

**Testimony Template (adapted from
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**Opponent Testimony for SB1
"Enact Advance Ohio Higher Education Act"
Senate Higher Education Committee**

February 10th, 2025

Madeleine Ray

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

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Madeleine Ray. I am currently a student in my senior year of college and will soon be graduating and becoming a pediatric nurse. I am writing to you to share why I am opposing the "Diversity, equity, and inclusion, intellectual diversity, and other concepts" section of the bill. I am asking for your consideration and compassion when voting for this bill.

In the policy it states that, it "Prohibits state institutions from providing or requiring training for any administrator, teacher, or staff member that advocates or promotes certain prescribed concepts regarding race and sex."

This required training is essential for college campus staff and students.

Being the president of a student organization, the board members and I are required to take an inclusion training course. This course teaches me how to

treat others respectfully and promote inclusion. I feel that this is very important as there are many students that have not had to consider inclusion. To further explain, there is one student in my organization that grew up in a school composed of only white students. When she started attending college, she did not know how to go about inclusion and equality in our organization. With this required training, she was able to learn ways to promote inclusion and respectfully ask questions about equality to people of another race. This student had previously come to me with concerns about accidentally disrespecting someone or hurting one's feelings. I feel that I was able to firsthand witness the effect of this required training.

On my college campus, many of the kids come from diverse backgrounds. I have many friends who are African American and a part of the LGBTQ community. I grew up ten miles away from my college campus in a town full of poverty and have firsthand seen the effects of this that have impacted my peers. I have witnessed friends of mine get discriminated against or not included due to their relationship with the same sex, being transgender or simply having black skin. Being a college student, I believe you see a lot more than someone who works a nine to five job and isn't exposed to inclusion and equality issues every day.

I am testifying because I believe that inclusion, equality, and freedom of speech in the classroom is a basic right of any citizen in the United States of

America. My college peers and friends who are of a different race/ethnicity or a part of the LGBTQ community will primarily be affected by this bill and that is why I am asking you to vote no for this bill.

Thank you for your consideration and time. I'm happy to answer any questions.