

Laura Wiegand  
Shaker Heights, OH

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Dear 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 Laura Wiegand. My husband and I both grew up in Northeast Ohio and we are raising our two children in Shaker Heights. We are strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

Higher education is meant to train young adults to be independent, analytical thinkers. The extreme and discriminatory requirements this bill means to put on Ohio's universities robs students of the opportunity to develop their own thoughts and opinions through the synthesis of differing viewpoints offered by faculty and peers with varied backgrounds and life experiences. You can bet that every student with the means to escape such restrictive environments will quickly take their tuition dollars out of state. Ohio will suffer significant brain drain as these students leave to get educated and go on to put down roots in other states.

Furthermore, the faculty of our institutions will flee right along with them, taking their expertise to places where it is valued and respected. Ohio will be left with second rate educators to teach a rapidly evaporating student body. What knowledge-based business would choose to locate in a state with no pipeline of qualified employees? How long will our hospitals continue to be the best in the country if the best doctors and nurses don't want to work here, and don't want their children to be educated here?

I respectfully ask you to consider what the end game is with such a needlessly prescriptive bill. Trust Ohio's students to develop their own minds. Trust Ohio's educators to provide solid facts and multiple viewpoints to consider within their fields of expertise. Demonstrate moral leadership by supporting access to higher education for ALL Ohioans.

Thank you for reading my testimony and for considering a NO vote on SB1.

Sincerely,



Laura Wiegand