

Testimony of Farida P. Sidiq, Ph.D
Before the Senate Higher Education Committee
Senator Kristina Roegner, Chair
Feb 7, 2025

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

I am an instructor at Owens Community College, where I have taught since 2013. I do not represent Owens Community College but rather am submitting testimony as a private citizen in opposition to Senate Bill 1.

I am writing as a dedicated professor of microbiology who has spent years cultivating a passion for science in my students. My career is devoted to ensuring that the next generation of Ohioans is equipped with the knowledge and critical thinking skills necessary to navigate an increasingly complex world. I am deeply concerned about the proposed SB 1 legislation and the detrimental impact it will have on education, academic freedom, and the success of our students.

SB 1 threatens to undermine the very foundation of quality education by centralizing power away from those who best understand the needs of students and educators. Science education, in particular, relies on the ability to teach based on empirical evidence, peer-reviewed research, and an evolving understanding of the world around us. If enacted, SB 1 would jeopardize our ability to maintain rigorous academic standards, restrict our capacity to innovate in the classroom, and discourage talented educators from remaining in Ohio.

My students are not just names in a grade book; they are future scientists, healthcare professionals, and leaders who will drive Ohio's economy and scientific advancements forward. By diminishing the voices of educators and academic professionals, SB 1 creates unnecessary barriers to their success and threatens to erode Ohio's reputation for excellence in education. The potential consequences of this bill—decreased educational quality, increased teacher turnover, and a weakening of public trust in our institutions—are far too great to ignore.

As an educator, I urge you to stand against SB 1 and prioritize policies that support academic integrity, student success, and the professional expertise of Ohio's educators.