

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 Migiwa Orimo. I am a resident of Yellow Springs, Ohio and a current co-leader of OPAWL Dayton caucus. We are a statewide grassroots community of Asian, Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) women and non-binary people in Ohio. Our organization is a multi-ethnic, multi-generational community and our 300 members represent the diverse diaspora from Asia and the Pacific Islands.

I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

This bill presents a dangerous precedent for education, free thought, and the well-being of marginalized communities, including Asian Americans. While it claims to promote intellectual diversity, its restrictions on teaching "controversial" topics, bans on DEI initiatives, and the vague language allowing students to challenge factual information create an environment of fear, misinformation, and suppression of critical learning.

As an Asian American woman, I recognize the importance of teaching honest history, including the Chinese Exclusion Act, Japanese American internment, and the role of Asian immigrants in shaping America. This bill's broad definition of "controversial beliefs" could prevent educators from correcting students who deny historical events or dismiss systemic discrimination. If faculty fear consequences for simply stating facts, it undermines their ability to provide a truthful education.

This bill does not protect intellectual freedom—it suppresses it. It does not foster diversity of thought—it silences necessary discussions. And it does not create equality—it erases the voices of those who have historically been excluded. As an Asian American woman, I oppose this bill because education should empower students with knowledge, not shield them from reality.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this discriminatory bill.
Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,
Migiwa Orimo
Dayton Caucus Co-Leader
OPAWL - Building AAPI Feminist Leadership