

Testimony of Sydnee Wade
February 9, 2025

Chair Brenner, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Ingram, and Members of the Senate Education Committee.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify on behalf of myself as a private citizen. My name is Sydnee Wade, and I am a student at Kent State University, majoring in Psychology with a concentration in Child Psychology. I am testifying to express my strong opposition to Senate Bill 1.

I come from a history of educators, with my mother currently serving as a teacher and my grandmother serving as a teacher for 36 years. Every part of my educational journey and development is fundamentally rooted in the work of educators and the educational capabilities of the state of Ohio. The people who inspired me—who poured into me—were first poured into by the educators that came before them, and they worked hard and tirelessly to provide the education that I received.

Being a Kent State student, I am always walking in the footsteps of those who came before me. Kent State, whose contributions to minority causes run deep. Kent State, whose dedications to protest are a part of school history. A tragedy we have yet to learn from. Kent State, whose dedication led to the first observance of Black History Month. Is this not considered “DEI”? Is this not considered a “subject of political controversy?” How dare we forget our roots by insisting on the erasure of history? Am I not able to discuss the history of the institution that I am proud to be a part of? Institutions of higher education have always been a place where change is made, where the future is born.

My degree would be directly impacted by this. As a psychology student, how can we learn how to treat people if certain demographics of people are cut out of our curriculum entirely? Psychology is a very popular major in the state of Ohio. What a great loss to have inherently uninformed practitioners. Would you trust someone uninformed to provide you with help? Then, I ask, how can I have trust in people so gravely unaware of my experience and those of many others alongside me? How can we, as a collective, stand idly by as deeply nuanced topics that our forefathers did backbreaking work to have taught in schools be defined as simply “controversial beliefs” to be subjected to mandated suppression and condemned to be forgotten?

I implore you to stand true to the values you claim to support and vote NO on this harmful bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.