

**Testimony of Christabel A. Devadoss of 3907 Ellendale Rd. Moreland Hills, OH 44022**

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 Dr. Christabel Devadoss. As a faculty in higher education and as a graduate of Ohio's community colleges and universities, I strongly oppose SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

I'll never forget my first semester at Lakeland Community College as a high school junior. The quality of the classes, faculty, and college changed my life. I grew up in rural Ashtabula County and had never considered pursuing a PhD or a career in higher education because I thought I was not good enough or smart enough. Lakeland's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging allowed me to imagine that someone like me, a rural high school student whose parents had never completed 4-year degrees and whose father was from India, could find a place and community where I was welcomed. I was able to build a successful career and become a faculty member in higher education today precisely because of faculty at Lakeland Community College and Kent State University, who introduced me to critical thinking skills and inspired me to follow a career path that I never thought was possible.

These bills will not only negatively impact future students, but they will also harm the faculty, such as those that helped me on my road. This bill also targets scholarship programs for military veterans, those with physical disabilities, human trafficking survivors, and other such groups who make up a significant portion of Ohio students. More importantly, students deserve faculty who can focus on them. Not allowing faculty to strike does not help students - it harms them. It allows the administration to push for more part-time faculty who are overworked, underpaid, and cannot provide comprehensive classroom experiences that properly-paid faculty can provide. Faculty unions support stronger education experiences for students.

I must also point out that Mr. Jerry Cirino has a personal interest in gutting Ohio's faculty unions. This is a serious conflict of interest. He served as chairman of the board of trustees of Lakeland Community College. He has long wanted to destroy and gut unions in Northeast Ohio, even though that is not popular with Ohio citizens. When SB-5, which targeted collective bargaining, was passed in 2011, there was a referendum, and voters overwhelmingly rejected it. We don't need partisan politics destroying Ohio's higher education system. Ohio's education is one of the strongest aspects of this state and these bills will destroy it.

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

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.