

Resolution Title: Resolution on the Academic Bill of Rights (Student Bill of Rights)

Submitted by: Professional Staff Congress/CUNY

WHEREAS, the Academic Bill of Rights purports to advocate political pluralism and diversity; and

WHEREAS, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) endorses that principle but believes that the Academic Bill of Rights is an “improper and dangerous method for its implementation” since there are mechanisms in place to protect this principle; and

WHEREAS, the proponents of the Academic Bill of Rights attempts to enforce diversity that is narrowly based upon political categories or membership in a political party; and

WHEREAS, the Academic Bill of Rights directs colleges and universities to enact guidelines for hiring faculty that would measure diversity by political standards that “diverge from the academic criteria of the scholarly profession; thereby corrupting the academic integrity of universities”, and

WHEREAS, the Academic Bill of Rights declares that all knowledge is opinion and that all opinions are equally valid; and

WHEREAS, the Academic Bill of Rights expresses distrust of faculty’s ability to make academic judgments and undermines their authority in guiding and instructing students; and

WHEREAS, the Academic Bill of Rights, in reality, infringes on the very principles that it purports to advocate and undermines the academic freedom that it claims to support by prohibiting faculty and their colleges from making the decisions necessary to instruct students and advance knowledge; and

WHEREAS, it transfers the responsibility of student competence to the administration of colleges and universities and threatens to impose administrative and legislative oversight over the professional judgment of faculty; and

WHEREAS, Students for Academic Freedom, with chapters on 135 campuses, has launched a national campaign to have state legislatures and Congress approve an “academic bill of rights” that protects students and faculty from discrimination because of their political beliefs; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that NYSUT and AFT repudiate any legislative attempts to incorporate an Academic Bill of Rights into law and oppose any attempt of the State to impose it on the colleges and universities of New York State; and be it further

RESOLVED, that NYSUT develop a campaign along with the AFT to combat the propaganda and expose the Academic Bill of Rights for what it is, the subversion of academic freedom.