

A Huge Setback: Arizona Lawmakers Vote to Kill Free Speech on Campuses

Conservatives are up in arms over legislation which will limit free speech on college campuses in Arizona.

Arizona House bill 2563, which applies to public universities and community colleges, has passed the state Senate, so it's now up to the governor whether it becomes law.

The bill, which started out with clear protections for student's First Amendment rights, was amended to do exactly the opposite.

In an article by Erick Erickson, editor of *the Resurgent*, he states that two keywords in HB 2563 have been altered—changing it from protecting free speech to giving college administrators dictatorial powers over student speech.

It originally read: "A university or community college *shall not* restrict a student's right to speak, including verbal speech, holding a sign or distributing fliers or other materials, in a public forum."

And this is how it was changed: 'A university or community college *may* restrict a student's right to speak, including verbal speech, holding a sign or distributing fliers or other materials, in a public forum.'

Erickson is joined by a growing group of voices calling on Governor Doug Ducey to veto the bill, like the group called FIRE, which stands for Foundation for Individual Rights in Education.

Greg Piper of the College Fix thinks this latest move toward censorship is intolerable, and he hopes the governor will wake

up before signing this controversial legislation into law.

But Piper is not too confident that Ducey will veto the bill, pointing to his wavering support of student speech.

In 2017, Gov. Ducey went against conservatives to veto the New Voices bill which, in Piper's words, "would protect student journalists and their advisers from censorship and retaliation."

If the governor signs this bill, then the Grand Canyon state "is on the verge of making a fool of itself by passing a law that directly contradicts its ban on free speech zones" says Piper. {eoa}

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