



Sonoma State University Academic Senate

RESOLUTION REGARDING INDIANA RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT

Resolved: That the Sonoma State University (SSU) Academic Senate reaffirm its support for the SSU Diversity Statement (<http://www.sonoma.edu/senate/resolutions/diversitystatement.html>) and policy on non-discrimination (<http://www.sonoma.edu/UAffairs/policies/discrimination.htm>); and;

Resolved: That the SSU Academic Senate express its strong opposition to the Indiana Religious Freedom Restoration Act (SB 101) as signed into law by Governor Mike Pence on March 26, 2015, and;

Resolved: That the SSU Academic Senate applaud San Francisco State University (SFSU) President Leslie E. Wong for his decision to ban the use of SFSU general or auxiliary funds to support employee or student travel to Indiana, and the SFSU Academic Senate Executive Committee, SFSU Vice Presidents and SFSU Deans who endorsed President Wong's actions and;

Resolved: That this resolution be sent to Chancellor Timothy White, SSU President Ruben Armiñana, SFSU President Leslie E. Wong, The Academic Senate CSU (ASCSU), Campus senate chairs and Indiana Governor Mike Pence.

Rationale

On Thursday, March 26, 2015, Indiana Governor Mike Pence signed into law the Indiana Religious Freedom Restoration Act. The law provides that "persons" (defined as individuals, churches and businesses) may refuse actions that impose a "substantial burden" on their religious beliefs. All "persons" may use the act as a claim or defense in a lawsuit regardless of whether or not the state or any other government entity is involved. The law recognizes corporations as having First Amendment "free exercise" rights equal to those of individuals and could make it easier for businesses to refuse service to LGBT individuals or couples. Currently, the state of Indiana does not have a protected category for persons identifying as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender. Apple, Wal-Mart, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and the state of Connecticut, which banned state-paid travel to Indiana, oppose the law. On Monday, March 30, 2015, SFSU President Leslie E. Wong banned the use of SFSU general or auxiliary funds to support employee or student travel to Indiana. This resolution affirms the SSU Academic Senate's support for campus policies regarding diversity and non-discrimination, expresses opposition to the Indiana law and applauds President Wong's action.

Sources

Garrett Epps, "What Makes Indiana's Religious Freedom Law Different?" The Atlantic Online, March 30, 2015 <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/03/what-makes-indianas-religious-freedom-law-different/388997/>

Sarah Kaplan, "Arkansas and North Carolina are latest states to consider religious freedom bills," Washington Post Online, March 30, 2015 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2015/03/31/arkansas-and-north-carolina-are-latest-states-to-consider-religious-freedom-bills/>

Scott Neuman, "Indiana's Governor Signs 'Religious Freedom' Bill," NPR Online, March 26, 2015 <http://www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2015/03/26/395583706/indianas-governor-signs-religious-freedom-bill>

Senate Bill 101, Religious Freedom Restoration Act, Indiana State Senate <https://iga.in.gov/legislative/2015/bills/senate/101>

SFSU President Leslie E. Wong Statement on University Travel to Indiana <http://news.sfsu.edu/sf-state-president-leslie-e-wong-statement-university-travel-indiana>

SFSU President Leslie E. Wong Email to Faculty, Staff and Students Regarding Use of University Funds to Travel to Indiana, March 30, 2015

SSU Non-Discrimination Policy <http://www.sonoma.edu/uaffairs/policies/discrimination.htm>

SSU Diversity Vision Statement <http://www.sonoma.edu/senate/resolutions/diversitystatement.html>

Unanimously approved on April 2, 2015