

Testimony of Brittany Glenn
Before the House Higher Education Committee
Representative Tom Young, Chair
May 14, 2023

Chairman Young, Ranking Member Miller, and members of the House Higher Education Committee:

My name is Brittany and I am a master's student with the College of Social Work at the Ohio State University and a member of the Ohio Student Association. I am submitting my testimony as a private citizen in opposition to House Bill 151.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion content is vital to competent and ethical social work practice. Although HB 151 permits state institutions to receive exemptions for prohibiting DEI if it effects accreditation, the lengthy and cumbersome process of getting exempt will deter students from seeking out Ohio Universities for certain professions. Ohio's higher education attainment goal of 65% will not be reached when we continue to present more barriers for people to get licensed in certain professions, nor will additional barriers bring more people to Ohio. Workforces such as nursing and social work that are based on DEI practices are already experiencing a shortage and Ohioans need these services.

I classify as a student with a disability and I feel very supported with the inclusion piece of DEI. To me, inclusion means having programs and policies in place that will assist me in being able to complete a college degree. It means having an extra week on an assignment, if I have a pain flare up that is debilitating. I should not have to suffer because of a chronic illness I did not choose to have. And this is what DEI helps with. I personally feel like OSU cares and that means a lot to someone who lives with a chronic illness. It is imperative to every student's mental, emotional, and physical health, that DEI is not optional. It is required.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this harmful bill. Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony.

Sincerely,
Brittany Glenn