

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Cristopher Thompson, and I am a graduate student in the physics department at The Ohio State University. I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 1 and its companion bill, HB 6.

This bill threatens the quality of education at OSU. By allowing controversial beliefs and policies to blur the line between fact and opinion, it undermines intellectual integrity and academic excellence. Encouraging the distortion of truth under the guise of "intellectual diversity" does not promote learning—it promotes misinformation. This is not only a disservice to students but a dangerous precedent that puts lives at risk and jeopardizes graduates' opportunities for further education and professional advancement across the country and the world.

Additionally, this bill seeks to weaken collective bargaining rights. Collective bargaining is essential because it empowers workers to negotiate fair wages, benefits, and working conditions. When employees bargain collectively rather than individually, they have greater leverage to ensure fair treatment and prevent exploitation. This process fosters a balanced power dynamic between employers and employees, leading to better job security, workplace safety, and overall economic stability. Weakening these protections would harm educators, students, and the broader academic community.

Furthermore, eliminating Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives does not create a fairer educational environment—it does the exact opposite. DEI efforts are crucial because they foster innovation, enhance decision-making, and create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for all students. By bringing together individuals with diverse perspectives and experiences, DEI strengthens problem-solving and helps address systemic inequalities—the same inequalities that this bill falsely claims to resolve through "intellectual diversity."

I urge you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this harmful, regressive, and discriminatory bill. Protecting the integrity of Ohio's higher education system is not just a political issue; it is a moral obligation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Cristopher Thompson

Graduate Student, Physics Department

The Ohio State University