

Opposition Testimony to Senate Bill 1 – Susan Messinger

Chairman, members of the committee, my name is Susan Messinger, and I am President of the North Eastern Ohio Education Association. I am in opposition to Senate Bill 1 because it represents an overreach and a step backward for higher education in the state of Ohio. By dictating how and what our professors teach, we risk undermining the ability to attract and retain not only students, but the best educators who are essential to their development. The proposed changes to tenure and faculty governance will have talented professors rethinking their choice of Ohio as home. It is crucial that faculty are treated with the respect they deserve as the professionals they are. Our students, in turn, deserve nothing less than an honest and comprehensive presentation of fact-based learning. This approach is vital for them to develop the critical thinking skills necessary to thrive in today's competitive workforce. Finally, let's not forget that this bill is a rehash of Senate Bill 83, which attacked academic freedom, and proposed numerous limitations on faculty and course content. It was resoundingly rejected by educators, students, business leaders, and community members. The message is clear, Ohioans want an educational landscape that fosters innovation, creativity, and a commitment to excellence, not burdensome restrictions on higher education. I strongly urge you to vote against Senate Bill 1.