

March 9, 2025
Anna Stevenson

HB6 Opponent Testimony

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

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Anna Stevenson. I am a current undergraduate student at Kent State University though I write and speak for myself. I am strongly opposed to Senate Bill 1 and its companion bill House Bill 6.

On February 11th, the Senate's higher education committee held its first opponent testimony hearing. For this testimony, hundreds of students, professors, and faculty members of public universities around the state gathered to give their perspective on how the bill would affect them. I personally drove 2 hours, and waited for nearly 7, all to speak for just three minutes. I am willing to miss school to speak about this bill because I know that if I don't, it will affect me for the rest of my education.

In my testimony, I spoke about my concerns with the use of the word "indoctrination." I spoke of how the bill fails to define this word or provide examples of its implementation. I spoke about how this concerns me as a lesbian, as the queer community has long been stigmatized and demonized over fear-mongered worries that we were indoctrinating the youth simply by existing. I cited specific examples of this phenomenon, such as one in 2023 when a Florida teacher was investigated for showing her students a Disney movie which featured a minor storyline about a gay character. Her supposed infraction was indoctrination. (Halpert, 2023)

There were only 14 total proponent testimonies for Senate Bill 1, and nearly a thousand written testimonies in opposition. Yet still, the Senate Higher Education Committee and the wider Ohio Senate decided that this bill would be good for Ohio's public universities. For the Higher Education Committee to hear hundreds of students, professors, and educational experts beg against this bill, and to see them all be blatantly ignored, has left me disheartened and disillusioned with Ohio's Senate.

According to the website for the Ohio House of Representatives, the job of a state representative is described as "carrying out a broad scope of work in order to best represent their constituents." My question is this- who do you represent? Are you representing the will of your constituents? After you vote on this bill, can you look your student, professor, and faculty constituents in the eye and tell them truthfully that you have represented their perspectives?

We as students are exhausting all of the options that we have to make our voices heard. We are doing exactly what we have been told is the correct avenue to voice our complaints. We have done so in great numbers. We have the support of qualified organizations like the Ohio ACLU, the American Historical Association, and the Ohio Education Association. We are leveraging every bit of legislative power that we have, and the pit of dread in my gut tells me that it is in vain.

As a student, should this bill come to pass, I will have lost all hope in the legislative body of Ohio. It will be painfully obvious to every student in this state that our government has zero interest in listening to what we have to say. That they have abandoned their duty of

representing their constituents. That our voices mean nothing to them. Please, do not let that happen.

I ask you to please consider my testimony and vote NO on this harmful bill.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

I will now take any questions you may have.

CITATIONS

[Halpert, M. \(2023, May 15\). Florida teacher Jenna Barbee says she faces investigation for playing Disney movie. *BBC News*.](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-65597128)

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American Historical Association. "Senate Bill 1 - Opponent Testimony." *ACLU of Ohio*, 11 Feb. 2025, www.acluohio.org/en/news/senate-bill-1-opponent-testimony.

Daniels, Gary. "Senate Bill 1 - Opponent Testimony." *ACLU of Ohio*, 11 Feb. 2025, www.acluohio.org/en/news/senate-bill-1-opponent-testimony.

Kohler, Joel. "Ohio Senate Reintroduced as Senate Bill 1 - Ohio Education Association." *Ohio Education Association*, 18 June 2023, www.ohea.org/oppose-senate-bill-1/. Accessed 10 Mar. 2025.