WEST virginia legislature

2024 regular session

Introduced

Senate Bill 503

By Senators Grady, Taylor, Maynard, Roberts, Deeds, Azinger, and Rucker

[Introduced January 22, 2024; referred  
to the Committee on Education; and then to the Committee on the Judiciary]

A BILL to amend and reenact §18B-20-5 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to protection of belief-based student organizations by expanding student organizations that are protected against certain types of discrimination by a state institution of higher education; and expanding the types of discrimination the student organizations are protected from.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 20. FREE EXPRESSION ON CAMPUS.

§18B-20-5. Freedom of association and nondiscrimination against students and student organizations.

A state institution of higher education may not deny a religious, political, or ideological student organization ~~which is open to all students~~ any benefit or privilege ~~made~~ generally available to ~~any~~ other student ~~organization~~ organizations by the state institution of higher education, or otherwise discriminate against such an organization, based on:

(1) ~~the~~ The expression of the organization; or

(2) A requirement by the organization that the organization’s leaders or members:

(A) Affirm and adhere to the organization’s sincerely held beliefs;

(B) Comply with the organization’s standards of conduct; or

(C) Further the organization’s mission or purpose.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to protect belief-based student organizations by expanding student organizations that are protected against certain types of discrimination by a state institution of higher education and expanding the types of discrimination the student organizations are protected from.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.