

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

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Christine Ferens and I am an Ohio citizen who cares greatly about higher education. I am a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor and graduated from Ohio University with my Master's in Counselor Education. I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

I have been providing counseling services to a diverse group of people for over 25 years. It has been an honor to learn of differing beliefs, cultures, responses to challenges individuals face, and to bear witness to individuals learning more about themselves through exploration and questioning experiences and issues confronting them.

The people I see in my practice are incredibly resilient due to their life experiences, and their courage and strength to learn more about themselves through personal growth and education are admirable. SB 1 and HB 6 will take away much of the ability for young adults to learn resiliency, to learn about themselves, and to become more rounded and compassionate individuals. These dangerous bills will not only harm faculty and community, but they will also harm our young people. These bills will take away the rights of these young adults to learn and grow.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this destructive bill. Our universities have been assisting young people for decades to become independent and productive American citizens. Politicians do not have the right to take this away.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Christine Ferens, M.Ed., LPCC-S, NCC