

My name is Ben Gressle (he/his), and I am a fourth-year Horticulture Bachelor of Science student at The University of Cincinnati. I am submitting this testimony as a private citizen in opposition to SB 1.

I have lived in Cincinnati and the State of Ohio my entire life. After I graduated high school, I planned to go to college to pursue a career in helping to make our world a better place for all of us to live in. Therefore, I chose to go to a school where I could get the education to pursue such a career without prejudice or discrimination over what I support and how I learn.

SB 1 plans to severely limit the ability of faculty to teach subjects that are pertinent in this area of study. Many of my classes include discussion on climate change and many factors affecting our environment that are scientifically proven to exist. If SB 1 were to be passed into law, most of my instructors would be banned from teaching these subjects. Students and faculty have even mentioned the possibility of having to leave the State of Ohio should this bill pass. This could cause the colleges and universities across the state to ultimately fail.

The effects of SB 1 would utterly devalue my degree and cause significant harm to the pursuit of my career. My focus on the environment is with a passion to help all people in our community regardless of political affiliation. It needs to be known that our environment and nature is important. SB 1 completely and utterly disregards this reality.

On top of that, I also worry about the fate of many student services and organizations on our campus. Many of these support students with disabilities, diversity, equity, and inclusion, and so much more. Me and many of my friends and fellow students use these services often. What is going to happen to them if SB 1 passes?

This bill is not going to benefit higher education in Ohio at all. It will only lead to irreparable harm. Therefore, I strongly call on you to vote no on SB 1

Thank you for your time in reading this.