

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 Sarah Belles. I am a concerned Ohio citizen whose undergraduate degree was from a college that taught us to think critically and analytically. We were encouraged to think independently as well, but our instructors would let us know when we were wrong in our conclusions. I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

The way you have defined “controversial beliefs or policies” makes no sense. My uncle and his family escaped the holocaust in 1930s Germany. They came to this country, became US citizens and as soon as my uncle was old enough he joined the US Army, and was part of the D-Day invasion in Europe. He fought for his new country to defeat fascism, and prevent the extermination of any more unfortunate souls. To believe otherwise is a grave disservice to his memory, and to allow any student to maintain a belief that the holocaust did not happen is criminal. Doing so prevents instructors from doing their jobs—educating students on facts. There are no such things as alternative facts, the holocaust did happen and millions of Jews, homosexuals, gypsies, and German citizens who had mental or physical handicaps were slaughtered. Making students pay tuition so they can leave Ohio’s institutions of education as ignorant of facts as when they entered is basically stealing.

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

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.