

Testimony of Linda Maxwell

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 Linda Maxwell and I am a retired casualty litigation claim specialist. I am a graduate of Capital University Law and Graduate Center. I am submitting this testimony as a private citizen. I have lived and worked in Ohio for almost the entirety of my life. Ohio needs well educated, critical thinkers for a strong workforce. The debates and differences of opinion shared in an open higher educational setting promote such critical thinking.

In large part, my successes in my professional life were due to my educational experiences which required me to listen to other viewpoints and present another position supported by facts and evidence, including historical results. Preventing future students' exposure to this diversity cheats them of the opportunity to grow in their education and ability. Likewise, I have experienced the importance of understanding and appreciating the cultural differences between myself and the many individuals I encountered, both internally and externally. Students need the opportunity to receive guidance from professional educators as they explore "controversial" topics. This is what higher education is all about.

I firmly believe that this bill, if passed, would be a major hit to Ohio's economy. If it passes, our state would lose students, professors, tuition dollars, tourism dollars, and countless jobs. If you want a strong Ohio economy, you need to oppose SB1/HB6.

Over 1,000 Ohioans submitted testimony against SB1 in the Senate while hundreds of people showed up to testify in-person. Only 14 people sent in supporter testimony - and none of them were public university students. Listen to the people of Ohio. No one wants this bill.

Thank you for your consideration. I urge you to vote NO.