

WRITTEN-ONLY OPPONENT TESTIMONY FOR SB1
Senate Higher Education Committee Hearing on February 11, 2025
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Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking Member Ingram, and Members of the Senate Higher Education Committee,

My name is Ashley Jamison, and I am a licensed independent social worker in Ohio. I am a member of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and serve on the NASW Ohio Social Work Criminalization Task Force. I am submitting this written-only testimony in strong opposition to Senate Bill 1.

SB1 poses a direct threat to the integrity of social work education in Ohio by restricting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives that are essential to preparing competent and ethical professionals. Social workers serve diverse communities, addressing mental health challenges, systemic inequities, and social barriers. Limiting education on these critical topics hinders our ability to provide quality care and advocate for the most vulnerable.

Additionally, SB1 puts Ohio's social work programs at risk of losing accreditation from the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), which requires programs to incorporate DEI principles. Without accreditation, social work graduates will face significant barriers to licensure, exacerbating workforce shortages and reducing access to vital services for Ohioans in need.

DEI is not about division it is about ensuring that all individuals receive fair, equitable, and culturally responsive care. If Ohio fails to adequately train future social workers, we risk widening disparities in mental health, social services, and community support.

I urge the committee to reject SB1 and instead support policies that protect accredited, high-quality social work education, uphold DEI initiatives, and ensure Ohio's future professionals can meet the needs of our communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Ashley Jamison, MSW, LISW, LICDC