

Testimony of Ryan Metz, Ph.D. Student, The Ohio State University
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 Ryan Metz, and I am a Ph.D. student in the History Department at the Ohio State University. I do not represent The Ohio State University but rather am submitting testimony as a private citizen in opposition to Senate Bill 1.

When I first arrived at the Ohio State University in the Fall of 2022 for my graduate studies, I was exhilarated. I had never been to such a large school before. I remember, during my first week, looking out at the Oval, at the sprawling campus, home to the massive, vibrant, and bright student body, which I could now proudly call myself a part of. Like many members of this student body, I came to OSU for its brilliant faculty, rigorous academics, and exceptional career placement rates, all of which have made it a world-renowned university. Since I arrived at OSU, not only have I been able to explore new methods for researching U.S. diplomacy during the Cold War, but I have had the opportunity to present this research in numerous public forums. Right now, I am confident in OSU's ability to prepare its students for a job in their desired fields; however, if Senate Bill 1 passes, my confidence, as well as many other current and prospective students', will quickly erode.

By telling faculty what contents they can and can't teach, blocking diversity training and fellowships, and policing students' in-class discussions, Senate Bill 1 removes the primary function of any university: to help students think and learn critically, in and outside the classroom. These are skills that not only every accredited university encourages but that every single job, state and nation-wide, requires. If Senate Bill 1 passes, OSU will fail to provide students with the necessary tools for gaining and sustaining employment in an increasingly competitive job market. More than that, OSU will lose credibility in the eyes of would-be employers, as well as in the eyes of respectable researchers who know they cannot teach accurately or effectively under the tyrannical environment that Senate Bill 1 creates. Thus, if Senate Bill 1 restrictions are approved, I can assure you that thousands of future prospective students who would have otherwise chosen to come to Ohio State and build a life in Columbus will go somewhere else, somewhere that has the standards and faculty that can adequately prepare them for a career in their field.

I have loved my time at Ohio State. Thanks to the university's incredible faculty and courses, I have significantly advanced my research and professional development. I want others to have this same experience, but that will not be possible if Senate Bill 1 passes. This bill does a disservice to current and future Ohio State students everywhere, and if you really cared about "the students," you will not move this bill forward. I present my testimony to emphatically state that graduate and undergraduate students **do not want** Senate Bill 1.

Sincerely,

Ryan Metz
Ph.D. Student, Department of History
The Ohio State University