

Testimony of Amy Hobek
Before the Senate Higher Education Committee
Senator Kristina Roegner, Chair
March 10, 2025

Chair Young, Vice Chair Ritter, Ranking Member Piccolantonio, and Members of the Higher Education Committee:

My name is Amy Hobek, and I am a resident of Terrace Park, Ohio, 45174. I am submitting opposition testimony against S.B. 1.

Never in the history of ever were the people who were against Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion the good guys.

DEI efforts are to create spaces of belonging for all. So that ALL students can see other students who look like them (not just white students), so that ALL students have access to the resources that they need (not just white students), so that ALL students see that the course content is designed and created for them too (not just white students), so that ALL students have a university that supports their identity (not just white students). The “I” in DEI is for INCLUSION for ALL. I promise it’s not leaving out or against white students—EVER.

ANTI-DEI is White Supremacy. It’s actual racism, its purpose is exclusion. INTENTIONALLY. This is history repeating itself. This is how the NAZI’s did it. It is their playbook. **Countries like China, Russia, Turkey, Iran, Hungary, and Poland are considered to have significant government control over what their universities teach**, with authorities often dictating curriculum and restricting topics that can be discussed, particularly when they are politically sensitive, leading to limitations on academic freedom in these nations. This is actually what indoctrination looks like, not the other way around.

Please demonstrate that you want to uphold democracy by resisting authoritarian policies such as these that restrict freedom and speech. Students deserve to learn in an environment where ALL ideas can be critically discussed. It is their right to learn in a safe environment, free from hate, free from government control, free from political weaponization of their curriculum.

I am a parent of two children who will be attending college in the upcoming years. My daughter, who is 18 years old, is actively applying to colleges for the Fall 2025 term as a freshman. (My son is in 7th grade). If this bill is passed, we have collectively decided (my daughter, myself, and my husband) that she will not attend any college in the state of Ohio. This bill will infringe upon her rights as a student in many ways:

1. She will not be able to receive a complete education, full of dynamic discourse regarding an array of topics that are deemed “controversial” in this bill. This is a disservice to ALL students to be able to be critical thinkers and be able to engage in studying evidence-based research that supports learning in a variety of topics that a non-academic politician has deemed “controversial”.

2. This bill’s statement regarding “intellectual diversity” is meant to silence teaching of evidence-based and historically sound research if it is not reflective of the bias that this bill reflects. For example, “will allow students to reach their own conclusions about such topics and will not

indoctrinate any social, political, or religious view". It seems that this bill implies that if a student in a classroom states, "Slavery should be legal" or "Women's voices are not worthy", then a professor cannot dispute this uninformed, racist, or sexist perspective and that students need to be allowed to come to their own conclusions. Also, THIS BILL IS INDOCTRINATION, NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND. Further, this allows for hate to be present in Ohio classrooms, and I will NEVER send my child into an environment such as this.

3. Finally, banning diversity, equity, and inclusion is taking rights away from my daughter and her peers. It's clear by the wording of this bill that the author does not understand the definition of diversity, equity, and inclusion. DEI is not affirmative action in and of itself, it is so much more. It is literally including ALL voices, ALL religions, ALL races, ALL ethnicities (including low income groups, white students, veterans, women, people with disabilities) so that ALL students can learn in a safe environment. My daughter WILL NOT FEEL SAFE in an environment that does not value INCLUSION FOR ALL.

I am sad that my daughter will not be able to attend an institution in Ohio of higher education because of the intended indoctrination of this bill. It breaks my heart that she will not be able to be close to her family because she feels like her rights as a college student in higher education will be violated and dismissed. I have spoken to friends in my community, students in her school, and public school administrators/counselors who feel the same. They will not attend or recommend sending their children to an Ohio college or university if this bill passes. This bill destroys higher education in Ohio, and we will not be a state that is valued by future faculty, future students, or future employers because of the uneducated, uninformed nature of this bill. Please put our children first. ALL of our children.

Thank you for your time.

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