

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 Liam Dubay. I am an astrophysics PhD student at The Ohio State University, and I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

I am proud to be a student at Ohio State. Our astronomy department is one of the best in the country: our faculty lead cutting-edge research programs, and our students routinely win prestigious fellowships. I was accepted at multiple PhD programs across the country, and I chose to come to Ohio State because of the unparalleled research opportunities available here. I have become part of a supportive, inquisitive community that excels at preparing its students for the next stage in their careers, whether in academia or the private sector. I am terrified that SB 1 will destroy this community.

My academic community is diverse, including people of many different beliefs and from many different backgrounds. This diversity is at the root of our success. Without our continuing efforts to make this community inclusive, equitable, and accessible, many of the scientists whose research is lauded by the University would not be here. By banning DEI offices, trainings, and scholarships, SB 1 will make it impossible for us to understand the very real barriers to education that exist for people from disadvantaged backgrounds – barriers that must come down for this great institution to succeed.

SB 1 is an unmitigated attack on academic freedom in this great state. Ohio is a leader in research, technology, and industry precisely *because* of this academic freedom. A crucial part of education is the opportunity to examine our biases and re-evaluate our opinions in the face of new information. SB 1 claims to support “intellectual diversity,” but it will actually do the opposite by stifling discussion on topics the state deems to be “controversial.” If SB 1 passes, our most prestigious institutions will become educational backwaters, accessible only to the elites, and only capable of regurgitating the ideological mandates of the party in power.

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

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.