

February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Kristina D. Roeger, Chairwoman  
Senate Higher Education Committee, Ohio Senate  
1 Capitol Square  
Columbus, OH 43215

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 1, the Advance Ohio Higher Education Act. My name is Matthew Stouffer, and I write to you today as a lifelong Ohioan deeply concerned about the implications of this bill.

After completing my grade school education at Gilmour Academy in Gates Mills, Ohio, I had many options for higher education, both in and out of state. However, there was never any doubt that I would attend college here in Ohio. Our state boasts one of the strongest higher education systems in the country—across both public universities and small independent institutions. These schools excel in research, athletics, and the overall collegiate experience, a success made possible by our ability to attract and retain exceptional students and faculty members.

SB 1 would irreparably damage Ohio's reputation as a leader in science, industry, and the humanities. The politicization of education would set us on a path toward the deterioration of one of our greatest assets. We risk losing entire generations of Ohioans who will seek education in neighboring states where neither students nor educators face such restrictions. This bill would make Ohio less competitive in emerging fields of study, as our brightest minds leave in search of greater academic freedom and opportunity. Ultimately, the only thing this bill "advances" is the erosion of the very foundation of the state we all cherish.

For these reasons, I strongly urge you to oppose SB 1. I appreciate your time and consideration and encourage you to vote against this harmful legislation.

Sincerely,  
Matthew Stouffer