

Honorable Senators,

My name is Prof. Chris Orban. I am a tenured physics professor at Ohio State University. I teach on the Marion campus and I advise Ph.D. students on the Columbus campus. My most significant research collaboration is with a laser research group at Wright Patterson Air Force Base. I have both indirectly and directly as a Principal Investigator played a role in bringing over a million dollars in grants to Ohio. I speak for myself today.

I oppose this bill for two important reasons: (1) **The bill does a poor job of defining “controversial beliefs”**, which creates practical problems for me and science educators across the state in designing classes, and (2) I personally participate in efforts to convince some of the smartest people in the US to move to Ohio to become researchers at Ohio State University, and this bill greatly undermines that goal.

SB1 defines “controversial beliefs” as anything “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”. I teach physics and astronomy classes. This list gives me no guidance on **whether I should treat the roundness of the earth, or the moon landings as established facts, or should I carve out extra time in my classes to allow “intellectual diversity” on these issues**. There is no shortage of scientific topics that someone could classify as being a “controversial belief”. If the bill passes, I need to know which scientific concepts are controversial and which are uncontroversial as a practical concern as I try to design my fall classes to comply with state law.

My second concern is another practical matter, which is that Ohio State University is a success because we continue to convince the best and brightest people in the world to work here. This bill interferes with that. **Some of these people literally cure diseases**. Some of these folks are working on quantum computing methods that will get spun off as the new tech giants. I have personally interacted with people in this category and served on recruiting committees. The lack of clarity around “controversial beliefs” is not just a headache. Coupled with other items in the bill, it is a recipe for professors with no ill intent whatsoever getting in trouble with University trustees because of the inability of this bill to clearly state what is and is not a “controversial belief”. The brilliant people we are trying to get to come and stay at Ohio State University, have many other options. By your vote on this bill, you will tell them everything they need to know.