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HB 2428: An act concerning postsecondary educational institutions...

Opponent – Written
February 3rd, 2026

I write to oppose HB 2428. As a proud alumnus of the University of Kansas, I moved over 1,000 miles to make Kansas my home over a decade ago in large part because of the state's strong, diverse and well-resourced higher education system. Throughout my time here, I have been consistently impressed with the quality of the faculty, staff and students I have encountered from Kansas higher educational institutions, and I believe a central reason for that has been the state's longstanding commitment to offering a diversity of courses within its academic and professional programs that reflect the state and the country as a whole.

This bill will undoubtedly undermine the ability of faculty in many disciplines (including but not limited to social work, nursing, sociology, anthropology and political science) to freely teach and conduct research in their areas of expertise. Consequently, it undermines our institutions of higher education from attracting and retaining faculty in these fields.

The top scholars in these fields bring significant grant funding with them, and impeding their ability to conduct research will cost the state in both monetary and human capital.

Not only this, but interest in courses related to DEI-CRT has been growing among students. According to a nationwide survey conducted by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2024, 73% of race and ethnic studies departments reported that their enrollment had either held steady or increased in the prior three years.¹ Similarly, a survey conducted by scholars at Case Western Reserve University in 2024 showed that 50% of departments reported an increase in enrollment in classes related to women and gender studies, and 36% reported an increase in women and gender studies majors.² With the passage of this bill, many of the students interested in these courses and majors would likely choose to attend universities outside the state, choosing to put their educational dollars elsewhere.

By undermining the ability of our higher educational institutions to do their job, this bill would put Kansas at odds with the rest of nation and undercut our ability to serve the needs and speak to the interests of our students and young people.

For these reasons and with great concern, I oppose the bill.
Alexander J. Myers

¹ https://www.amacad.org/sites/default/files/publication/downloads/HDS4_Race-and-Ethnic-Profile.pdf

² <https://commons.case.edu/mathercenter-briefs/5/>