To All Who Support Academic Freedom and Tenure,

Calling all hands on deck!

On Thursday, March 30, the Senate Higher Ed Subcommittee will be hearing SB 18 to eliminate tenure at public institutions of higher education. Here’s the hearing agenda and location. SB 18 is the last item on the agenda for this 9am meeting.

Please forward this message to others.

If you are at a public institution of higher ed, you have full First Amendment Rights to express your views as a private individual. [1][2] I am only sending this message to personal and other non-State Agency email accounts for a variety of reasons.

**Action #1: Now and anytime.** Sign the Texas AAUP/AFT campaign to Defend Tenure, DEL, and Academic Freedom. Based on you address, a letter will be sent to the Senator and House member who represents you. You can customize the letter before it's sent. Please provide a personal phone number and personal e-mail address. You can amplify the message by using the Impactive App (from the App store) and use campaign code 851761.

**Action #2: Needed for Actions 3 and 4.** Write 200-250 words about what tenure or tenured faculty mean to you with 2-3 main points. This can be used for all the actions below. Here are resources to help you generate ideas for your page of thoughts:
- One page “white paper” and two-page “talking points”
- AAUP/AFT Analysis of SB 16, 17 and 18
- Texas AAUP Supporting Higher Education Values in Texas
- Op-Ed “UT scientist: Killing tenure would ruin the state’s research universities” PDF

**Action #3: Now and tomorrow.** Post comments and call staffers by Wednesday at 5pm:
1. **Now.** Submit your comments from Action #2 on the Web pages for every member of the Senate Higher Ed Subcommittee by clicking E-MAIL YOUR SENATOR on the upper right:
   a. **Brandon Creighton** (Rep; Comm. Chair, BA UT Austin)
   b. **Mayes Middleton** (Rep; Comm. Vice Chair, BA UT Austin; JD UT Austin)
   c. **Phil King** (Rep; BA & MBA Dallas Baptist Univ., JD Texas A&M)
   d. **Drew Springer** (Rep; BA UNT)
   e. **Royce West** (Dem, BA & MA UT Arlington, UH JD)
2. **Wednesday 10am-4pm.** Call the staffers who handle higher ed issues for the above committee and let them know of your objections to SB 18 by reading what you had written in Action #2 -- phone calls are far more effective than e-mail because e-mail messages can be easily ignored:
   a. Abby Johnston (512) 463-0355, Sen. Creighton (Abby is Committee Clerk)
   b. Joel Resendiz (512) 463-4788, Sen. Creighton (Joel & Abby split duties)
   c. Ryan Jones (512) 463-0111, Sen. Middleton
   d. Beth Shields (512) 463-0110, Sen. King
e. Jonathan Mathers (512) 463-0130, Sen. Springer  
f. La Juana Barton 512-463-0123, Sen. West

**Action #4: Thursday.** Testify at Thursday’s hearing.
- You must be in person to testify  
- You’ll have two minutes to testify and the time limit is strictly enforced  
- You can refine your thoughts from Action #2 to be your testimony  
- Bring water, snacks, and a seat cushion with you because the hearing might last into the evening and you might end up sitting on the floor  
- Here’s the agenda and location and SB 18 is the last item for the 9am meeting  
- Plan to arrive at 8am if possible – arriving any time before SB 18 is heard would be fine and SB 18 is the last item on the agenda  
- To testify, you must sign in using the kiosks outside – your testimony is under oath  
- As examples of testimony, see excerpts from Thursday’s hearing of SB 16 on academic freedom by the Senate Higher Ed Subcommittee starting at 1:20:23 mark  
- See the Guide to Testifying by the Texas Election Reform Commission for more info  
- See the Texas AAUP Advocacy Training for more info

**References**
[1] Texas Government Code “Sec. 556.003. State Employee Rights. A state employee has the rights of freedom of association and political participation guaranteed by the state and federal constitutions except as provided by Section 556.004.”
[2] When speaking as a private individual, you have freedom to express your views using your First Amendment Rights. Be clear who you’re speaking for. Use non-State Agency equipment, networks, e-mail accounts, etc. BTW, the State Legislature is not a State Agency (see the definition of “State Agency” in Texas Government Code Sec. 556.)

Best,  
Brian

Brian L. Evans, PhD | He/His/Him  
Member, American Association of University Professors, AFT, AFL-CIO  
Vice President, Texas AAUP Conference

Speaking for myself as a private individual  
Not representing any group, institution, or organization