

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

Thank you for allowing me to testify. My name is Silas Haplea. I am a graduate teaching assistant employed at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio. I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

Every day that I teach is a day that I am committed to making students feel comfortable in the classroom. With an ever-growing disillusioned student body, it is my job to show them that they are accepted and validated in their personal identity. I do this regardless of race, gender, sex, or otherwise-exactly as the bill orders.

However, what makes me so strongly opposed to the bill is the removal of any topics that fall within DEI. A removal of these topics is an insult to the intelligence of the student body, claiming that they cannot handle the weight of topical subjects such as racism, sexism, homophobia, or otherwise. Being able to learn the nuances of these topics builds empathy and understanding towards people unlike oneself. What kind of teacher would I be if I could not foster an environment where students could not express themselves as they are?

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this detrimental bill.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.