

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 Brenda Moran Schaefer. I am a public school teacher with 26 years of experience. I teach ELA 11 and CCP College Composition. I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

Academic freedom, by virtue of the first amendment of The U.S. Constitution, is a pillar of democracy and essential for free speech. It is not the purview of the state to monitor intellectual discussion. As famed scholar Noam Chomsky asserts, "The role of intellectuals is to challenge authority, not to serve it." Therefore, the purpose of higher education is much more than job training; it is also a traditional right of passage in the maturation of the mind. Higher education is meant to encourage critical thinking and intellectual pursuits that breed creativity and innovation. Academic freedom and the protection of intellectual discussions is an American college tradition that values scholarly pursuits, intellectual growth, as well as, preparation for a rapidly changing world. It is of utmost importance that right wing political oversight be prohibited from the noble American tradition of intellectual freedom.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this unConstitutional, unAmerican, anti-intellectual bill.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.