

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

I am testifying in opposition to SB1 / HB6. This is a more dangerous resubmission of SB83 which was wildly unpopular and soundly defeated in a bipartisan manner last year.

From a fiscal standpoint, it is redundant and irresponsible. Many of the “components” in these bills are already handled in house by higher educational institutions (posting of syllabi, faculty evaluations, and course outlines). In these bills, this would be mandated by the state and therefore cost taxpayers money as they would need funding to accomplish. With raising food, mortgage, rent, and transportation costs, I am sure tax paying citizens would ardently oppose this.

From an educators standpoint, one of the primary goals of higher education is to produce a well rounded, critical thinking, open minded individual who will have a broad view of life and society and make a positive impact on the world. These bills will stifle this by presenting a narrow outlook on life and society.

From a Health Career Educator’s standpoint, it will have a negative impact on patient care. The elimination of DEI will limit the input of new and possibly better ideas and viewpoints. Numerous studies have shown that women of color, women living in rural areas, lesbians, and women in general, receive substandard healthcare as their lives and opinions matter less. These bills will increase these disparities even more.

I teach in a very specialized Health Career (Electroneurodiagnostics Program). We are a small profession, however, our services are in very high demand. The Neurology laboratories in our area depend on the highly educated and trained graduates to work in their labs. Our Health Career could become a victim of entrenchment and be eliminated simply because of smaller numbers. This would have a devastating impact on quality patient care, and possibly cause burn-out in present staff at area hospitals. Additionally, the requirement for a 3 hour “civics” course may send the END curriculum over the maximum number of allowed credits for an Associates of Applied Sciences Degree. This would require the elimination of an existing course, which would be a discrepancy for the Program’s accreditation. Every course in our Program is critical. We are not the only Health Career Program that this course requirement would impact.

Finally, these requirements could cause highly trained multi-credentialed faculty members to seek employment in other states. In our Profession, there are a limited number of individuals that hold the multiple credentials required to teach in a Program such as ours. This would further negatively impact patient care.

For these and so many more reasons that I can present, I ask you respectfully to adamantly oppose SB1 and HB6.

Respectfully submitted:

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