

RESOLUTION 18

A Resolution Regarding Mississippi House Bill 1523

Whereas the Mississippi State Legislature recently passed Mississippi House Bill 1523; and,

Whereas the Mississippi House Bill 1523 outlines particular discriminatory actions based on gender identity, sexual orientation, and marital status that would be immune to anti-discriminatory regulation (Section 2), and these discriminatory actions are as follows:

- (a) A religious organization's actions regarding marriage, employment, and housing-related decisions; (sub-sections 1,2) and,
- (b) A person's actions regarding adoption or foster care; the provision of medical treatment, counseling, surgeries, or other services related to sex reassignment or gender identity transitioning; and the complete process and recognition of a marriage; (sub-sections 3-5) and,
- (c) A person's actions "establish[ing] sex-specific standards or policies concerning employee or student dress or grooming, or concerning access to restrooms, spas, baths, showers, dressing rooms, locker rooms, or other intimate facilities or settings;" (sub-section 6) and,
- (d) A state employee's "lawful speaking or engaging in expressive conduct," (sub-section 7) "[seeking] recusal from authorizing or licensing lawful marriages," or from performing or solemnizing said marriages; (sub-section 8) and,

Whereas, as affirmed in Mississippi State University's Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy, "Mississippi State University is committed to assuring that the University and its programs are free from discrimination and harassment based upon race, color, ethnicity, sex, pregnancy, religion, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, or any other status protected by state or federal law.;" and,

Whereas, the Student Body of Mississippi State University is resolved to protect the value of diversity and to oppose unequal and discriminatory treatment based upon sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, or any other characteristic; and,

Whereas the aforementioned items of Mississippi House Bill 1523 are contrary to values detailed in the Mississippi State University Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy, and to the University's overall commitment to the protection of the rights of all students, faculty, staff, and administration, regardless of their many diverse backgrounds and characteristics; and,

Whereas the Student Association Senate of Mississippi State University finds Mississippi House Bill 1523 to be directly contradictory with the expressly-stated values of Mississippi State University;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Student Body of the Mississippi State University and the Student Association Senate of Mississippi State University express rejection of and divergence from the discriminatory views in the bill; and,

Therefore, be it further resolved that the Mississippi State University Student Association Senate expresses strong disapproval of the passage of Mississippi House Bill 1523; and,

Therefore, be it further resolved that the Mississippi State Legislature be urged to recognize and protect fully the rights of all groups as equal, to act in the best interest of the state of Mississippi and its constituents overall rather than only that of one specific group, and to only support legislation that is of similar sentiment to that of the values of Mississippi State University articulated above; and,

Therefore, be it further resolved that the Student Association Senate of Mississippi State University implores the Mississippi State Legislature and the local governments of Mississippi to persist in efforts toward the protection from discrimination and promotion of diversity and equality; and,

Therefore, be it further resolved that the Student Association Senate of Mississippi State University urges fellow student governments across the state to institute similar resolutions to illustrate a statewide commitment to the values referred to within this resolution; and,

Therefore, be it further resolved that copies of this resolution be sent to Phil Bryant, Governor of Mississippi; Phillip Gunn, Speaker of the Mississippi House of Representatives; Terry Burton, State Senate President Pro Tempore; Dr. Mark Keenum, President of Mississippi State University; Dr. Regina Hyatt, Vice President of Student Affairs; Dr. Cody Coyne, President of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate; various public media outlets of Mississippi; *The Reflector*; the Starkville City Council; heads of student governments of Mississippi universities; and the University Archives.