

Chairman Roegner, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking
Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Higher Education Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Andrea Bonamico. I am a senior at Kent State University, and I will graduate this spring. I strongly oppose SB-1.

This bill is extremely concerning for me as a current college student. I am worried that my program will cease to exist with the prohibition of any diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) departments and offices. My major is Human Development and Family Science and many courses within my major discuss essential topics for young adults. From Changing Roles of Men and Women to Human Sexuality, these classes have helped me learn information that is crucial for everyone to have a significant understanding of, and I would have never had this opportunity to learn these vital aspects of life without these courses. Taking the courses I have and being in my major has been a privilege and I don't know what I would've done without it. If this bill passed when I was a freshman, I would have had to attend a school out of state to enroll in my major.

These topics that are integrated within my program would fall under "Controversial Beliefs or Policies", including issues such as diversity, equity, and inclusion programs, marriage, or abortion. A student organization I am an officer for, known as Kent URGE, would cease to exist, as it educates and advocates for reproductive justice. Under this bill, I would be unable to continue to educate and stand up for individual rights to one's health, eliminating all of the hard work we have put in to create a positive, healthy environment for everyone. We have been support systems for students who have turned to us for help, and I don't want this resource to be taken away from them.

I am worried for my nieces and nephews once they get into school. I fear they will not be able to receive a full and open understanding of important social matters and historical events. These topics of "contention" are not something that should be prohibited for students to learn about. I want to have an education open for conversation not only for me but for everyone. Alongside this, if students are allowed to reach their own conclusions about topics that have factual evidence to support such subjects, then students can state incorrect information, and professors could not count them against it. This is extremely worrying, as I believe it is fundamental to learn and be properly informed of accurate subject matter within the classrooms.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this harmful bill.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.