

Testimony of M.S. Denise Mondragon, Current PhD Student Before the Senate Higher Education Committee^[1] Senator Kristina Roegner, Chair February 10, 2025

Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking Member Ingram, and Members of the Higher Education Committee:

My name is Denise Mondragon, and I am a PhD Student of Geosciences at The Ohio State University. I do not represent The Ohio State University but rather am submitting testimony as a private citizen in opposition to Senate Bill 1.

I strongly oppose Senate Bill 1 because it attacks academic freedom, faculty rights, and student opportunities. By banning DEI programs, restricting discussions on critical issues, and imposing vague mandates on “intellectual diversity,” this bill stifles open inquiry and undermines higher education. Eliminating tenure protections and banning faculty strikes will drive away top talent, weakening Ohio’s universities. Worse, it grants the state power to withhold funding based on political agendas, turning education into a tool of government control. Ohio’s universities should foster knowledge and innovation—not be subjected to political interference. I urge lawmakers to reject this harmful bill.