



May 30, 2023

### **APSA Statement on State Legislation Attacking Academic Freedom**

The American Political Science Association (APSA) expresses deep concern over recent proposals by state legislatures threatening the basic principles of academic freedom. The proposals such as those by the Texas Senate ([SB 16](#), [17](#), and [18](#)) are dangerous examples of attempts to redefine academic freedom in order to permit the suppression of certain types of scholarship, institutional programs, and critical thought. In particular, SB 17 would ban diversity, equity, and inclusion programs at public institutions and SB 18 would jeopardize academic freedom by putting pressure on faculty at public institutions through the weakening of tenure protections.

APSA strongly opposes any attempt to redefine academic freedom so as to enable censorship of teaching in schools, ban books and other sources of scholarship, or otherwise suppress critical thinking. As we affirmed in our [March 17, 2023 statement on Florida's HB999 bill](#), these bills jeopardize political and social science education at all levels of study and threaten the advancement of scholarship and education around issues pertaining to race, ethnic studies, gender, feminism, LGBTQ+ and queer studies, social justice, intersectionality, and other issues essential to a free, pluralistic, and inclusive democratic society. Our understanding of these issues has benefitted from a rigorous research approach and the free exchange of ideas. The current proliferation of legislation limiting academic freedom is troubling; APSA is concerned that more bills such as those coming out of Texas and Florida will be introduced elsewhere.

Furthermore, APSA recognizes that attempts to weaken faculty tenure also endanger academic freedom. Tenure provides faculty with security to freely contribute to their fields of study without threat of dismissal and is a core component of the advancement of scholarship. While APSA recognizes that tenure should not be unlimited in its protections or construed to mean faculty may teach and do whatever they wish without consequences, it is crucial that faculty be allowed to engage in teaching, research, and service without fear or external pressures.

APSA reaffirms our commitment to the principles of academic freedom and calls for a rejection of these bills in Texas, Florida, and others that may be yet to come.

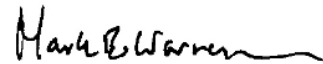


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*Founded in 1903, the American Political Science Association is the leading professional organization for the study of political science and serves more than 13,000 members in more than 80 countries. With a range of programs and services for individuals, departments, and institutions, APSA brings together political scientists from all fields of inquiry, regions, and occupational endeavors within and outside academe to deepen our understanding of politics, democracy, and citizenship throughout the world.*