

Testimony of Lemuel E. Stewart III Psy.D.
Before the Senate Higher Education Committee
Senator Kristina Roegner, Chair
February 11th, 2025

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

My name is Dr. Lemuel E. Stewart III, and I am a professor at an Ohio Community College. I have been with my institution for almost 14 years. I do not represent any institution but rather am submitting testimony as a private citizen in opposition to Senate Bill 1.

This bill places arbitrary restrictions on faculty hiring, limits tenure protections, and forces a distorted definition of intellectual diversity that could limit evidence-based teaching. This will eliminate academic freedom and micromanage the curriculum. The bill also erodes the public bargaining of faculty unions at institutions and threatens institutional funding based on vague ideological metrics. This bill could destroy shared governance and will not promote excellence in education. I believe that the bill will make Ohio less attractive to potential candidates at our institutions and will result in a minimized curriculum and less educated students lacking the skills needed for the workforce.

As a parent of three daughters, this bill concerns me greatly. My two older children were both educated at Ohio institutions and received an excellent education. In fact, they are both now pursuing graduate programs in their fields at Ohio schools. My fear is that if SB -1 is enacted, we will be compelled to explore out-of-state colleges for our youngest daughter to ensure she receives a quality education, and skills needed to be a productive citizen.

I urge you to oppose this bill in the interest of our students, our institutions, the future of Ohio's workforce and my daughter.

Thank you for your time