

Caelan McFadden-Grubenhoff

## Testimony Against SB 1

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Caelan and I am a Sociology student at the University of Cincinnati. I have a minor in Communication and a Certificate in Non-Profit and Community Leadership. After reading through the proposed SB 1 there is only one word that comes to my mind; Control. I believe from the bottom of heart that SB 1 is purely about the control of students and public universities rather than “reforming” them.

This bill is presented as a tool used to “reform” higher education but I feel that if the goal was truly to reform, then SB 1 would be about making public universities more accessible to *everyone* instead of creating barriers between students and their right to free education. Senator Bill Reineke and Senator Jerry Cirino want to bring “honesty” back to Ohio education. So, I will stand and ask Reineke and Cirino to be honest with me, a student and a Sociologist.

SB 1 wants to allow the government to integrate itself within our classrooms and determine what can be taught and what can not be. So be honest with me; if SB 1 is passed, where do we draw the line? What is the goal here? Why do you feel so entitled to destroy academic freedom, destroy DEI programs, and eliminate faculty labor rights? Be honest with me; Where do you get off?

My fellow classmates and I see no reason to remove and destroy DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION! Diversity and Equity for all make campuses fair and great. DEI programs allow those who are systemically placed at a disadvantage have a chance at public universities. You claim you want honestly and “intellectual diversity” but in my eyes what you truly seem to be advocating for is keeping marginalized communities out of public universities. How could someone advocate for a learning environment that lacks inclusion? Who does that benefit other than selfish men like you? We need each other, we learn from each other, inclusion makes us whole. If you are uncomfortable with students becoming whole by learning about the different perspectives of those around them, then *you* are the problem, not the classroom.

Diversity in schools has allowed me to learn so much about my community and my classmates. Being surrounded by others who challenge my biases and encourage my learning has made my college experience more than wonderful. Almost all students that I have discussed this bill with strongly oppose it. The best and brightest students studying in Ohio will not remain here underneath SB 1. Restricting our learning is a threat to our freedom. DEI programs allow for people who I love dearly to have access to education. These scholarships ARE merit based if that is your concern, but they also take the time to understand the systemic injustices that may push marginalized communities to the side. We need these programs to create more beautiful and inclusive campuses. I also think that public syllabi is more dangerous than you think. Syllabi often have information for students who may be facing poverty, lack of resources, food security issues, or mental health issues. Students often feel embarrassed to discuss these things with a trusted adult and a private syllabi allows them to access this information without feeling shamed or embarrassed.

I think we need really think about the fact that you even thought that banning faculty's right to strike was okay. You threatening the right to strike is like threatening the right to someone's freedom of speech. Institutions should be able to be criticized by the people who fuel them. Teachers now more than ever deserve the rights to stand up for themselves. I would be nowhere without my university and neither would you.

SB 1 impacts more than you think. I find it sick and embarrassing that you would even consider an atrocity like this. Universities deserve love, recognition, diversity, and academic freedom. I, as a sociologist should not feel threatened to learn about the society that you are planning to destroy. You can not silence students, you can not silence teachers, and you will not silence me. I encourage you to actually continue to keep learning instead of creating bills like SB 1 out of fear.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this harmful bill. I am begging you to keep government inviolate. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.