

Opponent Testimony of Nica Delgado

Senate Bill 1

Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee

February 11, 2025

Good afternoon. Thank you Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Higher Education Committee for allowing me to testify against Senate Bill 1 today. My name is Nica Delgado, and rest assured, I am not getting extra credit to testify today.

I am a Cultural Anthropology major at Kent State University. I am the oldest of four children, with a brother currently in high school, and two siblings with disabilities. My mother has been an English Professor for 12 years, and my family served in the United States Air Force for three generations prior to myself. As a Catholic, I believe God's plan for me is one of service, and opposing Senate Bill 1 is to my interpretation the greatest act of service I can do for my family, friends, and peers today.

When I tell people that I study anthropology, I usually follow it up by saying it's the study of culture. But my education has been more than that—I have been lucky to study the Homo sapiens sapiens from birth to death, and our evolutionary path. I've been fortunate to learn from professors who are deeply invested in not only their students, but the pursuit of knowledge. If SB1 passes, these professors will be unable to offer a curriculum that challenges their students, since they would be required to be neutral on "controversial concepts." This includes climate policies, electoral politics, foreign policy, immigration policy, marriage, and abortion— all of which I have researched as an anthropology student. Proponents of this bill say it will encourage

critical thinking, but I am doubtful considering my professors will be unable to teach the true history of racism, eugenics, phrenology– these are not topics that can be taught neutrally, considering their association with Nazi ideology.

Senator Cirino, In 2023, I feared for my future when SB83 was introduced. I even considered transferring to Michigan State University, as I wouldn't be able to afford staying in Ohio due to lack of funding. Thanks to over 500 students, professors, and community members who testified against SB83 for six hours and the work of the Ohio Student Association, I stayed. I'm now applying to Kent State's Masters in Library and Information Sciences program, but Senator Cirino, I want to make you aware that I am not the only student who will leave Ohio if this bill passes. My brother, who will be 15 years old this Saturday, wants to go to college for music theory and composition, and he would also not be able to afford to stay in Ohio if this bill passes.

When I told my family I was testifying today, they were overwhelmingly proud. I was incredibly fortunate to grow up around so many people who valued education My grandfather had been coming to work in the fields of Ohio since the 1960s, but my grandparents settled in 1972. When he was laid off during the Reagan administration, my Grandfather was able to get his second degree in electromechanical engineering, paid for by General Motors as part of one of their diversity programs. My uncles went to Ohio university on minority scholarships, and they wouldn't been able to go to college without them. My family had lost everything and had 3 kids in college at the time. One of them had to join the marines because their scholarship did not cover all of their tuition. What a shame it would be to have to move so far away from my family to carry on their legacy of excellence.

Senators, many have spoken before me, and many will speak after, but I ask you to take my testimony to heart and vote NO on this bill before it harms the education of Ohioans like my family. Thank you again for the opportunity to speak today. I am happy to take any questions you may have.