

My name is Mary G. Wilson. I teach criminology and criminal justice courses at Kent State University. I am a former criminal justice practitioner and crime victim advocate with 15 years of experience in the field. I worked in both the public and private, non-profit sectors of the justice system. I have worked in higher education since 1998. As an Ohioan and educator, I care deeply about our state's commitment to higher education institutions, academic freedom, safe learning conditions, and worker's rights, I urge you to STOP Senate Bill 1.

The current bill is unhelpful and harmful to our students. The business of identity politics has no place in our society much less in our educational system. Many of my current and former students have expressed concern for their safety and well-being in our state. I have assured my students that everyone can expect equal and fair treatment before the law. The law protects everyone equally.

I am concerned that the sweeping provisions of this new bill will negatively impact student safety and fair working conditions for many Ohioans. The bill will undermine a healthy learning community for our students. The time, energy, and costs associated with SB 1 needlessly shifts attention away from student learning. There are several unintended consequences of the bill including fewer students attending Ohio colleges and universities and retention of workers in Ohio.

I am unclear as to how SB1 would enhance higher education for Ohio. I am concerned that prospective students and their parents will not want to attend our fine institutions. Our state needs to be more welcoming and create a sense of belonging. Thousands of Ohio students, families, faculty, professionals, unions, and organizations have bravely spoken out against this reckless, destructive measure. Be a true leader and stand against attacks on Ohioans and public education.

I urge you to reject Senate Bill 1 and similar attacks on higher education.

Thank you.

*Dr. Mary G. Wilson*

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