

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

Thank you for allowing me to submit written testimony on this important issue. My name is Kevin Carr. I am a resident of Oxford, Ohio, and a Learning Specialist within the Rinella Learning Center at Miami University. I work with students from various socioeconomic, educational, and environmental backgrounds. No matter their background, all are focused on their academic pursuits, as well as their own personal growth. I am writing as an individual and not as a representative of my employer, and **I am strongly OPPOSED to Senate Bill 1.**

One of the main concerns is the bill's potential to increase financial burdens on students. If the bill includes provisions that reduce state funding for public universities or lead to higher tuition costs, students from low-income backgrounds will be disproportionately affected. This could limit access to higher education for those who need it most, undermining the principle of education as an equalizer.

Another worry is the potential restriction of academic freedom. The bill may introduce policies that affect curriculum decisions, limiting the ability of educators to teach and conduct research freely. This could lead to a chilling effect in the classroom, where professors might feel pressure to avoid certain topics or areas of study that are politically controversial, which is detrimental to the intellectual growth of students.

Bills like SB1 often fail to consider the mental health challenges students face, especially as financial strain and academic pressures continue to grow. Navigating an uncertain educational environment can take a toll on students' well-being, and policies that limit resources for mental health services or impose stricter regulations may exacerbate the problem.

If the bill includes provisions that limit diversity or inclusivity initiatives, it could harm students from marginalized communities. A diverse and inclusive academic environment is crucial for fostering a sense of belonging and encouraging students to engage in critical thinking about different perspectives. Limiting these efforts could undermine students' development as global citizens and reduce the richness of the educational experience.

Higher education is critical for preparing students for a competitive workforce. Any legislation that undermines the quality of education or reduces access could result in a less skilled workforce in the long term. This will not only affect students but could have broader economic implications for the state of Ohio, impacting the state's future growth and prosperity.

In summary, State Bill 1 has the potential to significantly harm students by reducing access to education, stifling academic freedom, exacerbating mental health issues, undermining diversity and inclusion, and negatively impacting workforce readiness. It is for these reasons that I ask you to consider my testimony and **vote NO on SB1.**

Thank you for your time, consideration, and service to our State,

Kevin Carr, Med
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