

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 Megan Denman, she/her. I am a piano instructor in the Westpark neighborhood of Cleveland. I have 7 nieces and nephews whom I love deeply.

I am here to oppose Senate Bill 1 because I am deeply concerned it will present massive obstacles for the children in my life I care about to receive an honest and productive education if they attend college in Ohio.

I want my young students and niblings to be able to have an informed education when they attend college, not an overly-policed curriculum that denies the full events of our country's history. I want them to be able to get a comprehensive education in order to insure a secure job in the future, not from teachers who no longer have secure employment because of the dismantling of tenure proposed in this bill. I want students to feel safe in the college environment, rather than fearing for their lives and well-being if they happen to hold one of the marginalized identities that this legislation insists on diminishing and giving equal treatment with those who are not affected by such an identity. It is heartbreaking that students should have to pretend the history of discrimination doesn't exist within the classroom. It is an outright evil attempt to rewrite history.

The unnecessary policing and reduction of courses that teach important history for marginalized populations in the world such as teaching the Holocaust is terrifying and will enable the repeating of such history. The proposed whitewashing of US history and insistence on not teaching the full truth of our country's racism fosters hatred and continued damage.

The proposed limits to DEI and college groups that seek to mitigate the damage caused by discrimination by those with power privilege will do immeasurable harm to future generations of Americans trying to live their best, authentic lives within unjust systems.

This bill is a militaristic denial of the diverse past of our country, a denial of brave persons such as MLK Jr who have stepped in harm's way for the betterment of future generations. To topple this all in a hastily-made and pushed-through bill would be an absolute tragedy for Ohioans.

I ask that you please consider my testimony and vote no on Senate Bill 1, for future generations who deserve a chance to thrive.