

Opponent Testimony for SB1
Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee
Submitted by email on February 9, 2025 for the opponent hearing scheduled on February 11, 2025

Jeremiah Veiga

Thank you for the opportunity to offer written testimony against SB1. I am a resident of Cincinnati, Ohio, and hold a professional teaching license in the state of Ohio. I do not represent my employer; instead, I am submitting testimony as a private citizen. I write to you in total opposition of SB1. One of my primary concerns is the effect SB1 would have on the future college education of current K-12 students in our state.

I moved to Ohio in Fall 2022 and worked as a private school teacher in the Hamilton County teaching 3rd grade. After a year in that position, I obtained my Ohio teaching license and transitioned to a public school district in Hamilton County, where I had the privilege of teaching 7th grade students. Across both of my teaching positions, my wish for my students was for them to pursue a college education in the state of Ohio. One of the most rewarding experiences as a schoolteacher was to share in my students' enthusiasm and excitement of eventually graduating high school and going to college. For my middle school students specifically, many of them expressed going to a university in Ohio because of the strong reputation and diverse opportunities and training offered at the state's public universities.

The bans on DEI as outlined in SB1 would create a barrier for future college students by not allowing them to achieve the best education possible at Ohio public universities. For example, one of my students expressed an interest in becoming a lawyer in order to better serve marginalized populations with a history of unfair treatment in the legal system. For some of my other students, many of them expressed interests in pursuing careers in medicine with a goal of better serving communities who face documented health disparities. With the DEI bans put forth in SB1, I fear my students will not be able to pursue such education in the state of Ohio. Moreover, I fear that this may cause more young Ohioans to leave the state in order to obtain such educational opportunities elsewhere.

In conclusion, the proposed ban on DEI training in SB1 poses a significant threat to the quality of college education in Ohio. I urge you to oppose SB1 to ensure that our educational institutions can continue to prepare young minds to work with diverse peoples within our state.

Sincerely,

Jeremiah Veiga