



**State Senator
Kirk Watson
District 14**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Watson files free speech on campus bill

Senator Kirk Watson on Thursday filed a bill to reaffirm Texas' commitment to protecting free speech and fostering open and civil dialogue on our public college campuses.

"The right to free speech and expression is central to our identity as Americans, and it's particularly important on our public college campuses," Sen. Watson said.

"We cannot foster the next generation of Texas leaders if college students, faculty, and staff do not feel safe to exchange different ideas and viewpoints. Unfortunately, a series of incidents at campuses across the United States have undermined that security, which is why I believe Texas should take the affirmative step of codifying the free speech protections in SB 447."

SB 447 protects free speech on public college campuses by:

- Prohibiting "free speech zones," while allowing constitutional time, place, and manner restrictions to prevent classroom and other interruptions;
- Barring public colleges from silencing students based on their speech's content or message;
- Prohibiting speaker disinvitations for any reason other than a legitimate risk to campus safety; and
- Requiring public colleges to establish disciplinary sanctions for students or employees who interfere with expressive activities of others on campus after being asked by an official to stop the interference.

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