

Chairman, members of the committee, my name is Aaron Biddle, and I am a student at the University of Cincinnati. I am deeply concerned about Senate Bill 1 and its impact on my education and future career as a physical therapist. This bill limits the ability of faculty to foster open discussions in the classroom by imposing vague restrictions on teaching controversial topics. As an aspiring healthcare provider it is pertinent to my patient's care that I be informed on issues that impact their lives and overall health. I want to engage with difficult subjects and hear diverse perspectives that will allow me to provide the best possible care. This bill also removes DEI initiatives, which have been instrumental in supporting students from different backgrounds, ensuring that we all have an equal opportunity to succeed. Without these programs, Ohio risks alienating students from underrepresented communities, discouraging them from attending our state's institutions. As an out of state student, I can say personally that DEI initiatives at the University of Cincinnati are part of what drew me to this school over those in my home state. I fear that this bill will diminish the value of my degree, making Ohio universities less competitive nationally and would encourage me to look elsewhere as a licensed practitioner. I urge you to reject this bill and prioritize policies that enhance—not restrict—our education.