

**Cincinnati, 02/10/2025**

**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 Martina Palocci.

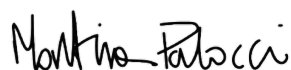
I am an educator, architect, and designer dedicated to fostering critical thinking and creative exploration in higher education. I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

I believe it is crucial to shape the consciousness of our students in a free way. Without freedom, there is no debate; without debate, there is no freedom of expression. Higher education should be a space where students can question, challenge ideas, and develop their own perspectives—not one where fear and censorship dictate the boundaries of learning. This bill imposes severe restrictions on teaching, suppresses diversity, and undermines the very principles that define academic inquiry.

The proposed constraints on tenure and diversity policies would weaken the ability of faculty to challenge students intellectually and prepare them for the complexities of the world. Diversity is not an abstract concept—it reflects the reality of our society and strengthens our educational environments. Suppressing it will not only make Ohio's institutions less competitive but will also send a clear message that critical engagement with different perspectives is unwelcome.

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

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Martina Palocci