

Resolution 2025-R-020805

-A resolution to urge the Ohio legislature to reject the proposed Senate Bill 24

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Whereas, Senate Bill 24 (S.B. 24) was introduced in the regular session of the 126th General Assembly in the 2005-2006 year to enact sections 3345.80 and 3345.81 of the Revised Code, establishing the academic bill of rights for higher education; and

Whereas, S.B. 24 purports to be a bill of academic rights, it is in actuality it is a bill of statutory requirements, with no rational bearing, which will have an adverse impact on both the academic profession and the colleges and universities in the state of Ohio; and

Whereas, S.B. 24 will corrupt the academic integrity of both public and private institutions of higher education and undermine the mission of The University of Toledo; and

Whereas, Universities have been, and will continue to be, leading advocates of free speech and expression with sufficient safeguards already established in our federal and state constitutions, particularly the First Amendment of the US Constitution; and

Whereas, S.B. 24 is both redundant and subverts aforementioned policies and safeguards that protect the free exchange of ideas; and

Whereas, S.B. 24 threatens classroom debate and obstructs the objective evaluation of students by negating the important measurable basis of grading such as attendance, participation, originality, creativity, and group participation in favor of grading based on the vague and sole statutory requirement of namely "reasoned answers" ; and

Whereas, S.B. 24 seeks to transfer responsibility for the evaluation of student competence from the faculty, who are capable of such evaluative judgments, to college and university administrators and the courts; and

Whereas, S.B. 24 mentions but does not specify the meaning of "controversial matter," how many times it must be introduced in the classroom to offend the said statute, or how a professor is to hold himself or herself in a "posture of neutrality" ; and

Whereas, S.B. 24 negatively affects the hiring and firing decisions of a university by requiring that these decisions should bring about diversity using political standards that diverge from the academic criteria of the scholarly profession; and

Whereas, S.B. 24 could conceivably forbid a university from enforcing its own non-discrimination policy against student organizations, leaving them free to discriminate based on race, sex, or religion;

Therefore let it be resolved, That The University of Toledo Student Senate feels that the vague and undefined terms of the bill would lead to frivolous, unwarranted, and unrestrained legal challenges to universities in the state; and

Furthermore let it be resolved, The Student Senate of The University of Toledo wishes to express their opposition to this bill and their deep disappointment in legislators who try to reduce the pursuit of knowledge to matters of personal opinion; and

Furthermore let it be resolved, That The University of Toledo Student Senate, in conjunction with the Faculty Senate of The University of Toledo, urges the Ohio legislature to reject this bill and therefore protect our institutions of higher learning from a political and administrative quagmire; and

Furthermore let it be resolved, That The University of Toledo Student Senate instructs the authors of this resolution to send a letter urging opposition to other northwestern Ohio universities and legislators.