

Chairman, members of the committee, my name is Madeleine Blaydes, and I am an out of state student at an Ohio university. I am deeply concerned about Senate Bill 1 and its impact on my education and future career.

I am testifying against Senate Bill 1 because I am seriously considering leaving Ohio after I graduate, and I know many of my classmates feel the same. If Ohio continues down this path, I don't see a future for myself here.

This bill limits the ability of faculty to foster open discussions in the classroom by imposing vague restrictions on teaching controversial topics. As a student, I want to be challenged. I want to engage with difficult subjects and hear diverse perspectives. This bill also removes DEI initiatives, which have been instrumental in supporting students from different backgrounds, ensuring that we all have an equal opportunity to succeed. Without these programs, Ohio risks alienating students from underrepresented communities, discouraging them from attending our state's institutions. I fear that this bill will diminish the value of my degree, making Ohio universities less competitive nationally. I urge you to reject this bill and prioritize policies that enhance—not restrict—our education.