

Opponent Testimony for SB 1

Senate Higher Education Committee

February 2025

Joshua Ferry

Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking member Ingram and members of the committee. My name is Joshua Ferry, and I am a fourth year student at Cleveland State, studying political science and urban studies. Contrary to popular beliefs, I am not testifying on behalf of the university. Before discussing my testimony, I would first like to congratulate Chair Roegner on becoming committee chair, and I wish her and the Senate higher ed committee all the best.

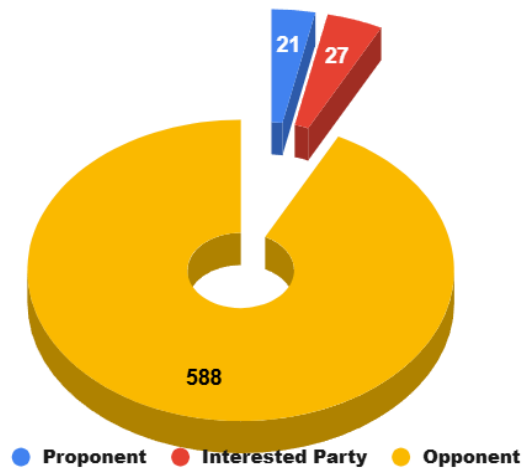
Senate Bill 1—formerly Senate Bill 83, is an abhorrent and disgusting bill, and a middle finger to higher education in Ohio. As you are well aware, Ohio’s public Universities are facing many challenges from multiple fronts: whether it be financial woes, lack of recruiting students, and cutting anything that could even come close to being ‘diversity, equity and inclusion’. Just a couple examples over the last couple of weeks: Cleveland State cut three of its sports programs and The University of Akron cancelled its race forum due to the federal executive overreach coming from the White House. You’ve heard many times from many different experts about the ‘controversial topic’ ‘DEI’ and other portions of the bill that are deceptive. I wanted to use this testimony to discuss stuff beyond that.

For example, the bill doesn’t address any real concerns in regards to higher education, such as affordability. With the U.S. Department of Education in limbo, and FAFSA in limbo, a comprehensive higher education bill would address some of those issues, such as how the state of Ohio, as well as local and regional governments can address affordability. For example, per Ideastream, Cleveland Municipal City School Districts is working with Cuyahoga Community

College to [create a high school-to-community college pipeline, and guarantee automatic admission for all CMSD students.](#) The bill was built on the idea that universities are somehow partisan institutions indoctrinating students with “liberal ideologies” . However, this is something I have not experienced, and is far from it. I have never been coerced into any DEI program, and though I did have to take a ‘diversity’ course, it was a la carte. Students, professors, and others in academia and higher education generally oppose this bill.

I want to leave you with a pie chart i’ve created showing the ratio of Opponents/Proponents/Interested Party per the Ohio General Assembly website, using the data from Senate Bill 83, and removing all duplicates as best as I can. While the graph is not perfect and reflects SB 83 and not SB 1, it sends a clear message that Ohio disapprove of SB1.

Testimony Ratio



I ask you to consider my testimony and vote **NO** on this toxic bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify. I encourage you to follow up with me with any questions and rebuttals at joshf0904@gmail.com.