) efforts include representation of underrepresented groups in both the hiring practices and educational materials. In 2023, we appointed a Chief Diversity Officer and a DEI Manager to increase the company's dedication to creating an inclusive workplace. These initiatives are for the success of all learners.

SB 1 is dangerous to these principles as it seeks to prohibit DEI programs, which are detrimental to the interests of students from minority groups, including religious and ethnic minorities. DEI efforts can assist Muslim students by providing prayer spaces, addressing Islamophobia, and promoting the inclusion of diverse perspectives.

Furthermore, I am also very much worried about how this bill will exacerbate the student debt crisis. Current underrepresented students are often coming to college with a financial burden; thus, excluding DEI programs will limit students' access to important support such as financial aid, scholarships, and other resources that are important in solving this crisis. This means that SB 1, which seeks to hinder initiatives that are meant to promote equity, will continue to hurt students who are already neck deep in debt.

Education should allow every learner to unlock his or her potential and to this end, institutions must be diverse to accommodate the needs of the society they serve. The way McGraw Hill is inclusive of individuals in its products and hiring, Ohio's universities should be allowed to develop a similar culture that accepts every student.

If enacted, SB 1 will negatively impact the students' efforts to combat prejudice and to enhance affiliations across multiple campuses. It will discourage potential students and faculty members from underrepresented groups from joining Ohio's higher educational institutions. Thus, the bill will make our state's universities less attractive. I ask you to please **reject Senate Bill 1 for the sake of DEI** and for the opportunity of equal learning. I appreciate your time and attention.