

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

Thank you for reading my testimony today. My name is Sebastian Meekins. I am a freshman at The Ohio State University. I am majoring in Nursing and minoring in Pharmaceutical Sciences. I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

For starters, the bill's definition of "controversial belief or policy" is any belief that is politically controversial. As a future healthcare professional, I believe in evidence-based medicine. I do not believe supporting evidence-based medicine is a matter of opinion, but rather a matter of fact. Within recent years, LGBT people have become the center of political discussions. It is undeniable that discussions of LGBT individuals can easily fit into this bill's definition of a "controversial belief". Evidence-based medicine has consistently proven that being LGBT is not a choice and that LGBT individuals have better mental health outcomes from being in supportive environments. These aren't opinions, they're facts. Those of us who believe in evidence-based medicine support the LGBT community. With this bill, university professors will be disallowed from stating facts without it being considered "political and social indoctrination". How can an educational institution achieve its goal of educating students if it's disallowed from teaching them facts? Facts being challenged politically by individuals who do not believe in evidence-based medicine does not make them any less correct. Demanding that educators refrain from stating facts simply because said facts don't support your own perspectives is the true indoctrination we should be fighting against, which is what this very bill does.

Please consider my testimony and vote "no" on this harmful legislation.