

Testimony of David Hoffmann, Ph.D.
Before the Senate Higher Education Committee
Rep. Kristina Roegner, Chair
Feb. 7, 2025

Chair Roegner and Members of the Higher Education Committee:

My name is David Hoffmann, and I am a professor of history at The Ohio State University, where I have taught for 30 years. I do not represent Ohio State, but rather am submitting testimony as a private citizen in opposition to Senate Bill 1.

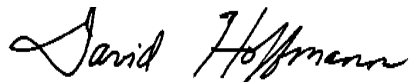
I strongly oppose Senate Bill 1 due to its many harmful provisions. The bill seems rife with contradictions. It claims to promote diversity in higher education but outlaws Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives. It calls for “varied perspectives on a wide range of public policy issues,” but then mandates a civics course with prescribed readings. Overall the bill violates values we hold dear—freedom of speech and academic freedom.

Senate Bill 1 appears to be based on a fundamental misunderstanding of what goes on in higher education. Professors do not attempt to indoctrinate students. My colleagues and I place great value on encouraging students to think for themselves. In history courses, we assign a wide range of readings from different viewpoints and encourage students to assess those readings and come to their own conclusions.

I have always thought that Republicans oppose government regulation and intervention in people’s lives. Yet this Republican-sponsored bill represents a blatant attempt to impose government control that would eliminate academic freedom on our college campuses.

I strongly urge you to dismiss this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Hoffmann". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "D" and "H".

David Hoffmann
136 King Street
Lancaster, OH 43130