

Testimony of Justin Diles, AIA, Associate Professor, Ohio State  
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:

Thank you for allowing me to provide written testimony. My name is Justin Diles. I am a registered architect and an Associate Professor of Architecture at The Ohio State University. I am submitting testimony as a private citizen. Despite my Hoosier roots, during my 13 years at OSU I've become a passionate booster of our academic programs, Buckeyes Football, and the State of Ohio.

I am strongly opposed to SB 1. Examining its policies, all proud Buckeyes should ask: "Do we secretly want Michigan to win?!" What would we say if we were considering a bill that obstructed the ability of the OSU football program to recruit excellent players, hire top coaches, and saddled the organization with stifling oversight? The answer would be an easy "Hell, No!"

SB 1 is similarly self-defeating. Ohio's economic and workforce development is as important as great football. Our excellent public universities drive it forward, and this bill will kill our competitive edge. We need to be able to recruit top specialists in their fields. But this bill's post-tenure review and oppressive oversight policies will drive that top teaching and research talent to competitors like Michigan, Michigan State, Penn State, Wisconsin and others. Why work in Ohio when universities in neighboring states offer industry-standard job contracts and no excessive red tape designed to bully people just for doing their jobs?

You must know that if SB 1 is passed, Ohio State will struggle to recruit and maintain outstanding faculty. Those faculty build cutting-edge programs, and without those competitive programs, we will struggle to attract good students. Ohio's brightest in-state students will look elsewhere, while exceptional out-of-state students will choose other schools. Ohio students who cannot afford to go out-of-state or to private schools will struggle to get good-paying jobs. The growth of Ohio's families relies on strong public higher ed. And Ohio's businesses rely on skilled talent graduating locally.

The drastic overhauls proposed by SB 1 are self-destructive. They won't make our state competitive, prosperous, or frankly healthy. This bill is designed to hand Michigan and countless other colleges and universities the students and faculty we should be fighting for, not scaring away. We need their talent to keep Ohio strong.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this extreme and harmful bill. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.