

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

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Zeyd Khan. I have lived in the state of Ohio since the age of 1, spending my early years in Dayton and Springfield before completing my undergraduate degree at Ohio State University and my medical degree from the University of Cincinnati. Since, I have settled in Cleveland as a child psychiatrist with a young family and daughter of my own. I have lived all over Ohio and feel my views resonate with the views of the state. I am strongly opposed to SB 1 and its companion bill HB 6.

I am astounded to see a red-leaning statehouse bring forward such a blatant example of government overreach. As I read through this bill, I was confused as to why our government is required to affect the way businesses are run or even what is stated within the confines of a classroom. On one end there is a push for diverse speakers of different etiologies, and in the same bill, there is removal of curriculum and perspectives regarding race relations and the institutional racism and sexism within our country. This is so clearly an attempt to control what young people learn and how they think. It is attempting to control our freedom of individual thought by destroying our access to different ways of thinking. And I think that is dangerous and a poor overall policy for a diverse state and country.

As a child psychiatrist, it is exceptionally important for me to understand how people's backgrounds and experiences within this country affect their mental health. I need to think about the experiences of kids from immigrant backgrounds, explore how people of different cultural backgrounds experience grief and mental illness, and consider long-standing familial beliefs about the healthcare system in how I advocate for mental health with parents. It is through my education at OSU and UC, that I have learned to navigate these challenges and help people of all races and backgrounds in Cleveland. I fear that this bill would affect young psychiatrist's ability to care for American citizens and lead to overall poor and more costly healthcare for many Americans. Medicine is full of different statistics for different populations of people (black maternal mortality rate in Cleveland for example), and painting with a broad brush in education, as this bill attempts to do would again be costly to the American people in a multitude of ways that I fear are not being considered in posing this dangerous bill.

As your constituent, it is my hope to be able to trust you to consider the wide-reaching consequences of such government overreach and to listen to the voices of the many who are opposed to it. As proud as I am to be a Buckeye and a Bearcat, I would not want my daughter or future children to attend a university such as the one envisioned in this bill. And I have spoken to colleagues and friends with young families of their own who feel the same.

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

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Zeyd Khan