

Opponent Testimony for Senate Bill 1
Submitted by: Jona Hilario PhD
Testifying as Opponent

Chair Roegner, Vice-Chair Cirino, Ranking Member Ingram and Members of the Higher Education Committee

My name is Jona Hilario, I am a resident of Columbus, Ohio and an alumni of The Ohio State University.

I am asking this committee to vote NO on SB 1.

I have grave concerns about the implications of SB 1 on the academic integrity and reputation of Ohio State and of all Ohio colleges and universities. This bill purports to promote academic freedom but in reality is muzzling it. The proposed limits on so-called “Controversial beliefs and policies” is especially egregious and will not help students learn to think critically about important issues and scientifically proven knowledge that impact their lives. What it will do is create a chilling climate of fear in classrooms for professors who are the real experts in these topics and for students who just want to learn.

I also take issue with the singling out of collaboration with Chinese institutions as suspect versus other countries. This just feeds into existing anti-China narratives that lead to harassment and hate crimes against people of Asian descent in Ohio. This would also negatively impact important scientific collaboration and data sharing that is needed when responding to threats like a global pandemic which has demonstrated how incredibly interconnected and interdependent our world really is.

I respectfully urge the Senate Higher Education Committee to consider my testimony and to vote NO on SB1. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to testify against this legislation.