

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 10:53 AM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Barbara Ladner, email - ladnerbe@wvstateu.edu, phone number - (304) 522-7826, org - WVSU, zip-code - 25701

Date of Submission: 03/12/2025

It would be a big mistake to take voting rights away from faculty, staff, and student BOG reps. They are only a small minority, but voting rights gives them an authority to speak and be heard that non-voting status would undermine. BOGs need to listen to those 'in the trenches' when considering policies and actions. New board members especially need these voices to understand how board actions will actually play out in the institution's operations.

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 12:19 PM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Mary Roush, email - mgroush14@gmail.com, phone number - (304) 593-3886, org - , zip-code - 25260

Date of Submission: 03/11/2025

As a life long West Virginian and student at West Virginia University, I strongly oppose this bill. The student voting seat on the Board of Governors is vital to the student body and allows for the student voice to not only be heard but also to make change. I strongly urge you to reconsider and not strip students of this privilege.

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 12:18 PM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Erin Skaff, email - erin.wu777@gmail.com, phone number - (304) 993-4104, org - , zip-code - 25311

Date of Submission: 03/11/2025

I oppose this bill. The student voting position on the Board of Governors allows our student body to have a voice in what happens to us, on our campus. It is unfair to remove voting privileges from our Student Body President, a person elected by and representative of our student population.

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 11:55 AM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Andrew Kohn, email - Andrew.Kohn@mail.wvu.edu, phone number - (412) 735-3673, org - West Virginia University, zip-code - 15213

Date of Submission: 03/11/2025

HB-3279 should be defeated. Votes taken by the West Virginia University Board of Governors should include votes cast by the representatives of the faculty, staff, and students. These constituencies must have a voice. The University exists, first and foremost, for these constituencies.

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 11:44 AM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Carter Leadmon, email - cml00023@mix.wvu.edu, phone number - (304) 951-4744, org - West Virginia University Student Government Association, zip-code - 25526

Date of Submission: 03/11/2025

My name is Carter Leadmon, I am a student at West Virginia University from Hurricane, West Virginia. Over the past years, I have been heavily involved on the WVU Morgantown campus serving in our student government as Treasurer, as a Presidential Student Ambassador, and as an Admissions Ambassador.

This public comment is with respect to the sections of this bill that address the voting status of student, staff, and faculty representatives on the West Virginia University Board of Governors.

I believe that the student and faculty vote on the Board of Governors is essential to the ability of the Board to represent all stakeholders at WVU. The vote that our student body president has is imperative to ensuring that the voices of students are heard, and that our interests are kept at the forefront. The removal of the voting privileges of our student body president would be taken as a hostile act against higher education in West Virginia by the many students enrolled in our state's universities.

I highly encourage those voting on this bill to consider my comments, and vote accordingly.

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 11:13 AM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Erin Ellis, email - erin.ellis@mail.wvu.edu, phone number - , org - , zip-code - 26501

Date of Submission: 03/11/2025

This bill to remove voting rights for faculty, staff, and student representatives for a public university's Board of Governors is **absolutely unconscionable**. These are actually the people that make up the population of said public university - why on earth would they not be represented on the governing body? This is an obvious move to dismantle any opposition to the true motives of the BoG, which is to move towards a corporate C-suite model where all of the power rests in the hands of a few "executives." NO. A public university is for the people, not for a select few who might never have even attended the university. How are we to trust that a BoG with no current students or employees represented will make decisions for the *entire community*, knowing all of the information, experiences, and points of view? **WVU is a public university** and as such, it is critical that students, faculty, staff (the folks that actually get and provide an education at this institution) have a voice in decision-making. **Public education is not a corporation!** They are non-profit organizations that serve the population of the state, including the state employees that work there, not to mention the students that pay to attend!

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 10:42 AM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Julia Bolin, email - ajbolin@hotmail.com, phone number - (304) 771-4431, org - WVU, zip-code - 26149

Date of Submission: 03/11/2025

I do not agree that faculty, student, and classified staff members of the Board of Governors for ANY institution in West Virginia be changed to "non-voting" members. The voices of these members is important and should not be silenced from the decision making process.

