

Testimony of Stephanie Sanbe Kasuboski, M.A., Ed. D.
Before the Senate Higher Education Committee
Senator Kristina Roegner, Chair
February 7, 2025

Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking Member Ingram, and Members of the Higher Education Committee:

My name is Stephanie Sanbe Kasuboski and I am a professor of English as a Second Language at Cuyahoga Community College, where I have taught for 23 years. I do not represent Cuyahoga Community College but rather am submitting testimony as a private citizen in opposition to Senate Bill 1.

I became an English as a Second Language instructor because I wanted to improve the lives of those who had recently arrived in our country. I am dedicated to the mission of community colleges, and I recently earned a Doctorate in Community College Leadership, because I want to continue to improve the lives of community college students and the communities we serve.

Senate Bill 1 affects the lives and futures of my students. The vague language surrounding many of the restrictions listed in the bill greatly affects not only how, but what, I can discuss. The curiosity of students frequently drives classroom discussions, yet this bill restricts what can be asked or discussed by the students, for whom this bill is supposed to protect. Students will be unable to share their opinions, their cultural diversity, and their fears and concerns. By avoiding many of these topics, we would be teaching our students to live in fear and oppression. Ironically, many of my students came to this country to escape these very things.

My colleagues at Cuyahoga Community College are some of the best faculty I have encountered in my teaching career that has spanned multiple states and institutions. Cuyahoga Community College attracts premier faculty because it offers a positive work environment that includes the guarantee of employment and benefits. The passage of this bill puts this in jeopardy.

I am honored to see the successes of my students as they continue their studies to pursue a new career, or use their newly acquired English skills to continue the career that they began in their country. I have seen the pride in their faces, and the faces of their families (including their children) and friends, when they have achieved their goals. The passage of this bill affects the chances of me being able to continue doing what I love, but more importantly I would be unable to help students improve their lives and the lives of their families.

I respectfully ask that SB 1 not be passed.