

**3/31/25**

# House Higher Ed Committee

# Hearing: HB 1705

Hosted by Texas AAUP-AFT

March 31, 2025

Presenters are speaking for themselves  
as private individuals



# AGENDA

- Breathe – we're stronger together
- AAUP-AFT Legislative Priorities
- Overview of House Higher Ed Committee
- Bills up for hearing on 3/31
- HB 1705
- Talking points/testimony training

# Lege Priorities

Texas AAUP Bill  
Tracker:



## Freedom to Research

Removing barriers that hinder competitiveness for research teams to win government and private grants.

## Maintaining Tenure

Upholding current tenure policies that recruits and retains instructors for workforce development.

## Freedom to Learn & Teach

Encouraging and protecting free inquiry, free expression, intellectual exploration, and open dissent.

## Shared Governance

Supporting traditional democratic faculty structures to foster the highest quality curriculum, teaching methods, research, and hiring decisions.

# House Comm. on Higher Ed



Representative  
**Wilson, Terry M.**

Chair



Representative  
**Howard, Donna**

Vice Chair



Representative  
**Davis, Aicha M.**



Representative  
**Lalani, Suleman**



Representative  
**Lambert, Stan**



Representative  
**Perez, Vincent M.**



Representative  
**Shaheen, Matt**



Representative  
**Shofner, Joanne W.**



Representative  
**Tinderholt, Tony**



Representative  
**VanDeaver, Gary**



Representative  
**Ward Johnson,  
Charlene**

Terry Wilson (R) Chair  
Donna Howard (D) Co-Chair

## Seniority Appointments

Stan Lambert (R)  
Vincent Perez (D)  
Matt Shaheen (R)  
Tony Tinderholt (R)

## Speaker Appointments

Aicha Davis (D)  
Suleman Lalani (D)  
Joanne Shofner (R)  
Gary VanDeaver (R)  
Charlene Ward Johnson (D)



# Bills Being Heard 3/31

- HB 173 Capriglione | et al.  
Relating to prohibiting public institutions of higher education from soliciting or accepting gifts, grants, or donations from certain foreign countries.
- HB 184 Guillen | et al.  
Relating to student loan repayment assistance for certain prosecuting attorneys who are employed as part of the border prosecution unit.
- HB 484 Lalani  
Relating to the use of cigarettes, e-cigarettes, and tobacco products on the campus of a public institution of higher education.
- HB 678 Walle  
Relating to the inclusion of the National Sexual Assault Hotline on certain student identification cards issued by a public institution of higher education.
- HB 1211 Lujan | et al.  
Relating to tuition and fee exemptions at public institutions of higher education for certain students who were under the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services.
- HB 1507 Ashby  
Relating to tuition and fee exemptions for firefighters enrolled in certain courses at public institutions of higher education.
- HB 1705 Shofner  
Relating to the accreditation of certain postsecondary educational institutions in this state or of certain programs offered by those institutions.
- HB 1868 Leo Wilson | et al.  
Relating to performance tier funding under the public junior college state finance program.
- HB 2290 Johnson  
Relating to health benefits offered by institutions of higher education to students and their families.
- HB 2851 Howard  
Relating to including nursing school applications in a consolidated application service.
- HB 2856 Howard  
Relating to a study by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board on the feasibility of implementing a statewide system for coordinating clinical training placements.
- HB 3041 Paul  
Relating to measures to support the enrollment of students with a nontraditional secondary education at public institutions of higher education, including eligibility for certain student financial assistance programs.
- HB 3204 Metcalf  
Relating to the Polytechnic College at Sam Houston State University, including the college's eligibility to participate in certain programs.

# HB 1705 OVERVIEW

- HB 1705 seeks to remove the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) as the sole statutorily-mandated accrediting agency for Texas public colleges, universities, and health institutions, excluding law schools and medical schools.
- **ABOUT SACS**
  - SACS is one of seven regional accrediting agencies recognized by the federal government.
  - If a public college, university, or health institution is not accredited by an agency federally recognized like SACS, its students will no longer be eligible for federal student financial aid, its degrees will not be recognized at other institutions or corporations, and it will be ineligible for federal research grants and certain private grants.

