

Written Testimony Opposing SB 1

March 9, 2025

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

Thank you for reading my testimony. I am a college instructor who teaches at two public colleges directly affected by this bill, Ohio State and Columbus State. In this testimony, I am representing myself, not my workplaces, and my views are my own. I strongly oppose SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6 and believe it would negatively impact Ohio college students.

A native of Central Ohio, I have dedicated my career to teaching at Ohio's public colleges and universities. Whereas many of my graduate school classmates left Ohio to pursue careers elsewhere after completing their PhDs, I have always planned to stay right here in Ohio. We have amazing public colleges and universities—some of the best in the country. We have the best students too.

Ohio's young people currently have access to top notch public colleges, and I want these bright, ambitious, and hard-working young people to remain in Ohio to benefit from our great public institutions.

I am worried that if this bill passes—because it limits and restricts what is taught in the college classroom—it may deter students from choosing Ohio colleges. The restrictions on curriculum could place departments and courses at risk, forcing students who are enrolled to drop-out or transfer to another college if their majors of choice are eliminated. I also worry that professors, instructors, and graduate students will leave or choose to accept jobs elsewhere. Teachers and staff also may leave because the bill severely limits workers' rights—educators are some of the hardest working people and deserve a say in their working conditions. Lastly, everyone in the university community will be negatively impacted by the bill's attempts to limit divisive topics in the classroom, which will ultimately stifle robust discussion in the classroom. In my experience, classes are strongest when students express a diverse range of viewpoints. In the student-led discussions in my courses, students respect the views of others, and they know I respect their views as well. No one viewpoint is favored in the classroom, as this bill suggests. One-sided classrooms are something I just don't see. Instead, my concerns are about funding, programs, and opportunities being limited at universities if the bill passes.

I encourage you to protect the outstanding public colleges here in Ohio and vote no on SB 1.

Thank you again for the opportunity to share my testimony.