



Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Ohio
C. Todd Jones, President and General Counsel
House Finance Committee
June 20, 2024

Thank you, Chairman Edwards and members of the House Finance Committee, for allowing AICUO to submit written testimony on behalf of Ohio’s independent, non-profit colleges and universities in support of House Bill (HB) 606.

AICUO represents 50 independent, non-profit colleges all over Ohio. Located in every region of the state, our membership includes research universities, traditional liberal arts colleges, comprehensive universities, single-purpose institutions, and religiously affiliated colleges.

Independent institutions place the highest priority on student safety by taking measures aimed at creating secure and inclusive campus environments. When students feel safe and supported, their overall well-being improves, fostering better academic success and mental health.

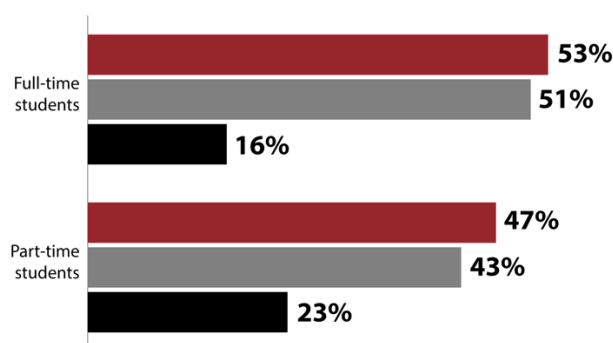
AICUO institutions are close communities, with our largest undergraduate institution still being smaller than all but two public four-year institutions. Due to that tight-knit nature, our institutions are able to help students thrive on a one-on-one basis and treat each student with the utmost care.

Students choose independent institutions because they are the right environment for them, which is reflected in student success rates and student satisfaction. Our higher degree-completion rates reflect that connection between the mission and culture of our institutions and the students who choose them because of that supportive environment.

Ohio Independents Lead in Graduation Rates

Average undergraduate award (degree and certificate) completion rates enrolled at Ohio institutions by enrollment status and sector

- AICUO independents
- Ohio public four-year main campuses
- Ohio community colleges



Note: Full-time student graduation is at a six-year rate; part-time student graduation is at an eight-year rate
Source: IPEDS Outcome Measures. (2021).

House Bill 606 will allow our institutions to continue our commitment to students while also ensuring our ability to operate as responsively as possible. We appreciate the sponsors' acknowledgment that our institutions are different from the public, particularly those members who are deeply rooted in their faith.

AICUO institutions will gladly continue to train all of our educational professionals to help deter harassment and intimidation on our campuses as well as work collaboratively on a campus taskforce to address the important issues of combating antisemitism and Islamophobia.

Additionally, collaboration with local law enforcement and the online publication of clear safety protocols further enhance institutional efforts, ensuring that students can focus on their academic and social experiences. These initiatives collectively contribute to a safer, more welcoming campus community where every student feels protected and valued.

AICUO institutions are different and foster small, close communities where every student's personal development and safety is a top priority. These intimate settings allow our institutions to consistently focus on individual well-being and create supportive, secure environments for all.

AICUO applauds Chairman Edwards and Representatives Pizzulli and Jarrells for their support to increase student safety at all of Ohio's higher education institutions.