

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 Meredith Benson. I received my bachelor degree from The Ohio State University and my graduate degree from Ohio University. I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

I chose to attend these universities in my home state because of their reputation as institutions providing a well rounded and varied curriculum; a space where ideas can be discussed organically and without fear of retribution. Where subject matter is viewed from different lenses and perspectives, where students and professors can learn from one another and their experiences in a safe environment. I believe that the restrictions outlined in this bill will generate a culture of fear that will hinder the free exchange of ideas and prohibit professors from addressing complex or controversial subject matter. Requiring rigid restrictions on syllabi would prevent the opportunity to exchange ideas on topical events. If this bill were in place when I was applying to school, I would have chosen to apply to schools in states without the restrictions outlined in these bills.

I am a cancer survivor who receives care from the University Wexner Medical Center. I trust that the doctors and staff at the James are given every opportunity to make advancements in cancer care and research for a cure. I fear this bill will impede the ability of the University to teach and cultivate research scientists that have the ability to conduct rigorous research. Specifically the ban on relationships with China; this would prohibit collaborative research and data sharing. Any hindrance to best practices or restrictions in access to relevant studies would prohibit OSU's ability to advance in cancer research and provide the best and most current cancer care and treatment; as I believe they currently do.

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

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.