

**Opponent Testimony for SB1
"Enact Advance Ohio Higher Education Act"
Senate Higher Education Committee**

February 7, 2025

**Jennifer Davis
Akron AAUP**

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

Paragraph 1: Introduction and purpose

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Jennifer Davis (she/her).

- a. I am a Public Services Librarian and faculty member at an Ohio University.
- b. State your purpose: I am here to Oppose SB1.

Paragraph 2: Personal connection/story

- a. As a faculty member and academic librarian, I am deeply concerned and troubled by Senate Bill 1 that undermines the fundamental principles of academic freedom, inclusion, and critical thinking that are essential to a thriving democracy.

Paragraph 3: Connect to broader community impact

- a. This bill places arbitrary restrictions on faculty hiring, limits tenure protections, and forces a distorted definition of intellectual diversity that could hinder evidence-based teaching. It seeks to micromanage course syllabi, monitor faculty for ideological conformity, and eliminate vital diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives that create more accessible and equitable learning environments. Most troublingly, it threatens institutional funding based on vague ideological metrics. By dictating how and what we teach, this bill weakens Ohio's ability to attract top-tier educators and students. The success

of Ohio's higher education system depends on intellectual freedom, not political mandates.

Paragraph 4: Reiterate purpose/call to action

- a. I stand in opposition to Senate Bill 1 because it represents an unprecedented overreach into higher education, undermining academic freedom, faculty governance, and the ability of institutions to prepare students for a globalized world.
- b. I urge you to oppose this bill in the interest of our students, our institutions, and the future of Ohio's workforce.

CLOSE:

Thank you.