

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

Thank you for the chance to testify today. My name is Dani Thiel. I am an alumnus of The Ohio State University. I strongly oppose the Senate Bill 1 and its companion bill, House Bill 6.

A review of SB 1 leaves one questioning the definition of DEI and leaves it open to interpretation. This is gravely concerning considering the bill may negatively impact scholarships for military veterans, individuals with disabilities, human trafficking survivors, and many other underrepresented and disadvantaged groups.

Higher education institutions provide students with opportunities to learn. Appropriately dubbed the Higher Education Destruction Act, this legislation would prevent Ohioans from learning and speaking freely at colleges and universities.

This overly broad and extremely controversial bill strips universities of their ability to educate students and imposes unconstitutional restrictions on their First Amendment freedoms.

Just because some lawmakers don't like certain topics, does not mean they should abuse their legislative power to trample over Ohioans' First Amendment freedoms. Everyone should have the freedom to learn in our state. SB 1 creates numerous problems and solves none.

This Higher Education Destruction Act is bad for students, bad for higher education, and bad for Ohio. I strongly urge you to REJECT SB 1 & HB 6.

Sincerely,

Dani Thiel