

3/9/25

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony today. My name is Lisa Lazarus. I grew up in Ohio and made the intentional decision to move back here to raise my child. But today, I find myself questioning that choice, and it pains me deeply. As both a parent and a business owner, I strongly oppose SB 1 and its companion bill, HB 6.

The economic consequences of SB 1 cannot be ignored. Students across Ohio have made their voices heard through op-eds and testimonies, stating clearly that they will leave the state or refuse to come here for college if this bill becomes law. If that happens, Ohio will lose not only students, but also the critical tuition dollars that sustain our universities. Parents visiting their children contribute to our local economies—dining at restaurants, staying in hotels, and shopping in our communities. College visits bring prospective students and their families to Ohio, benefiting businesses across the state. If SB 1 passes, these dollars will disappear, dealing a major blow to Ohio's economy. We will lose students, professors, jobs, and the reputation that makes our state a destination for higher education and opportunity.

As a parent, I want my child to know she could receive an excellent education in Ohio and to see this state as a place worth staying after graduation. SB 1 threatens both of those. If we want a strong, competitive Ohio, we cannot drive away students, educators, and top talent.

The overwhelming opposition to SB 1 speaks volumes. I was one of more than 1,000 Ohioans who submitted testimony against the bill in the Senate. Hundreds took the time to testify in person. Meanwhile, only 14 individuals submitted testimony in support of SB 1—and not even one of those people was a public university student. The message is clear: Ohioans do not want this bill.

I urge you to listen to the voices of the people you represent. SB 1 would harm our universities, our economy, and our future. Please vote NO on this destructive bill.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.