

Testimony of Lily Tyler

Before the House Higher Education Committee

Representative Tom Young, Chair

March 9, 2025

Good Morning. Thank you Chair Young, Vice Chair Ritter, Ranking Member Piccolantonio, and members of the House Workforce and Higher Education Committee for allowing me to testify today. My name is Lily Tyler. I am a graduate student at the University of Cincinnati pursuing a degree in School Psychology. I am here to urge you to vote NO on Senate Bill 1 as I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

My education as a graduate student in the state of Ohio is heavily affected by SB 1 and has implications for the depleting quality of my education if it passes. If passed, SB 1 will ban discussions around systemic issues that will in turn prevent faculty from teaching accurate history. Passing this bill will continue to perpetuate systems of oppression as it silences discussions around systemic issues surrounding diversity, racism, sexism, privilege, and so much more. My professors are at risk of harassment or threats from outside political entities that have no ties with the institution if SB 1 passes. My greatest concern is that it doesn't end here and the list of concerns goes on.

I am concerned that the quality of my education as a graduate student studying school psychology is at risk if SB 1 passes. The foundation of school psychology is a practice of social justice. My studies in school psychology thus far has taught me that social justice advocacy is at the heart of everything we do. This includes but is not limited to, disrupting systems within education that perpetuate discriminatory practices, advocating with marginalized communities

and populations in schools, and so much more. If my education has taught me anything thus far, it is that the heart of everything I do in my education and career as a school psychologist is rooted in social justice advocacy. Something that will be increasingly more difficult if my institution doesn't allow me to learn. I genuinely do not know how I can learn to be an effective and quality school psychologist without learning about topics of DEI and engaging in discussion around DEI. The passing of SB 1 is destructive for not only my education, but the education of all Ohioans. This is not how my education was intended to be. I want an education where I can learn. Let Ohio students learn.

Not only is my education at risk, but so is my sense of belonging. I am a part of the LGBTQIA+ community and the passing of SB 1 has serious implications for my identity and belonging at my institution. SB 1 will lead to the disbanding of organizations that focus on advancing the success of students from certain communities and banning of classes and materials that focus on understanding the history or cultural contributions of certain communities. This will prevent me from learning, it will prevent educators from teaching accurate history, it will prevent me from being a part of a community at my very own institution where I can unapologetically embrace my identity with people who understand me. My identity, my experiences, my community cannot be banned. The passing of SB 1 will impact discussions of history of this community and many other marginalized communities. My experiences as a member of the LGBTQIA+ community, along with the experiences of every other student at an Ohio institution are at risk for being eliminated from discussion. SB 1 is bad for Ohio. I ask that you respect our freedom to learn.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify. I ask you to take my testimony to heart and vote NO on this destructive bill before it harms the education of Ohioans.