

Testimony of Rachel Getman, 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:

My name is Rachel Getman, and I am a professor of Chemical Engineering at The Ohio State University. I do not represent The Ohio State University but rather am submitting testimony as a private citizen.

It is clear to me that SB1/HB6 is fiscally irresponsible and a massive overstep of government both of which are contrary to the principles by which this party prides itself.

Ohio State University is currently the 15th highest ranked public institution in this country. We are clearly doing something right. Yet SB1/HB6 presents a list of mandates that allow the government to take control of many aspects of our operation. This added bureaucracy will create tedium and decrease efficiency. The inefficiencies will increase the cost and deteriorate the quality of education.

Further, these bills will cause our ranking to fall, just as we are watching happen to the University of Florida, who has dropped out of the Top 5 since instituting a similar bill.

Rankings are essential for attracting top students.

So is the ability to speak the truth. SB1/HB6's requirement that institutions ignore topics such as climate change will turn people away from Ohio's universities. Why would anyone choose to attend a university that is ignorant of science?

The anti-DEI language in SB1/HB6 is based on a misunderstanding of what DEI committees do. The main tenet of most DEI programs is to empower students. DEI programs promote career development, create opportunities, provide recognition, and foster mentorship. They encourage review panels to consider entire applicant pools, rather than limiting to the first handful of people that come to mind. Their "best practices" include things like encouraging review panels to take breaks to ensure that each application gets a fresh look.

Removal of DEI is a direct hit to middle class students. Students want to know that they will have the opportunity to earn an education based on their merits and not whether or not they are well-connected. If SB1/HB6 passes, prospective students will choose to go to college in other states where they can be assured of this. This will result in a loss of tuition dollars for Ohio universities. It will also reduce the available workforce in Ohio, which will deter industry from building here.

Importantly, the mandates proposed in SB1/HB6 will also encourage professors to move elsewhere, or choose to start their careers in other states, hence preventing Ohio universities from retaining and hiring top talent. We are watching this happen in Florida right now.

But our faculty are a significant strength of our state. For example, faculty at The Ohio State University brought in billions of dollars in federal money through research grants last year. Every

faculty that leaves or chooses to start their career elsewhere is a lost opportunity to bring federal funding dollars to the State of Ohio.

Ohio is presently home to 6 Nobel Prize winners. Ohio State alone has had 24 faculty elected to the National Academy of Engineering.

The likelihood that such high caliber faculty will come to work in Ohio if SB1/HB6 passes is essentially zero. These people could literally work anywhere in the world. Why would they choose a state that has passed hysterical measures to ignore science, neglect the middle class, and add state-mandated tedium to their jobs?

Times like these are difficult. And they will define our state. I urge you to remain true to the principles of this party and vote against expanding state power.

Please do not contribute to the to the downfall of what is currently a global name brand in higher education. Vote NO on SB1/HB6.

Thank you for your time.