

February 10, 2025

Dear 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 Tina Stear. I am a graduate of the University of Cincinnati College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning, and a mother of an 8- and 6-year-old. I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

I have numerous objections, but at the heart there is the irreversible harm it will bring to our students. Diversity, equity, and inclusion expand our minds and our hearts. By omitting this teaching and training for our schools, you will be re-instilling close-mindedness, deepening the cultural divide, and setting our children back in an enlightened world that will leave them behind. I've dreamt of my children attending my alma mater, hoping that they would receive the same world class, stellar education as my husband and me. But with these limitations I have serious doubts that they would leave school with an education that has equipped them to be healthy contributors to our global society. Please tell me what it is about "a set of values and practices that aim to promote fairness and equal access for all people," that this state's Higher Education Committee finds objectionable. The "controversial" subjects defined by these bills as issues of "climate, diversity, inclusion, immigration, marriage, and abortion," seem to be heavily informed by individually held religious beliefs. As a nation founded on the separation of church and state, I cannot believe that in 2025 we are debating the place of others' religious beliefs in developing the secular education standards of the state.

In addition to the toll this will take on our students, the harm from this bill on workers' rights goes against what generations fought for. We should be doing everything we can to support our educators, those so deeply invested in the betterment of our children. Tell me what good comes from removing job protections and collective bargaining? What do we gain by driving invested, quality educators out of our state?

These bills will destroy higher education in the state of Ohio, and we will pay the price for generations. I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on SB1 and HB6.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Tina Stear

Cincinnati, OH