



Texas Conference of the American Association of University Professors
News Release

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Today, in response to the Senate's passage of the House version of SB 18, the Texas Conference of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) reiterated its defense of faculty tenure and academic freedom.

Brian Evans, Vice President of the Texas AAUP Conference, says that "tenure is a vital protection of the academic freedom for professors to develop, discuss, and share knowledge from all viewpoints, including conservative, moderate, liberal, and apolitical. A meaningful tenure system protects academic freedom in teaching, research, and expression, provides for long-term stability, and includes due process protections and procedures for professors undergoing review."

A robust tenure system is crucial for Texas to recruit and retain excellent professors, and for the state to be at the forefront of research and education. Our tenured and tenure-track professors are vital for workforce development in the state, including teaching key technical skills in our community colleges and bringing billions of dollars in federal grants each year to train advanced STEM students in our public universities. Our professors foster critical thinking skills across all disciplines for long-term student success.

SB 18, as amended and passed by the House and Senate, codifies a tenure system in public institutions of higher education. We do not believe that such a codification is necessary; furthermore, we are concerned with dangerously broad grounds for termination in the bill as well as the lack of the due process provisions recommended by the AAUP and adopted by more than 1300 colleges and universities nationally, including many in Texas. Nevertheless, the legislation passed by the House and Senate improves dramatically on the original bill, and we are grateful to the legislators, faculty, staff, students, and professional organizations whose work contributed to the amended bill.