

House Workforce and Higher Education Committee
March 11, 2025
Opposition Testimony to HB 6/Sub SB1

Ann Shroyer

Chair Young, Vice Chair Ritter, Ranking Member Brown Piccolantonio, and members of the Senate Higher Education Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Ann Shroyer. I am a resident of Delaware County and grew up in public schools in Auglaize County and went to college and grad school at Ohio Public Universities in Toledo. I am strongly opposed to Sub SB 1/HB6.

I oppose this bill for the myriad of reasons that others have and will state today, but most of all I oppose this bill because if this passes, this means my son will not have the benefit of a public university education in Ohio. There is just no way that the quality of higher education will be able to recover in time - if ever - from the passage of this bill for my elementary age student.. Our universities will not be able to recruit quality faculty and staff with the restrictions and punitive pieces of this bill.

I grew up in a rural community and as you might surmise from my gray hair and crows feet, it was a time with no internet, and we didn't even have cable living next to corn fields and a cow pasture. I personally wanted a large public university to contrast that experience. I also knew folks who wanted a smaller university experience, and that was a choice we made in our application process. I went to a large public university for that DIVERSE experience. I could have applied for a small conservative university if that is what I wanted.

I cannot even fathom what the "intellectual diversity" rule enforcement would mean for classes I took such as Women in American History and Poverty and Income Distribution. I still remember valuable lessons I learned in those classes, so many years later. Would I need a male perspective for the class? Would I need a wealthy guest professor? I felt the professors handled the classes well and I learned an immense amount with the syllabus as planned.

The punitive aspects of this bill are quite Orwellian. Will conservative groups plant students into classes to file complaints about "intellectual diversity" infringement just to initiate one of the punitive responses from the law and therefore diminish the freedom of professors to cover topics honestly.

Will we have geologists graduate from OSU who do not “believe” in geologic time? Before anyone laughs, I have a family member who works in Civil engineering and worked with such a person - they did not graduate from an Ohio Higher Ed program, but this bill will make the breakdown of science education inevitable. It will make all of us less safe as we graduate students from programs that no longer have a rigorous science basis such as understanding the polio vaccine prevents polio and is necessary. I have a 2nd cousin who has an album of the cards sent to her while she was sent home on quarantine when her dad was in an iron lung from polio and I had a high school physics teacher who had a profound limp from his bout of polio. To think that a student can walk into a University classroom and question the established effectiveness of vaccines and be given a platform is ridiculous.

Will our many Medical Schools be able to graduate qualified Doctors and Specialists if they are not able to freely learn about differences in access to care and making treatment plans that relate to those differences? Even just the differences in rural healthcare and the lack of access and the decrease of access thanks to for profit healthcare - this could be considered an issue of providing equitable access to healthcare, and yet, will not be taught if it is considered equitable, and my family in rural areas will continue to suffer an ever disappearing medical access.

Our state has been hemorrhaging young people for decades - I was a young person when I left the state 2 decades ago, but had looked forward to moving back to raise my son closer to family. It breaks my heart a little to think he will need to leave the state to get a quality education and to live in a state that values young people and their education. Our Ohio population is on the decline in comparison to the rest of the country. We have lost 3 Congressional seats in 15 years and I have no doubt the 2030 census will show a continued decline. Our state is becoming statistically older, less healthy, and less educated than the rest of the U.S. The ramifications of this bill will only add to that. High quality professors will not want to come to OSU and other state universities to teach, and subsequently high quality students will not seek an education here, and subsequently stay to have careers and families here. The downward spiral of population will accelerate. The continued anti-family, anti public education, anti-gun safety, and anti-public transit policies put forth by this statehouse do not encourage young people to move and stay here. Family and friends in other states laugh at the “move back to Ohio” ads that are aired there and my son of the skibidi rizzler generation uses “Ohio” as a pejorative. Senate Bill 1 will only solidify Ohio’s definition as lame, backwards, and dysfunctional.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this unbelievably destructive bill.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

I will now take any questions you may have.