

Chairman, Members of the Committee,

My name is Sanaa May; and I am an African American female student at the University of Cincinnati, currently double majoring in Philosophy and Law and Society, with the intention of completing my Master's degree simultaneously through the 4+1 Program. I am writing to introduce myself and to express my concerns as someone facing a high-risk pregnancy with twins, while navigating the challenges of maintaining academic success, a part-time job, internships, and housing for myself and my children.

I come from a low-income background, and despite the challenges, I managed to graduate in the top 5% of my high school class. I was fortunate to receive the Marian Spencer Scholarship, a DEI scholarship created in honor of Marian Spencer, the first Black female mayor of Cincinnati. Her legacy of resilience in the face of racial inequality has profoundly impacted me, and I have strived to use the funds from this scholarship to save for my children's necessities while also sustaining my academic pursuits. This scholarship has been a lifeline, enabling me to continue pursuing my dreams of becoming a Political and Civil Rights Attorney.

As I prepare to welcome my children into the world, I am doing everything I can to ensure a better future for them—just as I am working to make a difference in this country through my academic and professional goals. However, I find myself in a position of uncertainty as I navigate these challenges and prepare to take on the role of a mother. This is why I am seeking out any financial and government resources available to maintain my academic standing and secure the well-being of my family.

I am deeply concerned about Senate Bill 1, which, if passed, I believe would disregard the experiences of individuals like myself, who face unique and often difficult circumstances. I am doing everything in my power to better my life, and the lives of others, but I know not everyone has the same opportunities—especially when financial barriers often stand in the way of access to education, health care, and basic necessities. While I continue my education and work to make a difference in the community, Senate Bill 1 would undermine the very foundation of progress that many of us are striving to achieve.

When you vote on a bill, don't just think about your own life. Think about your neighbor, think about the woman who may just be trying to make a difference for her and her children. We need to consider the diverse experiences of those who, like myself, work tirelessly to overcome adversity in order to build a better life, not just for ourselves, but for the communities we serve.

I urge you to carefully consider the broader implications of this bill, and to make decisions that support the growth and well-being of all Ohioans, regardless of their financial background or life circumstances. Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Sanaa May

University of Cincinnati, Class of '27

