



American Association for University Professors - Indiana State Conference
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PRESS ADVISORY
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INAAUP shifts fight to State Universities' Boards of Trustees on SEA 202

Indianapolis, Indiana— The Indiana State Conference of the American Association of University Professors (INAAUP) expressed disappointment again upon Gov. Holcomb's decision to sign SEA 202 (formerly SB 202) into law on Wednesday March 13. The Governor's ill-conceived action has strengthened AAUP members' resolve to push the Boards of Trustees at their home institutions to interpret the law to strengthen academic freedom and protect shared governance principles where teaching, research, and the processes of promotion and tenure are the purview of faculty.

The state conference recognized the extraordinary groundswell of opposition to SB202 that has developed from February into March.

The following national professional associations have released statements opposing SB202:

- [Organization of American Historians](#)
- [American Historical Association](#)
- [Modern Language Association](#)
- [American Anthropological Association](#)
- [American Council of Learned Societies](#)
- [Classical Association of the Middle West and South](#)
- [American Political Science Association](#)
- [Society for Classical Studies](#)

In Indiana, the following groups have expressed opposition:

- ACLU Indiana, the Alliance of Distinguished and Titled Professors at Indiana University, Indiana House Democrats, the Indiana University president, the Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce, Indiana Democrats, the Purdue Graduate Student Government (West Lafayette).
- Faculty Senates speaking for over 9000 faculty and 150,000 students: Ball State University Faculty Council, Indiana State Faculty Senate, Indiana

University-Bloomington Faculty Council, Indiana University-South Bend Academic Senate, Purdue Fort Wayne Faculty Senate, Purdue Northwest Faculty Senate, the Purdue-West Lafayette University Senate, the DePauw University faculty, and the Indianapolis Faculty Council Executive Committee.

- AAUP chapters at Ball State, Indiana State University, Indiana University-Bloomington, Indiana University-South Bend, Purdue-Fort Wayne, Purdue-Northwest, and Purdue-West Lafayette.
- Civil rights and faith leaders across Indiana: Over 1000 Indiana residents and 70 civil rights, faith-based, and professional organizations endorsed a [statement](#) calling out the racism of SB 202. A group of [civil rights leaders](#), including the President of the Indiana NAACP, requested a meeting with the Governor about the [discriminatory impact](#) of the bill, but their [request was not honored](#).

Additional opposition, including national opposition from the [Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression](#) (FIRE) is listed on the INAAUP StopSB202 campaign [website](#).

INAAUP President Dr. Moira Marsh said, "This is a dark day for higher education in Indiana. Parts of the state will experience a total solar eclipse next month, but the darkness will only last for a few minutes. This law will darken the international reputation of our great public universities causing a flight of talent from our state that will take many years to repair."

Purdue University Fort Wayne Professor of Communication and AAUP-Purdue Fort Wayne chapter president Dr. Steve Carr asked, "How can SB 202 possibly claim in good faith to protect cultural and intellectual diversity when it clearly intends to silence and criminalize diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives?"

Prof. Sheron Fraser-Burgess (Professor of Social Foundations of Education and Multicultural Education, Ball State University) of Ball State University's AAUP's steering committee said: "Young people and their families of Indiana deserve better from their legislators, who should put their educational interests first. We will fight to make this message the one that endures."

Prof. Jennifer Erickson, Professor of Anthropology and co-President of BSU AAUP, adds: "This bill undercuts academic freedom, a privilege and protection that distinguishes professors from our K-12 teacher colleagues, and will especially punish professors who speak truth to power."

Prof. Stephanie Masta (Associate Professor of Curriculum & Instruction and President of Purdue AAUP) said: "SB202 represents massive governmental overreach into the leadership of Indiana's public colleges and universities. Let's hope that our Boards of Trustees recognize this law as

such, and continue to support the already established and rigorous review processes that exist on our campuses.”

Prof. Lindsey Eberman (Professor of Athletic Training and Vice Chair of the Faculty Senate, Indiana State University) said, “Senator Deery and his supermajority demonstrated that they are incapable of considering ‘a variety of political and ideological viewpoints’ as they repeatedly ignored all the public comment in opposition of SB202. Whose constituents are represented in this bill?”

Prof. Jake Mattox (Associate Professor of English and President of the AAUP chapter at Indiana University, South Bend) said, “It is now up to Trustees and other education officials to stand clearly with faculty, students, and all Hoosiers to defend against this and other attacks on public education.”

Dr. Kathy Marrs, Professor of Biology at IU Indianapolis and a member of the Indianapolis Faculty Council, said “Indiana's alignment with states like Florida and Texas in displaying contempt for higher education is disheartening. However, we resolve to continue our work to educate our students and the public. It is imperative that Hoosiers statewide mobilize efforts to elect a state legislature committed to valuing and supporting universities, by placing an emphasis on higher education, civil rights, and academic freedom.”

StopSB202 campaign lead Prof. Alice Pawley (professor of engineering education, College of Engineering, Purdue-West Lafayette, and executive committee member on Purdue-West Lafayette’s AAUP chapter), said, “We knew it was an uphill battle, and that even if the governor vetoed SB202, the veto could be easily overturned by the Legislature. But academics showing up in democratic processes is important to do, even when the deck is stacked against us, and 5 Republicans across the Legislature sided with the Democrats to protect academic freedom. A lot more eyes are now watching how Boards of Trustees respond than would have otherwise. Faculty are mobilizing on public campuses across the state to develop faculty-driven processes to evaluate “intellectual diversity” in our teaching and research. Given that Boards are not experts in this space, and given that faculty are responsible for teaching and research, we will offer those processes to our Boards as part of our commitment to shared governance. We’ll see if they will also show their commitment by adopting them.”

The Indiana Conference of the American Association of University Professors (INAAUP) promotes cooperation among AAUP chapters at Indiana institutions of higher education. It works for the betterment of higher education in the state through promoting academic freedom, shared governance, and the rights of faculty.

The American Association of University Professors (AAUP), with over 50,000 members and 500 local chapters, champions academic freedom; advances shared governance; and organizes to promote economic security for all academic professionals. Since 1915, the AAUP has shaped American higher education by developing standards and procedures that uphold quality education.

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General information on StopSB202: <https://inaaup.wordpress.com/sb-202-resources/>

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