

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

My name is Anna Fort. I am a law student, a former paralegal, and a former grant writer. I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

SB1 is a bipartisan issue and should receive bipartisan opposition. SB1 fundamentally harms quality of education for students and would eliminate jobs and job protections for hardworking Ohioans. In my studies as a law student, I have seen how legislation can have a chilling effect past what the legislature intends. SB1 is legislation that would have this type of effect. SB1 seeks to promote intellectual diversity. But restrictions on what is taught in schools can never promote intellectual diversity, only limit it.

My experiences in higher education led me to study the law. I want to fill the gap in legal services for those who cannot afford a lawyer. But I never would have chosen this career path if I was not exposed to a vast array of ideas – from all sides of political discourse. In undergrad, my social theory class presented “controversial beliefs and policies” from across the political spectrum. Without this class, without acknowledging controversial issues, and without looking at the issues from all sides, I would not have been inspired to make a difference in my community and become a civil servant.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this destructive bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Anna Fort