

Testimony of Vittoria S. Daiello, Ph.D.

Before the House Workforce and Higher Education Committee

Rep. Tom Young, Chair

March 11, 2025

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

Dear Committee:

My name is Dr. Vittoria Daiello, and I am an associate professor of art & design education at the University of Cincinnati, where I have taught for fifteen years. I do not represent University of Cincinnati but rather I am submitting testimony as a private citizen of Ohio. I oppose Ohio SB 1.

I oppose SB 1 because of the repercussions it will have on Ohio's economy. A well-functioning education system is one that supports the free exchange of ideas and upholds academic freedom. A strong education system is crucial to Ohio's workforce development, research quality, and industry innovations. In short, a high-quality education system is the foundation of Ohio's economic success. SB 1 risks undermining Ohio's economy creating instability in education policy and leading talented scholars and researchers to depart Ohio for opportunities in other states. Students are deeply concerned about SB 1's impact on their ability to continue their funded research, and the potential censorship of their ideas under SB 1. Several of my students are planning to apply to PhD programs this fall; however, they are no longer planning to submit applications to The Ohio State University or to University of Cincinnati. The "brain drain" effects of SB 1 are already happening. In sum, I am deeply concerned about the departure of talent from Ohio and losing the competitive edge that Ohio's citizens have worked hard to achieve.

I oppose SB 1 because of its effects on Ohio's workforce. Businesses depend on a reliable pipeline of well-educated graduates with the skills to bring innovation to Ohio's technology, manufacturing, and human service sectors. If our state's education governance becomes more politically volatile, it could deter investments in Ohio's economy and workforce training programs. Furthermore, increased administrative restructuring costs could divert valuable resources away from classrooms, negatively impacting students and teachers which will have a ripple effect on Ohio's workforce. Instead of fostering economic growth, SB 1 threatens to create long-term uncertainty that could weaken Ohio's ability to compete in an increasingly global economy.

Finally, SB 1 will have negative impacts on students and educators in Ohio. The untenable mandates in SB 1 will prioritize structural bureaucratic procedures over substantive educational reforms, distracting from the real issues facing Ohio's schools: teacher shortages, declining student performance, and the need for increased mental health resources in our schools. This bill risks creating instability, confusion, and inefficiencies that will ultimately harm students and educators across the state. Educators and administrators need consistent policies and support to implement effective teaching strategies, improve student outcomes, and ensure equitable access to quality education. Ohio's education system faces many challenges, but rather than address these pressing issues with practical solutions that address the urgent needs of Ohio's schools, SB 1 introduces unnecessary bureaucratic upheaval.

For these reasons, I strongly oppose SB 1 and urge this committee to reject its passage. Instead, I encourage legislators to focus on policies that empower educators, support students, and enhance community involvement in shaping the future of Ohio's education system.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Vittoria S. Daiello".

Vittoria S. Daiello, Ph.D.

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