

YOUNG CONSERVATIVES OF TEXAS

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WRITTEN TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 302 BEFORE THE SENATE EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

For twenty-five years, the Young Conservatives of Texas has been a staunch advocate for a colorblind society in all facets of life, especially within the public sector. However, as an organization that consists primary of college students YCT is particularly concerned with colorblindness in the area of academic admissions.

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE BILL

SB 302 requires each institution of higher education to submit a report to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board detailing “strategies” for increasing the number of undergraduate and graduate students who enroll in the institution from racial and ethnic groups that are “underrepresented” in the institution’s student body.

YCT POSITION ON S.B. 302

YCT’s opposes S.B. 302 because it encourages the use of race/ethnicity as a factor in university admissions and financial aid decisions. It is YCT’s position that public universities should not consider the race/ethnicity of its students or potential students for any purposes. In fact, they should not record the race/ethnicity of their students or be aware of the race/ethnicity of their applicants when making critical admissions decisions.

Although the legislation does not expressly call for quotas, its definition of which racial and ethnic groups are “underrepresented” presumes that institutions of higher education should have a specific percentage of each racial and ethnic group. In essence, this is a quota.

In addition, the bill requires institutions of higher education to collect racial/ethnic data of each student and applicant. If the goal of the Legislature is equal treatment of all racial and ethnic groups, this information should be irrelevant. The only way to make it irrelevant is to forbid its collection and use. S.B. 302 takes us in the opposition direction.

Finally, the bill requires institutions of higher education to detail specific outreach programs, admissions policies, and financial aid that are geared toward increasing minority enrollment. By having such requirements, the bill is effectively inviting institutions of higher education to use race/ethnicity as factors in its admissions and financial aid policies.

CONCLUSION

S.B. 302 is in conflict with YCT's priority of a colorblind academic environment. By requiring specific admissions and financial aid policies, it is tacitly calling on affirmative action without specifically saying so. Furthermore, by requiring the collection of racial/ethnic data, it is enabling institutions of higher education to discriminate. For the foregoing reasons, YCT calls on the defeat of S.B. 302.

YCT thanks the subcommittee for listening to our opinions on these matters, and if any members have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Matthew J. Griffing, Senior Vice Chairman for Legislative Affairs at 512-692-6858 or 469-235-9970