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HB 2428 Requiring KBOR to establish curricula and designate courses at postsecondary educational institutions relating to DEI-CRT

Opponent – Written only
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To: The Education Committee, Kansas State House

My name is Rannfrid I. Lasine Thelle, and I am writing as a private citizen, a resident of Wichita, KS. I work as an Associate Professor at WSU, and teaching and the field of higher education is my life-long vocation. I am writing to express my opposition to HB 2428.

This bill threatens academic freedom, inserts government into oversight of curricular content, and bars programs from requiring students to take courses that include DEI and CRT-related content, as defined by this bill. Professional programs such as nursing, education, and social work have requirements in DEI and CRT-related content that would be prohibited by HB 2428. Without these components, the programs would lose accreditation, and students enrolled in them would end up with worthless degrees. The consequences of this bill are grave. If core programs such as nursing, education, and social work risk losing accreditation, this would mean that Kansas universities would lose students, and next, would lose faculty. This is a recipe for financial disaster for the state.

As an educator, I am deeply concerned about the threats to academic freedom for educators that this bill represents. In HB 2428, the definition and approval of curricular content is being legislated, a violation of academic freedom and a usurpation of roles that belong in academic

environments of faculty and university procedures. With this bill, KBOR would become an instrument in the hands of the legislature, and not the body they are meant to be, in administering the state's system-wide program of General Education.

Additionally, Section 2 of HB 2428 robs future students of the opportunity to engage in courses and content that have been established by academic specialists as meaningful elements of General Education.

Finally, section 1D contradicts the remainder of the content of the bill.