

Ohio House Workforce and Higher Education Committee,

I am Dr. Nick Denton, again writing to the committee this time as an interested party since last week the committee cut the meeting short after only 8 out of the 172 opposition testimonies were read. As an interested party rather than an opposition testimony, I instead want to gain some clarification on one of the programs I fear might cost Ohio State University its entire state instructional budget:

I was part of a DEI task force at the college of pharmacy as part of my service effort two years ago where we investigated causes of the 34% student drop out of our bachelors of science in pharmaceutical sciences (BSPS) major, which we observed first generation and underrepresented racial minority students dropping out of our program at a higher rate than their peers. We interviewed students on where they and their peers struggled in the program and identified our chemistry course series as the primary challenge with students that did not go to a high school that offered college prep chemistry such as Advanced Placement or College Credit Plus were 2.8X as likely to drop out of BSPS.

To address this problem my colleagues expanded student tutoring support for chemistry, they created a summer bridge program where we provide foundational chemistry instruction the week before fall semester starts for students who enter BSPS without college prep chemistry, and created a chemistry course to provide pharmacy-based chemistry practice for students taking their general chemistry series. These programs came from the work of a DEI task force to make BSPS more inclusive to brilliant students who had no control of what high school they could attend, that have resulted in equitable improvement in student academic success, ultimately making Ohio's pharmacy workforce more diverse.

To bill sponsor and committee chair, Tom Yong: will HB 698 put Ohio State's approximately \$1.68 billion state instructional funding at risk if we continue to provide these chemistry tutoring interventions that are DEI programs that came from faculty serving in a DEI task force? And if not, then what DEI programs are allowed and what DEI staff functions are permitted under OH HB698 (because neither SB1 nor HB698 define what a "disguised" DEI program or staff member is)?

Thank you for your time and I am eager to hear your answer,

Nick Denton, PhD