

To the members of the committee,

My name is John Rasel, and I am a professor at an Ohio community college. Please know that you are reading the testimony of someone who considers themselves a moderate. I acknowledge that S.B. 1 contains a few sensible provisions. However, I strongly oppose this bill due to the overall harm it would cause to higher education if enacted.

This bill forces a distorted definition of intellectual diversity that could severely damage teaching and learning. I understand that S.B. 1 seeks to combat censorship, but are we, in the name of intellectual diversity, supposed to accept student essays written using junk science, conspiracy theories, and debunked articles? Part of our responsibility as educators is to teach our students to analyze sources for credibility. What happens when an essay on holocaust denial or another similarly disproven position needs grading, and the sources used to write it fly in the face of historical canon or established fact? The success of Ohio's higher education system depends on intellectual freedom, but the language of S.B. 1 grossly oversimplifies this issue, creating more problems than it solves.

Additionally, S.B.1 would rob faculty of the ability to advocate for themselves. The last thing we want to do is strike, but withholding labor has served as a key tool in advancing workers' rights in America for over a century. Depriving educators of this last-resort option is antithetical to our democratic past and denies us the ability to demand fair and balanced negotiations at critical times.

I urge you to oppose this bill in the interest of our students, our institutions, and the future of Ohio's workforce.

Respectfully,

John Rasel