

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

From: Jennifer B. Carr, resident of Beachwood, Ohio, 44122

Date: 3/10/2025

RE: Ohio SB 1 and HB 6

Chairman, members of the committee, my name is Jennifer Carr, and my career has been in higher education here in Ohio. As an educational professional and a parent of a future college student, I join thousands of Ohioans who oppose Senate Bill 1 and its companion bill HB 6. I ask the Ohio House of Representatives to oppose this bill. At the very least, representatives should be coming together with stakeholders to determine how to mitigate the vast damage this bill will cause in its current form.

SB 1 is a series of burdensome, contradictory and unworkable mandates that undermine intellectual integrity, academic freedom and the very operations of Ohio's higher education sector. It is a blatant expression of governmental overreach. It threatens our freedom of speech. When we allow government to threaten independent institutions of higher learning, we threaten the free exchange of ideas and the fundamental values of our state. We also threaten the economic impact of higher education.

A recent study by Lightcast, an independent consulting firm, confirmed that Ohio's public universities contributed nearly \$69 billion to the state's economy in 2022 (Hendrix, S., 2023), but this investment here in Ohio will stop if our institutions are hamstrung over policies that limit discussion of "controversial" topics and threaten funding based on ideological standards. As people testified to at the marathon SB 1 opponent hearing in the Senate, the mere introduction of this legislation has already made it more difficult to conduct successful faculty searches. Senate Bill 1 is causing an effective brain drain on our state's economy.

I implore this committee to listen to the voices of students, educators, and community members and to reject this dangerous piece of legislation, or try to work with interested parties to make important improvements. But as the bill stands now, please LISTEN TO THE PEOPLE and REJECT SB 1!

Thank you for your consideration.

Reference:

Hendrix, S., The Columbus Dispatch, Here's how Ohio's public universities say they drove \$69 billion to the state's economy. May 23, 2023.

<https://www.dispatch.com/story/news/education/2023/05/15/ohios-public-universities-tout-69-billion-impact-to-states-economy/70202898007/>