It is important that the Board of Governors remains in touch with the lived experiences of faculty, students, and staff. It is imperative that the voices of those affected most by BOG rules and governance, have the ability to vote on matters. Taking away their ability to vote is wrong.

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 9:32 AM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Joshua Swiger, email - joshua.swiger75@gmail.com, phone number - , org - , zip-code - 26508

Date of Submission: 03/11/2025

Removing Voting Rights in any organization bring the universal question of WHY? Why is the bill attempting to remove the voting rights of members, especially those members that are faculty, staff and students that are the "institution" and do the work that make the institution what it is?

Removing voting rights of any kind will **universally** be seen as a move to consolidate power within a group and trample on the rights of others. When these types of actions are considered, it generally will be seen as the select group not getting away with their group or personal agendas and the attempt is to silence those that they disagree with.

There is no other argument that can be made that people would consider removing someone's right to make their voice heard in a voting situation. The only argument is that this bill does not want those voices to be considered.

The sponsors of this bill Delegate Criss and Riley, are attempting to silence voices. Its nothing more than an attempt to do so.

The Founding Fathers created this country with the power of the vote. Granted at the time they were all men that owned land. However they wanted their voice to be heard in Parliment and were denied. They were never given the rights to vote, much less had their vote taken away. This country has fantastic voting rights for ALL, as that is what we were founded on. Any attempt to remove voting rights is an attempt to silence. It appears by removing the 5 votes of faculty, staff, and students is an attempt to silence those groups. This language needs to be struct from this bill.

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 9:16 AM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Kate Fotos, email - Katefotos32@gmail.com, phone number - , org - , zip-code - 26035

Date of Submission: 03/11/2025

To whom it may concern,

The Board of Governors is tasked with overseeing and managing the activities of a university. This task cannot be done without direct input from the primary employees and clients, the students, of the institution. It would be remiss to not allow the elected and appointed representatives of these integral parts of the university to vote. West Virginia University is such an expansive and impressive institution that touches the lives of all West Virginians. We deserves to have a Board of Governors that mirrors its image and has the power to vote to ensure its future.

Respectfully,

Kate

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 9:03 AM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Bryan Cole, email - bryancole06@icloud.com, phone number - (304) 620-7375, org - , zip-code - 25427

Date of Submission: 03/11/2025

I support the opposition of this legislation. It is important that students have a voice and are represented on college campuses in our state. As a West Virginia native, and, as a student of West Virginia University, I am deeply saddened to understand that the passage of this legislation will constitute student representation being stripped from the Board of Governors and moving it to an advisory position. Students need to be represented by their peers on college campuses. Statistically, it leads to higher graduation rates, more cohesion in student bodies, and eventually leads to encouragement of other students to be advocates for their peers.

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 7:42 AM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Greg Dahle, email - greg.dahle@gmail.com, phone number - (304) 293-6292, org - , zip-code - 26508

Date of Submission: 03/11/2025

While I support the consideration that at least one member of the BOG for WVU and for WVSU have a background in agriculture; I cannot support that the student, staff and faculty representatives on the BOG are advisory and non-voting. This move will remove all self-governance by the three groups that are directly effected by the decisions made by the BOG. The move would lead to a lack of representation that is similar to a primary complaint by the Colonists against King George - taxation without representation.

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2025 10:37 PM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Mimi Ferguson, email - mimifergusonwv@gmail.com, phone number - (304) 614-5158, org - WVU SGA, zip-code - 26250

Date of Submission: 03/10/2025

As a student at West Virginia University I believe having a student perspective and vote on the Board of Governors is absolutely essential to student representation. As a member of the WVU Student Government Association, I have watched the work our respective SGA Presidents have put in to meet students where they are at, and then represent those concerns at a higher level. Eliminating the voting rights of this position would work in opposite direction of that. Students and faculty, who this bill will directly impact, do not support this. I urge all public representatives to accurately vote in the best interests and desires of their constituents, and in this case that is through not supporting the passage of this legislation.

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2025 9:56 PM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Christopher Pritchard, email - christopher.pritchard@gmail.com, phone number - , org - , zip-code - 25405

Date of Submission: 03/10/2025

Please do not discontinue the ability of students to participate in the governing body. This is important for the students, the university and all of our futures.

