

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 Wheaton Wood, MD, JD. I am retired from practicing medicine and law, and teaching at Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine in Athens, Ohio. I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

Section 8 of the bill bans "DEI." Diversity is the very basis of this country and what the Statue of Liberty stands for. Equity means all people will have equal rights as mentioned in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Inclusion means people will be included to exercise these rights with others who have similar or different opinions.

Ohio is a net exporter of university graduates and post university graduates. SB 1 will make Ohio universities risible to other states. Why would students bother to come here when they can go elsewhere? If out of state students regard Ohio education as risible, they will go elsewhere, costing us money.

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

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.