

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

Thank you for allowing me to testify. My name is Thomas Martin. I am a life long republican and retired IT worker. I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

This bill introduces conditions that are not conducive to a healthy cooperative and productive system. While checks and introspection are valuable to any system the bill encourages what I would call witch hunts with respect to reporting on DEI behavior, and because of vagueness, personal bias, and rulings that would be highly subjective. This would lead to wasted time and a adversarial relationship which is highly undesirable.

I would also like to point out that the restrictions about including racism, inequality, white privilege and similar issues makes teaching history or even just including historical facts difficult if not impossible. We want to educate people. In higher learning this means exposure to subjects that can be uncomfortable and that students may aggressively disagree with. This is part of learning, to think deeply about topics and be able to critically analyze issues. In other words this gives students the tools they need to navigate life and become productive citizens.

in an attempt to shelter students from a broad spectrum of ideas and opinions you are not helping them, you are hurting them.

I'd like to leave you with a short story of mine,. While in college I took a course in public speaking. My speech was basically supporting the hand over of the Panama Canal to Panama. (Yes that dates me) My teacher gave me a D on that speech even though I thought I did much better. The thing is afterwards I questioned my opinions on my conclusions and dug a LOT deeper into the facts and the history. I discussed my research with my professor. I wanted to check to see if I had been wrong or not. I decided at the time that the issue was more complex than I originally thought. This was a pivotal moment for me from a political viewpoint. My point is that with this bill, the kind of discourse that I had between myself and my professor would likely be impossible. I strongly agree with Thomas Jefferson and his views on liberal education.

- "Whence it becomes expedient for promoting the public happiness that those person, whom nature hath endowed with genius and virtue, should be rendered by liberal education worthy to receive, and able to guard the sacred deposit of the rights and liberties of their fellow citizens".

Yes I had to look it up, but the basic idea is that one of the fundamental jobs of education is **not** to prepare one for a career but rather to prepare one for life and become a productive citizen capable of making good decisions.

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

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Tom Martin