



American Association of University Professors

Academic Freedom for a Free Society

May 16, 2017

Senator Arnie Roblan, Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Education
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support of House bill 2864-A – Cultural Competency

Chair Roblan and members of the Committee,

My name is Erna Gelles. I am professor emerita of public administration and nonprofit management at Portland State University, where I've taught for almost 20 years, and recent VP for Political Action of AAUP-Oregon, the Statewide Conference of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP-Oregon). I am here today speaking on behalf of the statewide conference's over 3400 members. Thank you for your service to our state, and thank you for the opportunity to communicate with you.

On behalf of the members of AAUP-Oregon, our collective bargaining faculty chapters at the University of Oregon and Portland State University, and our faculty members across Oregon, I am here to ask that you *please support HB 2864-A*.

As faculty members we teach a wide variety of students and work every day to make our classrooms and institutions welcoming places for those from every background. We understand the structural inequities and challenges that many of our students face. This bill commits our universities to include every stakeholder group on our multiple campuses to engage in conversations about how to deepen this work, and then set goals and report progress. In deciding to actively support the bill, we engaged in extensive conversations about the importance of this work and how to go about ensuring that it gets done. The final version of this the bill strikes a good balance that furthers inclusion while preserving academic freedom and the crucial role of faculty in shared governance.

As Oregon faculty, we are committed to all of our students and to the goal of moving the work of justice forward. This bill is part of this important process and has our strong support.

We ask that you please support HB 2864-A.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Erna Gelles', is written over a horizontal dashed line.

Erna Gelles, Ph.D.
Professor Emerita, Portland State University, representing AAUP-Oregon