

Chairman, members of the committee, my name is C. McDonald, and I am a student at an Ohio university. I am deeply concerned about Senate Bill 1 and the precedent it sets on educational boundaries for students across Ohio.

This bill imposes vague restrictions on “controversial beliefs and policies” that are unnecessary. As a student, I want to be engaged, I want to have controversial topics thrown my way so that I personally make the decision how to react. I do not want a bill to be passed that takes this opportunity away from me. I want students to feel comfortable expressing their thoughts, opinions, and beliefs on difficult subjects and to hear these diverse perspectives. Just because there is controversy surrounding a topic does not mean that I will inherently believe one side or the other immediately. Instead of imposing restrictions on such subjects and programs such as DEI that encourage diverse perspectives, there should be language in this bill encouraging controversial statements and the growth of students' mindsets and willingness to do research on these subjects themselves rather than just ban the mere discussion of them. Removing this ability to discuss controversial topics from Ohio schools will make Ohio less competitive nationally, especially to out-of-state students who were previously interested in moving to Ohio yet do not because Ohio would no longer provide a complete education. This bill is a big deal. I urge you to reject this bill and prioritize policies that enhance our education.