

HB 2696 -- CAMPUS FREE EXPRESSION ACT

SPONSOR: Dohrman

This bill modifies the Campus Free Expression Act. The bill requires the governing board of each public institution of higher education to adopt a policy on free expression by January 1, 2021. The free expression policy must be consistent with several principles of free speech specified in the bill and may not restrict student's speech to only particular areas of campus. The free expression policy shall be made available to students and faculty annually.

The bill also requires institutions to adopt policies on "student-on-student bullying and harassment", and cautions faculty to be cautious in expressing personal views in the classroom.

Institutions may not deny student activity fee funding to a student organization based on the organizations viewpoints, and shall allow all students and all faculty to invite guest speakers to campus to engage in free speech regardless of the views of the speakers.

The bill shall not be interpreted as prohibiting an institution from imposing restrictions on expressions that do not violate the United States Constitution or the Missouri Constitution.

This bill is similar to HB 576 (2019).