

Opponent Testimony for Senate Bill 1
Higher Education Committee
February 7, 2025

Elizabeth Slife

Chair Kristina Roegner, Vice Chair Jerry Cirino, Ranking Member Catherine Ingram, and members of the Higher Education Committee.

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Elizabeth Slife. I am an HR Manager for a global corporation located in Cleveland, OH. I am writing to oppose SB1 in its entirety.

I have a bachelor's degree in political science and anthropology and a master's degree in human resources management, both earned from Ohio State University. I attended Ohio State University because of its strong reputation for delivering a high-quality education in the areas I studied, and because of the affordability an in-state university offers. The quality of education I received was directly tied to the ability of students and faculty to debate controversial topics in political science, anthropology, human resources management, and all other topics studied over the course of my six years at Ohio State. The faculty I studied with were also renown in their fields for their research and teaching.

The company I work for has strong ties to Ohio State University, and many other Big 10 and large universities throughout the country due to the strong caliber of students from a variety of fields who graduate from the school. Every year, the university relations team in the company assesses the quality of hires from the target recruitment skills and decides which schools to continue partnering with. My company is global, with many locations – office, manufacturing, research labs, located throughout the US. Employees need to have both technical skills (engineering, finance, etc.) but also strong interpersonal skills working with a variety of people, from shop floor employees to engineers in India and Europe, to senior executives. The quality of higher education does not lie only in the technical skills gained, but in the ability to learn and debate differing viewpoints to connect with a variety of people and understand their experiences. When universities do not provide the caliber of graduate needed to be successful, my company ends the relationship with that university and focuses on others that do. If Ohio enacts this law and does not allow students to be corrected when they are wrong, and learn from others, the caliber of graduate will decline. My company and others like it will have many options to recruit from schools outside of the state.

I am testifying in opposition to SB1 for reasons both personal and professional. I value the quality of my degree and its reputation and worry about how this would change in the future if this bill were to be enacted. I also worry for that future Ohio students won't have the same quality access to public higher education that I did. This in turn will lead to companies looking elsewhere for the talent. I ask that you please consider my testimony and vote no to SB1.

Thank you. I am happy to answer any questions.

Elizabeth Slife