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2025 9:44 PM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Olivia, email - oer00002@mix.wvu.edu, phone number - (302) 609-0523, org - West Virginia University, zip-code - 20601

Date of Submission: 03/10/2025

The student body president is an integral position on the WVU Board of Governors, because they are the only board member whose job is solely to advocate for the students. WVU students vote on this issue in their elections, they want a candidate who will best represent them in conversations directly impacting their education. To strip the Student Body President of this power would make the democratic process of the university obsolete. The presidency would be ceremonial in nature, decreasing civic engagement on campus and thereby in the larger state community. Please reconsider the piece of this bill that strips elected Student Body Presidents on their voting power on the Board of Governors. To strip this position would only worsen civic education in this state. The pros do not outweigh the cons.

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From: Public Comments
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2025 9:37 PM
To: House Higher Education
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Contact Info: name - Emma Gardner, email - entropyemma@gmail.com, phone number - (304) 437-2448, org - , zip-code - 26452

Date of Submission: 03/10/2025

I strongly oppose House Bill 3279 as it seeks to strip faculty and student representatives on the WVU Board of Governors (BOG) of their voting rights. This change would significantly weaken shared governance and erode trust between the university administration, faculty, and students.

Faculty and students are the backbone of any university. Their firsthand experience with academic programs, research, and campus life provides critical insight into decisions affecting the institution's future. Removing their voting rights would silence the very people most impacted by Board decisions, reducing transparency and accountability in university governance.

West Virginia University is a land-grant institution with a mission to serve its students and the broader community. Excluding faculty and students from meaningful participation in governance contradicts this mission and could lead to decisions that do not reflect the needs of those directly involved in higher education.

I urge the legislature to reject this bill and preserve the integrity of shared governance at WVU. Faculty and student voices must remain not only heard but also counted in shaping the future of our university.

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2025 8:51 PM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Charlie Long, email - charlieclong@gmail.com, phone number - (304) 951-2838, org - West Virginia University Student Government, zip-code - 25314

Date of Submission: 03/10/2025

This bill would remove a vital component of WVU's Board of Governors: its student vote. I believe that doing this sends the wrong message to our state's young people: that their voice as a tuition-paying student does not matter as much as those appointed to the Board. As the current Student Body President, having a say in the Board's actions has taught me the value of public service and encouraged me to stay in West Virginia after graduation. I want everyone to have access to this experience - I don't want it to end with me.

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2025 8:49 PM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Shelby Davis, email - sld00030@mix.wvu.edu, phone number - , org - , zip-code - 26501

Date of Submission: 03/10/2025

WVU students, faculty, and employees should have a direct voting impact on the choices that affect their education and work. Is there a way to include someone with a background in agriculture without removing the crucial voting impact of key WVU constituents on the board of governors?

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From: Public Comments
Sent: Thursday, March 13, 2025 9:44 AM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Brittany Fletcher, email - arts.humanities@wvstateu.edu, phone number - (304) 208-7504, org - West Virginia State University, zip-code - 25504

Date of Submission: 03/13/2025

I am writing to strongly oppose House Bill 3279, as it undermines the essential role of faculty, staff, and student representatives in the governance of West Virginia State University. This bill, which proposes changes to the composition of the West Virginia State University Boards of Governors and other institutions within our state, risks diminishing the voices and involvement of faculty, staff, and students in critical decision-making processes.

Currently, the faculty, staff, and student representatives on the Board play an essential role in voicing the perspectives and needs of the academic community. These individuals are uniquely positioned to offer valuable insights that reflect the lived experiences of those directly affected by the board's decisions. By focusing on the addition of a specific expertise in agriculture and reducing the inclusivity of other representative roles, this bill could marginalize these critical voices and undermine the collaborative spirit that is vital for the success of our institutions.

Taking away the voting privileges of faculty, staff, and student members is taking away their key involvement in the decision-making process. Voting privileges allow these groups to actively shape the policies and decisions that impact the institution. Without this critical ability, their contributions would be significantly diminished, weakening the governance structure and reducing the effectiveness of the Board in serving the diverse needs of the academic community.

