

## Written Testimony in Opposition to SB 1 / HB 6

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

Thank you for allowing me to submit my written testimony in opposition to SB 1 / HB 6. My name is Melissa Bodner. I am a legal professional, active community member, wife, and a mother of two sons and one daughter, one son a soon-to-be graduate of the University of Cincinnati with a degree in business with a concentration in financial planning and analysis and my daughter a freshman at the University of Cincinnati in the elementary education program. I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

If this bill were to pass, it would devastate Ohio's public colleges and universities. If passed, it is a certainty that students, professors, tuition dollars, and countless jobs will flee our state. I do not understand what the authors of this bill are so afraid of. The only possible answer on the face of the bill is that they wish to discourage – even vilify – critical thinking. I can only assume that the authors themselves attended college, and even with that assumption this bill is tone deaf to the value of free thought, challenging ideas and theories, and understanding that factual history advances our society so that we can continue to grow. In fact, the language of this bill proposes exactly the opposite of these fundamental building blocks of higher education. They clearly do not desire a smart electorate here in the State of Ohio.

There are far too many horrifying provisions in this bill to be able to list them all in my short testimony, but the most salient examples include:

1. Requiring educators to make public their names and contact information as part of the bill's attempt at "transparency." This encourages foul play and risks the safety of these educators. Further, the additional regulatory burden that this bill puts on educators and universities to implement and report on these mandates will discourage educators from coming to Ohio and will cause an exodus of current faculty. This will result in dollars lost to the Ohio economy, which certainly cannot be the desire of the Ohio Senate;
2. Prohibiting curriculum that "is the subject of political controversy," citing a long list of broad policy topics that are central to complete education in many professional fields, including History, Political Science, Medicine, Environmental Science, Biology, and more – no doubt many members of Ohio's legislature obtained higher education degrees in one or more of these areas of study; and
3. Eliminating and programming, courses, or training related to DEI. If there is ever a place where diversity, equity, and inclusion is CRITICAL, it is in institutions of higher learning.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this extremist and destructive bill. Again, thank you for the opportunity to submit my written testimony.

Sincerely,

Melissa Bodner