

Testimony of Rin Reczek, PhD
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 Rin Reczek and I am a professor of Sociology at The Ohio State University where I have taught for 11 years. I do not represent The Ohio State University but rather am submitting testimony as a private citizen as a private citizen in opposition to Senate Bill 1.

Ohio State University is known world-wide as a premiere research institution that attracts the very top talent of researchers from all corners of the globe. Our university has dozens of very top-ranked programs across all edges of the University, facilitating our ability to receive millions of dollars in grant funding and attracting award-winning scientists who, frankly, make Ohio look like a strong and robust research-rich environment. I know you are proud of our Ohio Universities and want to see them lead in the 21st century. Their reputation will be forever damaged if SB1 passes.

When SB83 was introduced years ago, I immediately received notes of concern from my colleagues around the globe who were considering applying for faculty positions at our university. At that time, some still did apply, assuming this overreach of a bill would not pass. This year, however, with SB1 once again on the docket, it is clear to the entire research community that Ohio is now an inhospitable environment to be a researcher. In fact, I'm personally aware that two people who had previously applied for positions at the university withdrew their applications for consideration specifically due to SB1.

This is embarrassing and, frankly, appalling. But why should this matter to you? Let me explain the chain reaction of this bill. If you cannot attract the top scholars to teach our top students, students will fall behind in their skills, abilities, and perhaps most importantly, networks – as top faculty are those who have wide-ranging networks that get students jobs. If students fall behind in their skills, networks, and abilities, they will no longer be competitive at the national and global level in their fields. If they are not competitive in their fields, Ohio will fall even further behind top states and other countries. Our universities will drop in rankings, students will not want to stay here to go to college, and we will experience a massive brain drain. I hope you understand that this will personally affect not only you and your children, but also every single person who goes to college in Ohio (and in fact, many who have to go to college outside of Ohio because our schools will not be ranked highly). Are you willing to let your young people fall behind? If so, vote for SB1.

The unjust attack on tenure, the ill-informed panic over DEI, and the attack on workers' rights and intellectual freedom are just three of reasons (among many) that SB1 needs to fail. Ohio State, and many other of our public institutions, educate the young people of our state. If you care about the

quality of the educators who you hire to create our future—who create opportunities for our young people in this state, you will vote no on SB1.