

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

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Emily Johnson. I am a graduate student in the Speech Language Pathology program. I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

SB 1 is a dangerous and harmful bill to the development of future clinicians and to the funding of culturally diverse cohorts. Graduate school is extremely expensive and for many students, without receiving a scholarship, they would be required to take out more loans and accrue more debt. With students coming from a variety of backgrounds, removing these scholarships limits the opportunities for individuals in various circumstances to pursue higher education. Additionally, by removing DEI principles, the risk of significant mental, emotional, and social harm increases as there are fewer protective factors in place. Additionally, the clause prohibiting financial and other types of interactions with China creates an environment that continues to perpetuate anti-Chinese sentiment, causing harm to the students and faculty of Chinese descent and limits potential research opportunities. As a future speech language pathologist, my job will be to advocate for those that are not heard and to help amplify their voices. SB1 seeks to remove advocacy and continue to ignore and silence marginalized populations.

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

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.