

Testimony of Leticia R. Wiggins, PhD  
Before the Senate Higher Education Committee  
Senator Kristina Roegner, Chair  
February 11, 2025

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

My name is Leticia Wiggins, and I am an Assistant Professor at the University Libraries 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 have been a resident of Columbus for the past 18 years. I came to this city from sunny California to attend The Ohio State University university because of the strong public policy program at the John Glenn School of Public Affairs and the undeniable allure of Buckeye Football.

What made this education affordable and possible for me was the Morrill Scholarship - a scholarship given to underserved populations; a scholarship that changed my life trajectory and made my college education possible.

Once at Ohio State, I excelled and decided once receiving my BA in History to continue on as Buckeye in graduate school. I received my PhD in U.S. History from Ohio State in 2016 now serve as an Assistant Professor in the Libraries at the University.

My success in academics is a direct result of the strong social connections and institutional support I received from Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives. To find other students with similar cultural experience and understanding was key to my success. These programs considered my unique background and celebrated cultural differences to excite me to engage with the university community and feel supported while discovering my passion for history.

Working at the university now, I see students in similar situations - bolstered by faculty and programming that make it possible for them to find community. A bill like SB1 takes away all possibility of celebrating unique cultures and supporting students to feel welcome and wanted at the university. DEI programs do not harm anyone, they simply make the university stronger - this is also a historical truth.

I ask you to vote no on this bill to make it possible for students from all backgrounds to find community.

Sincerely,

Leticia Wiggins