

Testimony of Douglas H. Garrison, MA
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 Douglas H. Garrison, and I am a Westerville resident and an adjunct professor of Political Science and U.S. History at both Columbus State Community College and Wilmington College. I do not represent the views or opinions of either institution, but rather am submitting testimony as a private and deeply concerned citizen. I write to express my opposition to the proposed legislation. It is a terrible bill whose ramifications, if passed into law, will be felt throughout Ohio education for decades.

The proposed bill does significant harm not only to state institutions of higher learning, current faculty, and current students, but especially to potential future student enrollment and faculty hires. Eroding tenure protections, kneecapping faculty unions, and encouraging students to report their professors for political heterodoxy will create a deeply inhospitable learning and teaching environment for all. The chilling effect these would have on higher education in our state will immediately devalue degrees from Ohio and jobs in Ohio.

Faculty will flee state institutions for the academic freedom still on offer in other states. Student enrollments will plummet as both undergraduate and graduate students seek out-of-state institutions that continue to value free thought and free expression. It is hard to overstate this case. This bill will cause a "brain drain." Ohio state institutions will become national pariahs.

This bill is short-sighted, narrow-minded, and vindictive. There is no social science behind it, simply ideology; an ideology that fears the unknown, the different, and the misunderstood. This is a stain on Ohio's long and proud tradition as a leader in state higher education and I strongly urge the committee to reject it. Thank you.