

Chair Young, Vice-Chair Ritter, Ranking Member Piccolantonio, and members of the Higher Education Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today.

My name is Tori Haller. I am currently a master's student at OSU and a student teacher, preparing to teach social studies at the high school level.

I don't know what more I can say to convince you and the other members of this committee that this bill – SB 1 – is a danger to Ohio universities, businesses, and Ohioans themselves. It will chill free speech in universities. It will lead to worse learning conditions. It will turn workers away from Ohio. But none of that seems to matter to the Ohio General Assembly.

In the name of free speech, you would curtail it; in the name of protecting education, you would make those educators more vulnerable. Despite the hundreds of people who have come before you to speak out against this bill and the danger that it poses, it is resurrected again and again. Every time, we – the people of Ohio – have risen to meet you.

For that, Senator Cirino insults us. He says that our brains are mush. That we dare to participate in the political process, to make our thoughts heard, is so *aggravating* to him. Representatives are meant to *represent* their constituents; why do they refuse to listen to them?

Ironic, isn't it? He claims that we are the ones suppressing free speech, but the fact that we dare to use our free speech to speak out against him *infuriates* him. We will not be suppressed. We will not be controlled. We are a thorn in his side, and we will never go

away, no matter how many times he insults and degrade us. We will remember, and we will continue to fight this bill, no matter how many times he brings it back.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony today. I ask you to take my testimony to heart and vote NO on this bill before it harms the education of Ohioans.

- Tori Haller, Master's Student at OSU and Pre-service High School Educator