

10 March 2025

To the chair and members of the House Workforce and Higher Education Committee:

I am writing to ask you to vote “no” on SB 1, the anti-higher-education bill. The bill will harm universities and it will harm Ohio. SB 1 will result in a "brain drain" from Ohio; world-class professors won't come to teach at our universities, and the best American and international students will no longer come here. Ohio is the site of so much investment by tech companies who will need good workers. These workers will not come to Ohio nor will they remain if they know Ohio's universities are controlled by this terrible legislation.

I teach at an Ohio university. In fact, I teach LGBTQ Studies – something that I’m sure Senator Cirino thinks is a fake discipline and a waste of my students’ time. Don’t mistake my testimony for fear; I promise you, if the bill becomes law I am still going to teach exactly what I teach now. (I say this because the bill allows for faculty teaching the consensus opinions in their field, which is what I already do.) I also already allow for any and all student opinions in my course. Far from indoctrinating them – I am trying to get them to think for themselves!

Actually, so much of my opinion that this bill is terrible stems from what I just said: We at universities are already doing what the bill would “force” us to do. There is already a faculty review process. There is already a process for students to formally complain if they are disrespected or “indoctrinated” in the classroom. We already eliminate low-enrollment programs on our own. We already take seriously our responsibilities to teach the full breadth of scholarship in our disciplines. This is all already happening. SB 1 would only put more red-tape in our way, and would cost universities (and the state!) money – for no return on investment, unless you count disgruntled faculty and exhausted administrators.

Vote no, I beg you.

Thank you,

Lauren Vachon