

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 Riley. I am a current senior student at Kent State University, and I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

Ever since I was young, I understood the importance of community, and it was all I ever desired. I struggled finding it throughout my youth until I got to college. I've always been passionate about women's rights, equity, and social justice- all ideas that help us reach an inclusive and supportive society. College allowed me to explore my passions for these topics, find that community I was always struggling to find, and create good, meaningful change in areas that needed it. However, S.B.1 wishes to strip those to come of this beautiful experience.

Without the services, professors, resources, and classes that support diversity, equity, and inclusion, I would have never been able to find my community. For the privileged, this is not an idea that they need to think about. The world is designed for them, but for those of us who need to scrape and claw our way through life, struggling to find support, these programs are life changing. Because of my passions, I wish to enter the career field of advocacy and nonprofit work. I would never have gained this understanding and direction for my future if it weren't for people like the staff at the Women's Center, my professors for my Women's Studies courses, those who work in the sector of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and more.

I have younger siblings, and I worry about their quality of education they'll be receiving in the future. I would have been lost without diversity, equity, and inclusion programs, and no one deserves to have basic human rights stripped away from them. This bill is a direct attack on our human rights, first amendment rights, and our education rights. I urge you to reconsider this bill, and think about the very real, life changing effects it will have on future generations.

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

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.