The involvement of faculty, staff, and students in governance ensures that the needs of the broader academic community are considered. Their contributions help ensure that the policies and actions of the Board align with the mission and values of the institution and serve the best interests of all stakeholders. Removing or limiting their ability to vote would result in a less inclusive and less effective governance structure. Moreover, this shift could have long-term consequences, not only diminishing the quality of decision-making, but potentially leading to disengagement from the academic community. A governance structure that does not adequately represent those most affected by its decisions can harm the reputation of these institutions, erode trust, and hinder their long-term success.

I urge you to reconsider this bill and take steps to preserve the valuable contributions of all members of the Board, particularly those representing faculty, staff, and students.

Thank you for your attention to this matter

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Thursday, March 13, 2025 9:39 AM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Rachel McGuire, email - rachel.erin4@gmail.com, phone number - (304) 438-5555, org - , zip-code - 24901

Date of Submission: 03/13/2025

Taking voting rights away from institutional board members would be a disservice to the state, the board, and institutions represented by these boards. Institutional representatives should be able to voice their institution's opinions on record and have that time and effort count toward something. Reducing these positions to advisory only will make these boards more political tools than actual useful governing bodies, as the non-institutional members will be able to simply disregard the wants and needs of the institutions and do what they want, rather than what is best for the institutions.

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Thursday, March 13, 2025 9:39 AM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Jeffrey Pietruszynski, email - jeff.pietruszynski@gmail.com, phone number - , org - , zip-code - 25159

Date of Submission: 03/13/2025

Although on the surface the Bill proposes to amend the WVU and WVSU BOGs to include an agriculture expert as a mandatory member of the Board, the proposed bill does much more than that by including language that completely alters the BOG structure and strips membership and meaningful voices from on-campus stakeholders. As proposed, this is a full-frontal attack on the time tested effectiveness of institutions of higher education, shared governance.

Shared governance is identified by the leading board advisory organization, The Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB), as “essential to confronting today’s uncertain higher education environment.” Important in meeting the tenants of effective shared governance is having a meaningful voice in the conversation and an actual, not perceived, stake in decisions of the University’s future. West Virginia currently leads the way in shared governance by giving on-campus stakeholders full membership on the Board. By relegating these positions to non-voting advisory roles, the proposed Bill language weakens the impact of these important constituents. I believe this action would negatively affect “buy-in” with faculty, staff, and students of any decision or direction made by the board.

The arguments that have been reported for the bill are logically flawed, leaving out essential information. Although it may be true that in a business the “employees don’t pick the CEO,” it is important to note that universities and education are not, in fact, businesses. Instead of a traditional business model where experience creates a top-down model of expertise, higher education shares expertise among the organization’s multitude of experts. ALL of these voices have an equal stake in making sure the university is moving in the right direction.

The second reported argument was to say that an advisory committee still has a say in the operations of the university. If this was true, then why not just mandate an agricultural advisory committee instead of voting membership? (Especially since the agricultural component of the mission is smaller than the overall academic mission of the university). Research into the effectiveness of governing boards, especially those in higher education, shows that relegating faculty, staff, and students, to an advisory role has a negative affect on the effectiveness of the board. Voting positions in these categories allow for those most impacted by decisions being made. Advisory and voting roles, simply put, are not equal.

West Virginia is constantly being denigrated for its positions on education. However, as I wrote above, this is an area (BOG membership) where we are leading the way. As pointed out that not “all” Big 12 schools follow this model, but this is not about effectiveness, it is about the fact that not every institution

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Thursday, March 13, 2025 9:18 AM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Jill N Collins, email - jnwyant@hotmail.com, phone number - (910) 467-1148, org - Southern WV Community & Technical College, zip-code - 25634

Date of Submission: 03/13/2025

Faculty, staff and student representatives SHOULD have a vote on the Board of Governors. We are the ones with the knowledge of day to day activities that affect our work/school environment. The voices from inside the college should be heard!

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Thursday, March 13, 2025 7:40 AM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Stephanie Mounts, email - smounts1258@gmail.com, phone number - , org - Southern WV Community and Technical College, zip-code - 25601

Date of Submission: 03/13/2025

As a faculty member at Southern WV Community and Technical College, I strongly oppose HB 3279, which seeks to remove voting rights from faculty, staff, and student representatives on higher education Boards of Governors. This bill undermines shared governance, weakens institutional accountability, and limits the voices of those directly engaged in the education system.

