

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

Thank you for reading my testimony today. My name is Dr. Kate Page and I am a higher education professional with over a decade of experience working with college students in Ohio. I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

For the majority of my professional career, I have lived and worked with college students residing in the residence halls on college campuses and I have seen first hand the ways in which students who are from very different backgrounds interact with each other. Students who are from the Appalachian part of Ohio and students from inner-city Cincinnati living together and working along-side each other to earn their degrees. While these roommates often begin the year feeling apprehensive of each other, they quickly learn about each other and are able to form their own unique bonds while challenging their learned biases about each other. They have the tools they need to learn about each other and work through their perceived differences because of the events hosted on campus and training provided by the university to see their peers as human beings. These events and trainings are Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion education.

In reading through the tenets of SB1 and companion bill HB6, a drive toward diversity of thought is a clear; however, without education focused on questing stereotypes and biases, there cannot be civil discourse and there will be no diversity of thought. The bills are focused on the interactions of students in classrooms, but higher education is much more than classroom interactions. Students interact in the dining halls, the library, on the quad between classes, and in the residential facilities on campuses. It is during these times that providing students the necessary tools to engage civility with each other is most crucial. Without arming students with the means to have civil discourse, college campuses become dangerous for students to engage in any discourse.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this harmful bill.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Kate Page, PhD