

March 8, 2025

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

Thank you for allowing me to offer my testimony. My name is Kara Daley. I am a wife, a mother of two young children, a member of St. Patrick church, a life-long Cleveland-er, a graduate of Miami University and a former teacher and principal. I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

I would like to begin by asking you who is determined eligible to define “controversial topics,” what indoctrination looks or sounds like and/or what constitutes a “DEI” program or initiative?

When I was a sophomore at Miami University I lived in a dormitory on Western Campus...just a few steps away from the school’s student center. Western Campus is the current name but was originally chartered as a Female Seminary in 1853. Later (1888), the principal and trustees undertook the steps to become a college...and succeeded.

Western College was a pioneering liberal arts college! The students were socially and politically active and came from all over the world. During the Civil War students collectively bought gifts for sick and injured Civil War soldiers. The school was considered “Progressive” when it became the first American college to offer academic credit for domestic science in the late 1800s. Students planted “War Gardens” during WWI and “Victory Gardens” in WWII and started traditions for “Tree Day” and “Flag Day” in the late 1800s. From 1911-12 students organized groups in support of Women’s Suffrage and in the mid-1900s the school offered weekly non-denominational religious services out of respect for the diverse student body. In 1964 the college hosted orientation and training programs for young volunteers that were going to be traveling to the South to register African-American voters. Although Western College eventually closed its doors in 1974 due to financial struggles, it was held in high regard the world over and succeeded as an institution of higher learning in our state for over a century

This description of Western College begs you to consider which programs or initiatives they would have had to “cut” or change in order to abide by the new restrictions you are attempting to put into place with S.B.1. Where would the money have come from in a place which eventually had to close its doors for financial reasons? Which part of their historical narrative would you deem necessary to change in order to abide by this attempt at State oversight and rule enforcement?

I beg you to vote against S.B.1 and put your time and energy into solving real problems in our State such as working to reduce poverty in our inner cities and Appalachian counties, adjusting the Fair School Funding for inflation or tackling the problem families have in finding affordable childcare. We need to allow our higher education institutions and the experts in their fields the freedom to continue the excellence in education that they already provide.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Kara Daley