

Shannon Connolly, LPCC

10 March 2025

Subject: Testimony in Opposition to SB1/HB6

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

I am writing to voice my strong opposition to HB6, formerly SB1. As a licensed mental health counselor with an undergraduate degree in psychology and a graduate degree in mental health counseling, I am extremely concerned with the politically motivated restrictions this bill places on teaching and learning. Some of my most formative moments as a student came from brave conversations on topics that HB6 would deem controversial.

The bill would promote a campus culture of fear and thought policing that is not conducive to the free expression of ideas. Its antagonistic stance towards DEI, its attack on faculty bargaining rights, and its insistence on the tyranny of a so-called “silent majority,” reveal that HB6 goes against the very values of open dialogue and intellectual diversity it pretends to endorse.

Please talk to real students, please talk to real faculty members. You will find that nearly all of them see this bill for what it is: an attempt at government overreach that diminishes faculty expertise and treats students as incapable of engaging with difficult topics that challenge their critical thinking.

Thank you for your consideration.

Shannon T. Connolly, LPCC