

Chair Young, Vice Chair Ritter, Ranking Member Piccolantonio, and the members of the Workforce and Higher Education Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Alice Somers. I am a fifth-year undergraduate student at the University of Cincinnati. I am currently working to get my Bachelors of Science in Education for Elementary Education and a Deaf Studies Certificate. I am also a proud union member of the Ohio Education Association, acting as the Underclassman Member at Large for the Aspiring Educators Board of Directors. I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

Though I am not from Cincinnati originally, I am proud to be a current resident of this beautiful, diverse region. I believe that everyone should be a lifelong learner, and I also believe that one of the best ways (and most natural ways) to learn is through interacting with other people. In my adult life, I have learned so much from identity groups that I personally do not identify with. Every human has a unique, lived experience, and these stories deserve to be shared and celebrated.

I would like to highlight SB 1's **Sec. 3345.0217. (B)**, which focuses on the removal of diversity, equity, and inclusion offices; and the prohibition of diversity, equity, and inclusion training or orientation courses. Throughout the University of Cincinnati, there are student organizations, staff and faculty groups, and offices that have been created to support the educational growth of students who have different identities. As a current student, to me, the campus is built upon the diversity and uniqueness of the student, faculty, and staff populations. I value, and seek out, the different voices of my peers, because there is always a learning opportunity to be had.

I believe that by passing SB 1, it will hurt the very students it seeks to support.

Members of the Workforce and Higher Education Committee, I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this extremist bill.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.  
Alice Somers