

Greetings,

Please find my attached witness form and below written comment in opposition of SB 1.

My name is Alex Fay and I am a registered nurse living in Cleveland, OH. I am writing to oppose companion bills SB 1 & HB 6. This legislation says it is meant to enhance Ohio's higher education education, but instead, it threatens academic freedom by putting too much power into the hands of politicians.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion do not limit intellectual diversity but, instead, increase it by ensuring everyone's experiences and perspectives are shared and heard. This bill's intention to ban DEI and have restrictions on "controversial topics" will hurt both Ohio higher education institutions and their students and faculty.

As a registered nurse, I am especially concerned about this bill's impact on nursing and health sciences programs' ability to adequately prepare students to recognize and address health disparities as well as be able to practice health promotion and health care with patients of all backgrounds, belief systems, and experiences. Prohibiting DEI and limiting what topics are "acceptable" to learn about goes directly against the American Nurses Association's nursing code of ethics. Provision 1.1, respect for human dignity, states "nurses ought to recognize racism and other forms of bigotry, prejudicial bias, and discrimination (e.g., ableism, ageism, classism, heterosexism, sexism) as harmful assaults that negatively impact care and violate the human dignity of an individual." If this bill passes, nursing programs in the state of Ohio will be operating against the code of ethics and creating cohorts of nurses who are not able to adequately or justly care for their patients. Furthermore, it will likely deter students, especially students from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds, from coming to Ohio to study and will ultimately hurt the patients our healthcare community serves.

I urge you to oppose SB 1 & HB 6. This legislation harms students, faculty, and the integrity of higher education and puts the nursing workforce at risk.

Thank you,

Alex Fay, BSN, RN