Faculty, staff, and students provide essential insight into academic policies, campus operations, and student success. Their voting participation ensures informed decision-making that reflects the real needs of higher education institutions. Removing their voices from governance decisions risks disengagement and weakened institutional effectiveness.

Inclusive decision-making fosters institutional trust, accountability, and long-term success. I urge lawmakers to reconsider this bill and engage directly with higher education stakeholders before proceeding with such changes.

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 8:00 PM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Riley Coulter, email - rileycoulter@yahoo.com, phone number - , org - West Virginia University, zip-code - 25526

Date of Submission: 03/12/2025

Hello!,

I am a current Senior at West Virginia University, graduating in May with a degree in Biomedical Engineering. I have devoted much of my career at WVU to advocacy work through a variety of student organizations, such as the Student Government Association. Through this, I have seen first-hand how valuable the student experience and student input are when making decisions about our university. Taking away our vote on the Board of Governors is essentially saying that the voice of the students that make this university what it is do not matter, these decisions directly impact us.

I urge you all to please not support this bill as it takes away the voice of the almost 30,000 students that make up our flagship university, an institution that would not be what it is without our work and contributions.

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 7:48 PM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Elise Marie Vuiller, email - emvuiller3@gmail.com, phone number - (304) 914-0438, org - WVU Student Government Association, zip-code - 26062

Date of Submission: 03/12/2025

Hello, my name is Elise Vuiller and I currently serve as a Senator-At-Large in WVU's Student Government Association. By taking away the students and staffs vote away from the Board of Governors you are directly denying the very people who make the Board of Governor's possible. Without students (who pay tuition) there would be no University, as well as staff who run the University on a day to day basis. We matter and so do our voices, this is our education and this should be respected highly. It doesn't make sense to not listen to the very people who are affected by every decision made by the Board of Governors. Please vote no!

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 1:59 PM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Leah Stone, email - lstone@osteo.wvsom.edu, phone number - (304) 647-6318, org - West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine, zip-code - 24901

Date of Submission: 03/12/2025

I am writing to advocate for the inclusion of faculty, students, and staff members on the Board of Governors with voting rights in West Virginia higher education. This change is crucial to ensure that diverse perspectives are represented in decision-making processes, fostering a more inclusive and equitable academic environment.

Including these groups in the voting process will promote transparency, accountability, and trust within our institution. Ultimately, this will enhance the quality and responsiveness of our educational policies and practices.

Thank you for considering this important step towards a more inclusive and effective governance structure.

Best regards,

Leah Stone

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 1:45 PM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Evonne Richards, email - erichards@osteo.wvsom.edu, phone number - (304) 667-0879, org - WV School of Osteopathic Medicine, zip-code - 24901

Date of Submission: 03/12/2025

This affects every public institution in WV, not just the two land grant universities mentioned. Students, faculty, and staff are directly engaged in the academic and operational functions of their institutions. Their voting representation on Boards of Governors (BOGs) ensures that the largest and most impacted groups within higher education have a say in shaping policies that affect learning environments, faculty retention, student success, and institutional direction.

Many individuals who serve on BOGs have limited experience in higher education and may be far removed from the academic realities of campus life. Without input from those actively engaged in teaching, learning, and student support, board decisions risk being disconnected from the day-to-day challenges and needs of the institutions they govern. Eliminating voting rights for faculty, staff, and students would silence critical voices and concentrate decision-making in the hands of those who may not fully understand the impact of their policies.

I urge you to reject HB 3279 and maintain the voting representation of students, faculty, and staff on institutional boards. Preserving these voices is essential for ensuring that West Virginia's higher education institutions remain responsive, inclusive, and committed to academic excellence.

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 12:38 PM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Jodi Vincnt, email - jodi.vincent@mail.wvu.edu, phone number - (304) 288-5606, org - WVU Classified Staff Personnel, zip-code - 26505

Date of Submission: 03/12/2025

I would like to comment on my disappointment with this bill trying to take away voting rights of the few members of the BOG who actually work and attend WVU. This is outrageous! Why are you trying to silence us? We need to be able to express our opinions and know it means something.

