

February 9, 2025

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

I am deeply against this continued attack on Higher Education despite massive public opposition during the 135th General Assembly. I urge you to oppose Senate Bill 1.

SB 1 is the epitome of big government overreach that we constantly hear from Republicans about. This bill would impose unprecedented levels of political interference and unnecessary micromanagement on Ohio's colleges and universities, severely undermining the integrity of our higher education system. This is why the bill faced strong bipartisan legislative opposition in the last session and failed to advance. This is not a partisan issue.

SB 1 legislates the manner in which certain topics can be addressed and the way in which professors manage their classrooms, creating a chilling effect on academic freedom and making it more difficult for Ohio's colleges and universities to attract and retain students and faculty. This bills also create an unprecedented number of unworkable and costly unfunded mandates, most of which are simply more burdensome versions of what our colleges and universities already do. SB 1 also attacks workers' rights by attempting to prohibit fundamental collective bargaining subjects and the right to strike for faculty, who have every right to advocate for themselves and their students.

None of this advances higher education. Instead it distracts from real problems in higher education that we need to address: increased tuition and debt, student retention and completion, and drastic reductions in academic programs and full-time faculty positions.

Please reject this bill, which could do real, irreversible damage to Ohio higher education. Please vote no on SB 1!

Sincerely,
James Powel