

**Opponent Testimony for S.B. 1
2.10.2025**

Abby Spangenberg

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Abby Spangenberg, and I am a fourth-year Chemical Engineering student at The Ohio State University. I am here to strongly oppose Ohio Senate Bill 1, which seeks to prohibit Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives in higher education.

Without Ohio State's Office of Diversity and Inclusion, I would not have been able to attend this university. I am a recipient of the Morrill Scholarship, Ohio State's premier merit scholarship for students engaged in diversity-based leadership, service, and social justice. This program not only made college financially accessible for me and hundreds of others, but it also provided invaluable support through education enrichment programs that promote inclusion, academic success, and advocacy.

I am a white woman who earned this scholarship due to my commitment to expanding access to higher education for low-income Hispanic students in my 93% white, rural high school. Because of this opportunity, I have been able to serve as president of my student organization—where we recently implemented an Inclusion and Belonging committee—manage peers at my campus job, complete multiple internships at a Fortune 500 company, and represent a class of 8,000 students on Homecoming Court. These experiences have shaped who I am today, and none of them would have been possible without a DEI scholarship.

If you believe this bill won't affect you or those you care about, you are missing the bigger picture. This legislation would take away opportunities from hundreds of talented students who are shaping our future. When I give campus tours, I'm often asked about Ohio State's status as a predominantly white institution. I proudly point to the Office of Diversity and Inclusion and the resources it provides to help students build a sense of belonging on a campus of 60,000 people. By voting yes on this bill, you are dismantling those essential resources and isolating entire communities.

As you vote on this legislation, I urge you to put yourself in the shoes of a student stepping onto campus for the first time, searching for support, connection, and opportunity. Regardless of background, every student deserves the chance to thrive. The Office of Diversity and Inclusion is not just beneficial—it is imperative.

Thank you for your time and consideration.