We also need a percentage of classified staff to remain on each campus - 10% would be a great number out of all the classified staff. Please stop the Higher Education System from changing jobs to non-classified which still should be classified.

If you wish to help, change how the compensation system for higher education works so that it matches other state employees with a grade/scale. That way we have an opportunity to get raises. Stop the Administration from using up so much money on positions that could also be combined to one person - just like they did the lower paid persons.

Melinda Swagger

From: Erin Hudnall <erinbhudnall@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 12:37 PM
To: House Higher Education
Cc: Lori Dittman; Jimmy Willis; Trenton Barnhart; Thomas Clark; Elias Coop-Gonzalez; Rick Garcia; Phil Mallow; George Miller; Elliott Pritt; Adam Vance; Lisa White
Subject: Petition: HB 3279
Attachments: HB3279 amend language petition.pdf

Hello,

My name is Erin Hudnall, and I am a resident of WV and a staff member and student at WVU.

I am reaching out to provide petition signatures regarding language in HB 3279 that removes voting rights from faculty and student Board of Governors members. I will continue to collect and provide signatures, but I wanted to reach out while this bill is in the markup phase.

Please note that signatures from those outside of WV represent those who work at or attend WVU or another impacted institution, and therefore, all signatures should be marked as tallies against the amended language that removes voting rights.

It is important to point out that including those who are impacted by decisions is a best practice across many disciplines and areas of work, including youth engagement, community development, and patient advocacy. I work with young people and the one thing they want is to be considered in the decisions that impact them, and there is absolutely no justifiable reason to remove voting rights from student and faculty Board members. Remove this language so the bill can serve its real purpose - expanding decision making power, rather than concentrating it in the hands of a few.

You can find the list of signatures attached, and the [petition remains open at this link](#).

Thank you.

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Erin Hudnall

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 12:11 PM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Michael Casey, email - mcasey@alumni.unc.edu, phone number - , org - , zip-code - 25071

Date of Submission: 03/12/2025

I am writing as a concerned constituent to express my strong opposition to the proposed bill HB 3279, which seeks to restrict representation on the Board of Governors by making campus constituency representatives non-voting members. This legislation raises significant concerns regarding equitable representation, transparency, and the overall effectiveness of our governance structures.

Representation: Restricting representation on the Board of Governors undermines the principles that are fundamental to effective governance. A board should ensure that multiple perspectives are considered, leading to more comprehensive and balanced decision-making. Limiting representation could result in a narrow viewpoint that does not reflect the interests and needs of a campus community.

Transparency and Accountability: Broad representation on governing boards enhances transparency and accountability. When various stakeholders have a seat at the table, it promotes open dialogue and scrutiny, which are essential for maintaining public trust. Restricting representation may lead to decisions that lack sufficient oversight and do not serve the overall interest of a particular campus.

Governance Effectiveness: Effective governance relies on the relaying of varied expertise and experiences. By limiting who can vote on the Board of Governors, we risk excluding valuable insights that contribute to informed policy-making and the successful implementation of initiatives.

In light of these concerns, I urge legislators to oppose HB 3279 and any similar legislation that seeks to limit representation on the Board of Governors.

Thank you for considering my perspective on this critical issue.

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From: Public Comments
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 12:10 PM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

Contact Info: name - Grishma Madaliya, email - grishmadaliya23@gmail.com, phone number - , org - , zip-code - 25112

Date of Submission: 03/12/2025

Stripping the Bog of their voting rights isnt right as they are the ones who actually know whats going on on campus and student life on campus.

I disagree and disapprove of this notion.

Melinda Swagger

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To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

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The bill, as proposed, removes voting rights from the faculty and student members of the Board. No clear justification for this change has been provided. Removing voting rights signals to the students and faculty at higher education institutions that their input is not welcome. This is likely to have a negative effect on recruitment and retention, something that West Virginia can ill afford given demographic trends.

Melinda Swagger

From: Public Comments
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 11:15 AM
To: House Higher Education
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3279

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Prohibiting the Faculty, staff, and student representatives would be a huge mistake. Who on the Board of Governors knows better what is happening on campus than these folks.