

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony. My name is Dr. Julie Heck. I was raised and went to college in northeast Ohio, and I currently live in Columbus. As an educator, a mother and a resident of Ohio, I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

Among various concerning aspects of SB 1, I will focus my comments on the elimination of all DEI programming. For those who support SB1, I have a few questions:

- Is it diversity you oppose? Research shows that more diversity leads to better educational outcomes, such as enhanced critical thinking and a more educated citizenry¹. Maybe you prefer Ohio grads who do not think critically.
- Is it equity you oppose? Equity in education is about achieving parity in student educational outcomes, regardless of race or ethnicity. That seems to be something our Ohio government values at the primary school level, since state report cards rate schools on “gap closing,” a measure of the reduction in educational gaps for student groups. Perhaps you want those gaps among our college and university students; maybe you think some students *deserve* more opportunity than others?
- Or perhaps inclusion is the problem? I personally, in my many years of teaching, have liked helping all of my students feel included in the classroom, but I suppose some of you might prefer to make some staff and students feel excluded.

I have a daughter in high school who is brilliant, creative, ambitious and hard-working – in short, the kind of student any school would want and that Ohio should be trying hard to retain for its future workforce. If SB 1 passes, I will be encouraging her and her friends to go out of state in order to receive the best education possible; to go somewhere that embraces diversity and strives for an inclusive atmosphere. They will leave Ohio, just as faculty will flee the Ohio higher ed institutions that you are trying to destroy if you support SB 1.

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

Thank you for your time and consideration.

¹Bowman, N. A. (2010). College diversity experiences and cognitive development: A meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research*, 80, 4-33.