

February 10, 2025

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 Nicholas Palombo, and I am a student studying Accountancy at The Ohio University. **I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.**

As I am originally from Pennsylvania, I must reflect on the individuals that helped me solidify my decision to pursue higher education in Ohio. When I visited the university to weigh this decision, one member of Ohio University's faculty immediately comes to mind. This one person answered my questions in a manner that made me feel that I had a place at Ohio University. This one person ensured that I would become a part of a thriving community, and they assured my parents that I would be included in a vast support network of university resources oriented towards my success. This person, though I will not mention them by name, was the Assistant Director of Diversity and Inclusion.

Even with the strong support system of family and friends supporting my educational pursuits, this Assistant Director of Diversity and Inclusion made me feel welcome and encouraged me to become a student at The Ohio University. Without this individual, I would not have paid my tuition dollars to Ohio University; I would not have considered sitting for the CPA exam in Ohio; I would not have considered fully relocating to Ohio upon graduation, which I am excited to pursue this year.

Positions such as the Assistant Director of Diversity and Inclusion would be outlawed in SB 1, specifically under Section 3345.0217 (B)(1)(a) and its subsequent line items. It is legislation such as SB 1 and HB 6 that lead me to not only reconsider my future decisions of moving to Ohio, moreover this legislation discourages fellow citizens from pursuing higher education and careers in Ohio.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this unjust bill due to the unforeseen effects it will take on the educational and professional future of Ohio's residents.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.