



February 23, 2024

The Honorable Jennifer Decker
Kentucky State Representative, District 58
702 Capitol Avenue, Room 357D
Kentucky Capitol Annex Building
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Representative Decker:

The Prichard Committee appreciates your service in the Kentucky House of Representatives and recognizes our shared responsibility to create policies that improve education outcomes and support the long-term success of our state. We stand committed to working with you to ensure a big bold future for all Kentuckians.

In this spirit, we write to express our concern regarding the potential impacts of House Bill 9 on our colleges, universities, and, most importantly, our students. The essence of higher education lies in its ability to create critical thinkers and leaders prepared to contribute positively to our diverse society.

HB 9, as currently drafted, may lead to unintended consequences and significant challenges to postsecondary institutions in Kentucky, specifically:

1. Restrictions on available courses, course content, classroom instructional materials, and classroom discussion on significant current and historical events;
2. Restrictions on admission standards and admission services that are currently in place to ensure postsecondary institutions have a composition of students that is reflective of the commonwealth;
3. Housing restrictions on student preferences;
4. Restraints on faculty and student research;
5. Administrative burden on the acceptance and transfer of credits; and
6. Financial risk to the postsecondary educational system by the waiver of sovereign and governmental immunity protections.

To lessen the unintended consequences of these bills, the Prichard Committee welcomes a discussion with you, as the bill's primary sponsor. We have prepared an addendum accompanying this letter with our proposed amendments to HB 9.

Our primary concerns with HB 9 rest in the risk that its passage, as written, could lead to restricting discussions and academic inquiries in the classroom and the risk of stifling critical thinking skills that students profoundly need in today's society. Further, HB 9 would lead to an impact on the commonwealth's postsecondary institutions' ability to recruit top-tier faculty and students.



The Prichard Committee

Building a Groundswell for a Big Bold Future

The broader implication of this bill is the potential impact on workforce and economic competitiveness by restricting the business community from a desired pool of talented postsecondary graduates who are highly informed and have a diverse educational perspective.

It is crucial that Kentucky maintains educational environments that respect and promote the free exchange of ideas and support the comprehensive development of our students.

We stand ready to engage in a constructive dialogue with you and work toward solutions that align with our shared goal of advancing the highest quality of education in our state.

Sincerely,

Brigitte Blom
President & CEO
Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence