

Chairwoman Roegner, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Committee,

Thank you for considering my testimony in this matter. My name is June Gill, and I'm a student at The Ohio State University studying social work and public policy. I'm originally from New Jersey, and I was attracted to OSU because of its College of Social Work, which has a rich history of social justice advocacy and a commitment to diversifying the next generation of social workers. Senate Bill 1 would unjustly censor parts of the social work curriculum, making it harder for my classmates and me to prepare ourselves to be outstanding social workers in the future. For that reason and many others, I am strongly opposed to Senate Bill 1.

As you know, one of the provisions in this bill would eliminate DEI efforts from public universities, including mine, making it impossible for minority students like myself to find welcoming spaces that have the explicit goal of embracing diverse cultures, backgrounds, and voices, which is crucial to a feeling of belonging on a majority-white campus. Not only do I anticipate minority students leaving Ohio State if their identities are not provided a space to be celebrated, but the threat of taking away DEI scholarships would set universities back years in terms of equalizing the opportunities available to non-white college applicants, lower-income applicants, and students from communities that were historically denied access to higher education. You must know that DEI initiatives work to counter the immense damage done by racial discrimination and the selective distribution of upward mobility opportunities. DEI is essential to the health of my campus's ecosystem as well because diversity in the protected classes represented at OSU increases creativity, empathy, and the widening of perspectives for everyone here.

DEI is an integral initiative for today's college students to be competent in because of the diverse workspaces and cities we'll disperse to after graduation. OSU has a right to prepare its students to fight barriers to equal access to resources in their communities in a way that is respectful and civil. Every student should be able to hear their identity being taught in the classroom, and the wellbeing of so many minority students is at risk should SB 1 be passed. To protect Ohio's higher education population is to vote against SB 1.

The restrictions placed on faculty and the topics they're allowed to instruct on in their own classrooms also concern me, as does the proposed treatment of students/faculty/programs with ties to China, however, I want to be respectful of your time.

Please consider my testimony and vote NO on Senate Bill 1 which threatens the integrity and quality of every public university in Ohio.

Thank you again for the opportunity to express my opposition to this bill.

