

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 Mia Walsh. I am from Tallmadge, OH where I received a great public school education that prepared me for where I am today, a senior at Ohio University. It is because of the education I've received and the people I have met that I am strongly opposed to SB 1.

While a student, I've had the pleasure and honor of working the past four years for both OU's orientation programs and our Pride Center. During summer orientation, I get to greet every single incoming student and make sure they know they can call our campus home, regardless of where they are coming from. I get to connect them to resources like academic coaching, parking services, and centers like the women's center, multicultural center, and our pride center. There are students who ask for more info on our pride center, those are the most special relationships because I get to seem them come into the lounge during the school year. The Pride center is a physical sanctuary on campus as well as a resources/education center. Students of all backgrounds come to ask for trainings, stickers, or connections to local resources like healthcare and even barbers.

This Bill would eradicate the possibility of any other student making connections such as these. It would stifle diverse thoughts, not encourage it. Everyone deserves a place to call home and these centers provide resources to all students.

I ask you, as a lifelong Ohio resident who loves my state and wants to continue working in Higher Education, please consider my testimony and please vote NO on this heinous bill.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

I will now take any questions you may have.