

Chairman, members of the committee, my name is Lia Chervenak Wiley, and I am a professor at an Ohio university. I have lived my entire life in Ohio and earned several different degrees from two different institutions in Ohio. I stand in strong opposition to Senate Bill 1 because it will hurt our public universities and the state of Ohio.

We are standing on the edge of a demographic shift in the United States. The reality is that the "number of 18-year-old high school graduates will peak in 2025 at around 3.9 million...followed by a 15-year decline. By 2041, the number of traditional-age incoming college students will be down 13%" ("A Long Way Down the Demographic Cliff" *Inside Higher Ed* Article). Ohio universities will need to adapt to changing demographics, why limit ourselves with an unprecedented overreach into higher education which limits academic freedom, limits faculty governance, and limits the ability of institutions to prepare students for success in their chosen career fields? Students have a choice when deciding where to attend university. If I was a parent (which I am!), I would not choose the state that limits my student's potential.

The success of Ohio's higher education system depends on the choices made in this critical period of demographic and societal change. I urge you to oppose this bill in the interest of our students, our institutions, and the future of Ohio's workforce.

Link to referred article: <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/admissions/traditional-age/2024/12/11/college-age-demographics-begin-steady-projected-decline>