

Dear Committee Members,

Universities across the country are enforcing leftist worldviews and philosophies by censoring freedom of thought and speech of students and faculty. A 2019 report by Foundation for Individual Rights in Education analyzed the written policies at 466 of America's top colleges and universities for their protection of free speech. The report found that 89.7 percent of American colleges maintain policies that restrict student and faculty expression. These restrictions not only violate the 1st Amendment, they threaten a free society by giving our youth the false impression that freedom of speech is a privilege and not a right. This will lead to more and more authoritarian government overreach. Approximately 800,000 students at top US colleges must find a "free speech zone" to exercise their right to speak freely. This teaches students to avoid critical thinking so as not to come to a conclusion that may result in disciplinary action. The manipulation of free speech policies on college campuses is happening in the wider context of the current and widespread censorship of conservative voices. We must make our voices loud and clear: Freedom of speech is essential to a free and intellectual society. We must encourage, not limit, the free exchange of ideas in any sector of society, but especially in our institutions of higher learning. Please render a DO PASS on HB 1503.

Thank you for your leadership and service to the state of North Dakota.

Sincerely,

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Spotlight on Speech Codes 2019: The State of Free Speech on Our Nation's Campuses

<https://www.thefire.org/resources/spotlight/reports/spotlight-on-speech-codes-2019/>

Free Speech Zones

<https://www.thefire.org/issues/free-speech-zones/>

9 in 10 American Colleges Restrict Free Speech

<https://www.thefire.org/report-9-in-10-american-colleges-restrict-free-speech/>