

2/10/2025

OHIO SB1 TESTIMONY

Chair 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 Rachel O'Malley. I am a resident of this great state—born and raised in, and enthusiastically returned to Cincinnati after more than a decade away. I am a former student at Ohio schools, a former teacher, and a mother of current Ohio students. I currently work in the field of urban revitalization and real estate development and I know that it is essential that Ohio maintain and enhance a reputation of educational excellence in order to retain and recruit the best students, teachers, and workers in our state.

I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

On its face, this legislation is an assault on the basic liberty of thought and opinion. This alone is sufficient reason to oppose.

But for those unconvinced of its ideological flaws, it is a practical disaster. The proposed legislation diminishes our state's ability to nurture and attract human talent and skill. It takes the ability to educate away from knowledgeable, skilled, and experienced educators and puts it in the hands of politicians and administrators. It introduces requirements that put the accreditation of our colleges and universities at risk. It replaces academic curiosity, exploration, and healthy debate with repression and fear.

The inevitable result: High quality educators will leave. The ranking and reputation of our colleges and universities will diminish. The best and brightest of our high school graduates will seek opportunities for higher education elsewhere. Our ability to recruit students from other states and countries will dissolve. Our state's businesses will struggle to find top-tier talent, and will consider greener pastures.

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

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.