

Chair Young, Vice Chair Ritter, Ranking Member Piccolantonio, and members of the House Workforce and Higher Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on Senate Bill 1.

My name is Madeline Pugh, and I am a student at Ashland University and an Ashbrook Scholar.

Prior to Ashland University, I studied at Lakeland Community College in Lake County, Ohio. Although I took around 15 credits of history and political science courses at Lakeland, I never studied the primary sources, only textbooks. Going into the Ashbrook Scholar Program, I had a blurred vision of what the principles of our nation truly were and felt very behind. After joining the program, however, I was able to read the documents directly from their authors in context, rather than a short summary in a textbook.

As a requirement for the Ashbrook Scholar Program, each student must complete a list of core courses in history, political science, and political economy to graduate. In these courses, we have the opportunity to study documents like the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Federalist Papers, the Emancipation Proclamation, the Gettysburg Address, and many other core documents. Through the thorough reading of these texts, I have gained a better understanding of the principles that established our Nation and continue to govern it today. This has allowed me to become a better student, a better American, and a more informed citizen.

I feel that Ashland's requirement of civics courses provides all students, not just history or political science students, a better understanding of our government and our history. Furthermore, by creating this requirement, I believe the increased civic literacy will create a stronger future for our nation, with students well-equipped to understand their role and duty in a democracy, and a generation dedicated to maintaining a government by the people, of the people, and for the people.

Therefore, I urge you to support Senate Bill 1. Thank you for your time and I'd be happy to answer any questions.