# How to Testify

- ❖ [HB 1705 One Pager](#)
- ❖ Write your testimony beforehand.
- ❖ Please be clear that you're speaking for yourself as a private individual.
- ❖ Max 2 minutes for a Senate hearing and 3 minutes for a House hearing (one page)
- ❖ Review background info for context, like hearing agendas and invited speakers
- ❖ Tell your story! Personal narratives are important to testimonies, so tie how it impacts you and others back to the issues, and make the call to action clear!

# Getting Involved in Person

- ❖ The hearing is taking place at the Texas Capitol, room E2.036 at 8 am.
- ❖ Please arrive early to make sure you're registered to testify.
- ❖ Witness registration kiosks are on E2. If you need help finding the kiosks, please reach out to Amanda Garcia or Dr. Brian Evans (512-516-5991) and we'll help you get signed up!



# Getting Involved Remotely

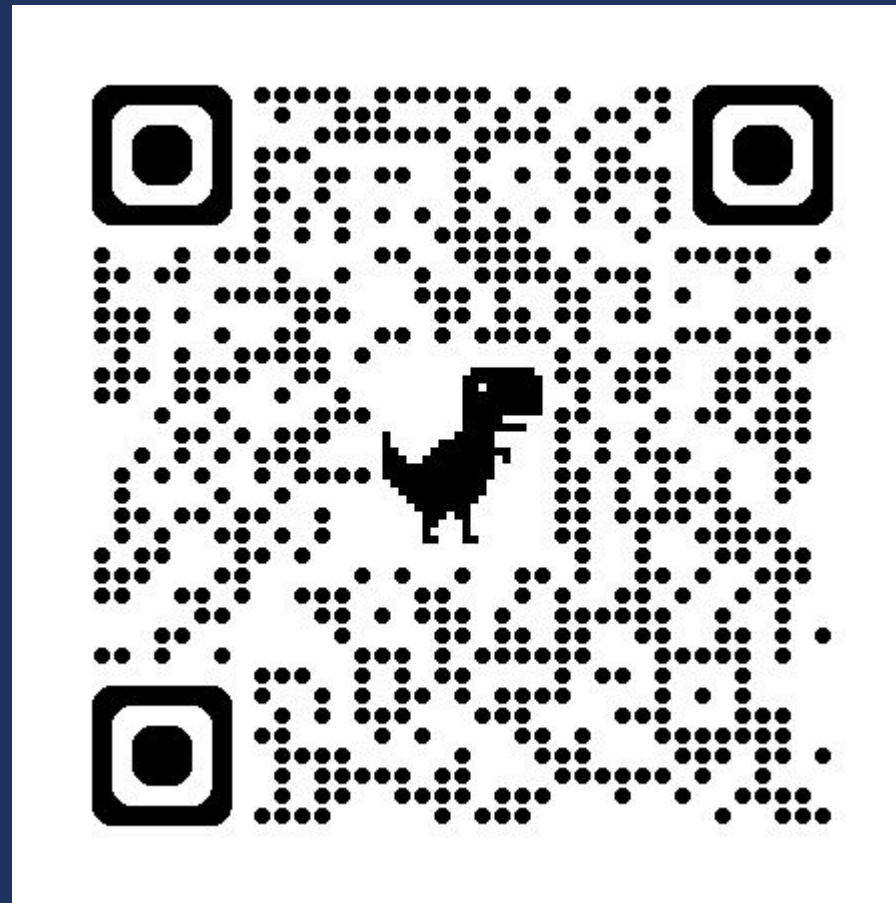
- ❖ Submit [electronic testimony](#)
- ❖ CALL YOUR SENATOR AND THE SENATORS ON THE SENATE K-16 COMMITTEE
- ❖ Sign the [Texas AFT Educator's Bill of Rights](#) for K-12 and higher ed educators.

# Join Texas AAUP-AFT Action Committees

- **Join Texas AAUP-AFT  
Action Committees!**
  - Legislative Advocacy
  - Organizing
  - Media & Messaging
  - Legal Analysis
- **1 year commitment**



# Thank you!



Texas AAUP-AFT  
Higher Education Bill Tracker