

By: Wentworth

S.C.R. No. 3

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1           WHEREAS, A vibrant and dynamic system of higher education in  
2 Texas is essential to the continued well-being and prosperity of  
3 the state and its diverse citizenry, contributing to the  
4 propagation of new ideas, the preservation of cultural legacies,  
5 and the vitality of the political discourse that is the hallmark of  
6 all healthy democracies; and

7           WHEREAS, While each college and university may serve one or  
8 more specific purposes, higher education's overarching mission in  
9 general is to promote the pursuit of truth and the advancement of  
10 knowledge through rigorous scholarship and research and to promote  
11 the transmission of knowledge to society at large through teaching  
12 and the development of students into creative and responsible  
13 individuals; and

14           WHEREAS, An institution of higher education cannot achieve  
15 these goals or fulfill its central mission, however, unless it  
16 respects the rights and privileges of each participant in the  
17 process, student and faculty member alike, recognizing the  
18 diversity of opinion that exists in the classroom and on campus; and

19           WHEREAS, Because the pursuit of truth inevitably entails a  
20 spirit of questioning and the close study and reasoned criticism of  
21 dogma, conventions, and traditions, the unfettered inquiry and the  
22 attendant freedom to speak out and to challenge are indispensable;  
23 without that spirit and freedom, the process, the participants, and  
24 the outcomes are all diminished; and

1           WHEREAS, Given that higher education is enriched by  
2 individuals from all walks of life and the diversity of traditions  
3 that shape the ideas they bring to this marketplace, colleges and  
4 universities must make and periodically renew their commitment to  
5 valuing and respecting diversity in intellectual and political  
6 viewpoints regardless of whose viewpoint it is or the position or  
7 role of the individual who holds it; and

8           WHEREAS, The academic freedom accorded faculty and that  
9 freedom to which students are entitled are both essential and  
10 complementary components of success in intellectual endeavors, and  
11 policies that protect one's freedom need not and should not  
12 infringe upon or diminish the freedom of another; and

13           WHEREAS, To that end, it may be justifiably expected that  
14 colleges and universities would periodically review their policies  
15 with respect to faculty and student rights and grievance procedures  
16 to ensure that intellectual and political diversity is recognized,  
17 valued, and protected; now, therefore, be it

18           RESOLVED, That the 80th Legislature of the State of Texas  
19 hereby encourage the state's colleges and universities to implement  
20 policies to safeguard the academic freedom of faculty and students  
21 alike and ensure the diversity of opinion not only in the classroom  
22 and campus but beyond; and, be it further

23           RESOLVED, That the secretary of state forward official copies  
24 of this resolution to the commissioner of higher education and to  
25 the chair of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.