

Testimony of Michael R. Fisher Jr., PhD
Before the Senate Higher Education Committee
Senator Kristina Roegner, Chair
February 10, 2025

Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking Member Ingram, and Members of the Higher Education Committee:

My name is Michael R. Fisher Jr., and I am a professor of African American and African Studies at The Ohio State University. I do not represent Ohio State but rather am submitting testimony as a private citizen in opposition to Senate Bill 1.

This bill threatens the integrity of higher education. Under the guise of equality, this bill opposes diversity, equity, and inclusion. SB-1 seeks to reduce research, teaching, and learning about forms of knowledge that emerge from marginalized and underrepresented communities and reflects a national effort to roll back the modest gains made toward a more just and equal society. SB-1 is an exercise in anti-democratic political domination and undermines a robust, quality education at public institutions of higher education in the Buckeye state for students who come from diverse backgrounds.

Public colleges and universities are instrumental in development democratic citizens. Since its founding as the state's land-grant university by the Ohio General Assembly in 1870, Ohio State has been at the forefront of preparing students from Ohio and beyond to make meaningful contributions to their communities, recognizing that the students that we educate impact the trajectory of American society.

This bill would weaken the quality of education at Ohio State and other public colleges and universities in Ohio. I oppose this bill and admonish you and the members of the Education Committee to do the same.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael R. Fisher Jr." in a cursive style.

Michael R. Fisher, Jr., Ph.D.