

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 John Keim, and I am a student at Ashland University, located in the heart of Ohio.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Ohio Senate Bill 1.

As a strong advocate for civic education and academic excellence myself, this legislation is a necessary step toward reinforcing the core values and foundational principles that have shaped

our state and nation.

I will be discussing a portion of this bill, known as the “American Civic Literacy Requirement.”

Ohio SB 1 enhances higher education by implementing multiple critical reforms:

Senate Bill 1 emphasizes the importance of civic literacy by establishing a required core civics curriculum for public university students.

As a product of this type of education, I’d like to say I turned out *pretty well*.

As a first-generation college student, I am a living testament that this type of education works.

Additionally, at the university I attend, it prides itself in allowing students to read primary documents, this gives them the ability to curate their own opinions.

As the saying goes at Ashland University,

“We teach students how to think, not WHAT to think.”

I believe this principle should be applied to all of Ohio’s public universities.

By engaging directly with these foundational documents, students will develop a deeper appreciation for the principles of liberty, equality, democratic governance, and what it means to be an American citizen.

Thomas Jefferson said it best:

“It is error alone which needs the support of government. Truth can stand by itself.”

By passing Senate Bill 1, Ohio takes a bold step in reaffirming the importance of civic education, academic integrity, and institutional accountability. This bill ensures that Ohio’s universities fulfill their fundamental mission: to educate, not indoctrinate; to empower students with knowledge, not ideology.

I urge the committee to advance Senate bill 1 and help restore a balanced, principled approach to public higher education in Ohio.

Thank you for your time and consideration and I’d be happy to answer any questions.