

February 10, 2025

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

Thank you for accepting my writing testimony. My name is Kathleen Payne, and I am a special education teacher from northeast Ohio. I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB6.

I received my bachelors degree from a public university in Ohio. So much of who I am as a person and citizen can be attributed to my college experiences. I grew up in a small town and attended a relatively small high school. Attending college exposed me to so many different people, personalities, backgrounds, ideas, and experiences that have made me a more thoughtful and intelligent adult. I believe that the above referenced legislation would significantly hamper our young people's abilities to access similar experiences, to the detriment of our state and country.

I am baffled by a desire to limit diversity of background, ideas, and experience in any environment. Our young people are smarter than you are giving them credit for. They are more than capable of taking in all of the information around them and making informed decisions about their own opinions, values, and actions. In a world that is becoming increasingly more "global," why would we choose to shrink the perspective of these young citizens? I suppose one could argue that this bill seeks to "protect" our young people, but it's a slippery slope. What qualifies something as harmful/dangerous, and who gets to decide?

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this harmful bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify,  
Kathleen Payne