

To: Chair

From: Jennifer Carr, resident of Beachwood, Ohio, 44122

Date: 2/10/2025

RE: Ohio SB 1

Chairman, members of the committee, my name is Jennifer Carr, and I have spent years advocating for equitable educational opportunities in Ohio. I stand firmly against Senate Bill 1 because it undermines the fundamental principles of academic freedom, inclusion, and critical thinking that are essential to prepare students for a globalized world economy and make Ohio a desirable place for business.

Senate Bill 1's attack on DEI threatens Ohio colleges and universities, and, by extension, Ohio's economy. A recent study by Lightcast, an independent consulting firm, confirmed that Ohio's public universities contributed nearly \$69 billion to the state's economy in 2022 (Hendrix, S., 2023), but this investment here in Ohio will stop if our institutions are hamstrung over policies that limit discussion of so-called "controversial" topics and threaten funding based on ideological standards. When we allow government to threaten independent institutions of higher learning, we threaten the free exchange of ideas and the fundamental values of our state that support a thriving economy. I implore this committee to listen to the voices of students, educators, and community members and to reject this dangerous piece of legislation.

Hendrix, S., The Columbus Dispatch, Here's how Ohio's public universities say they drove \$69 billion to the state's economy. May 23, 2023.
<https://www.dispatch.com/story/news/education/2023/05/15/ohios-public-universities-tout-69-billion-impact-to-states-economy/70202898007/>