

Good Afternoon Senator Roegner, Chair and Senators of the Ohio Senate's Higher Education Committee

I stand in opposition to SB #1

My name is Mark D. Stansbery, a member of the Old First Presbyterian Church, 1101 Bryden Road, Columbus, Ohio 43205.

In 1803, the congregation came to the confluence of Scioto and Olentangy Rivers through the leadership of Lucas Sullivant and James Hogue. With their subsequent leadership the congregation established the first public school and hospital in Franklin County.

Here today we are at a confluence, where the legislature seeks to guide the institutions of higher education into the future. However, the proponent testimonies spoke of a higher education of the past, and like museum pieces, came to testify to their concerns. The only testimony that has relevance to this current legislation would be Rep. Williams', where he spoke eloquently of the pain he experienced personally and professionally. The pain should resonate throughout these halls. His testimony recalled the historic racism that he experienced along his path to join this General Assembly.

This legislation at best is a C- paper; a plagiarized compilation of national legislative intent, hopped together in a non-coherent manner. That reality was brought painfully to

fore when one of the proponents thought they were speaking to the US Congress. That thinking is running on an empty tank.

The legislative intent of SB 1 does not advance higher education for the future workforce and society that State taxpayers need and expect. Cowering in the intellectual closets, afraid of the world that is and will be, does a great disservice to the current and future students.

Chair, Senator Cirino, the sponsor, spoke of a contract between the student and the institution. If the student has a grievance, where should that student address that concern. The relationship between the instructor and the student must be guarded from outside interference, and this legislation proposes such outside interference.

SB 1 scraps the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion programs, as if they caused the history that Rep. Williams spoke. If a DEI tool is not working, perhaps it must go, but the base foundation is that Ohio's laws promote equal opportunity in employment, housing, and education. So before getting rid of tools, the legislature must advance other methods to address this historic pain recalled by Rep. Williams.

SB 1 attacks the basic right of public sector employees to address concerns they may have in regards to health, safety, and working conditions that exist at these public institutions. Collective Bargaining Rights are enshrined in the Ohio

constitution. This legislation has no right to infringe on those hard won rights, and as 2011's Issue 2 proved don't tread on those lightly.

SB 1 attempts to limit higher education freedom under the ruse of diversity, while at the same time eliminating diversity enhancing tools; a tenured position is at the base of that freedom. Chair, I encourage this committee to put an end to this legislation, and seek real advancement of higher education through dialogue and discernment. If higher education is not an institution where these concerns can be addressed, no place in society will be where these historic wrongs can be corrected. As presently constructed, is the Ohio General Assembly a place for intellectual diversity, these hearings demonstrate why I ask that sad question.

Chair Roegner, again I oppose SB 1 and any type of legislation that seeks to eliminate diversity from higher education, curtails worker rights, and advances a national agenda that seeks the return of the days that Rep. Williams spoke. SB 1 would demand current and future students, faculty, or administrators, and the people of Ohio to walk in such a shadow.

The 136th Ohio General Assembly can do better, and must.
Peace, Mark D. Stansbery