

Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee
SB 1 Opponent Testimony
Emily Kichler, Ohio Constituent

February 10, 2025

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

Thank you for reading my testimony today. My name is Emily Kichler, and I am a constituent of Cuyahoga County, in which many higher education institutions reside. I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6 for the reasons that follow:

Rights of Educators

The bill, as it is written, does not protect professors who want to teach topics that may be deemed controversial. Making public the syllabus and contact information of professors for each course is dangerous and puts educators at risk for public scrutiny and harassment from members outside of the institution. The amount of information required of professors to be made public, in order to share their present and past areas of expertise, interest, and offerings, is irresponsible for this reason. An educator may want to make their information public and to take public comment about their teachings, but this is not for the discretion of the state.

The removal of fulltime faculty's right to strike is outright unconstitutional.

Accuracy of Information

The bill, SB 1, defines controversial belief or policy as "any belief or policy that is the subject of political controversy, including issues such as climate policies, electoral politics, foreign policy, diversity, equity, and inclusion programs, immigration policy, marriage, or abortion." The stated requirement for students to be able to come to their own conclusions around these topics without interference is dangerous. [Experts have testified](#) that this would make it nearly impossible to teach about historical events such as the Holocaust, because they could not correct students who don't believe it happened. [Medical students have stated](#) that this would place patients' lives in danger, because they would not learn to address differing health outcomes for different communities.

Concerning DEI Targeting

In several areas of the bill, the monitoring and limitations around DEI hiring, related teachings and teaching methods, and community gathering, are concerning. The main concern that comes to mind is equality versus equity. The bill seems to promote equality without taking equity into consideration, which is an important distinction on the road to real equality. The experiences of students and faculty of different races, genders, abilities, orientations, backgrounds, etc, inherently provide them with different experiences in life, which are well worth acknowledging and embracing in ways that provide equitable standing within a campus and society.

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

Thank you again for the opportunity to share my testimony.