

OPPOSING Ohio Senate Bill 1 / House Bill 6

Enact Advance Ohio Higher Education Act
House Workforce and Higher Education Committee

Miranda Holmes, Instructor

The Ohio State University

Dear Tom Young and members of the House Workforce and Higher Education Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Miranda Holmes (she/her). I am a Fine Arts instructor at The Ohio State University. I oppose the bill because it violates freedom of speech and disenfranchises instructors who attempt to maintain a robust and equal learning environment for their students.

Learning about painting and drawing requires students to be exposed to a vast range of different approaches in order for their own creative voices to shine. In my classroom, I show a huge range of different artists and their work, whether they be 16th century Renaissance painters or 20th century collage artists from the Harlem Renaissance. Not all students wish to paint like traditional realistic painters from the past, and I support their creative choices to try out alternative styles and methods. Many of the best artists to learn from would fall under the umbrella of “DEI” – Black, brown, female, trans, queer, and other marginalized groups. By enacting this bill, the Ohio state government is saying that they do not support various creative methods and artistic points of view. By enacting this bill, the Ohio state government is not allowing creative freedom of expression in the United State of America.

The Ohio Senate Bill 1/House Bill 6 disenfranchises instructors who maintain freedom of speech and multiple viewpoints in their classroom. My syllabus includes texts from art theorists expounding on the importance of French Post-Impressionist painters as well as Indigenous perspectives from Robin Wall Kimmerer’s *Braiding Sweetgrass*. This bill would make illegal part of my teaching and only expose my students to one side of the story. Ohio, as a state, should encourage and stand for multiple perspectives to be present in a space, even if they conflict. Students in higher

education must be exposed to multiple sides of a story, of history. This is why I strongly oppose this bill.

As an instructor at The Ohio State University, I consider the Ohio Senate Bill 1/House Bill 6 bill a violation of freedom of speech in higher education. I ask that you vote no on this bill. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Miranda Holmes