

HOUSE BILL NO. 5242

November 06, 2025, Introduced by Reps. Kelly, Bollin, Rigas, Aragona, Slagh, DeBoyer, Woolford, BeGole, Steele, Harris, Neyer and Maddock and referred to Committee on Government Operations.

A bill to prohibit accrediting agencies from reviewing or considering diversity, equity, and inclusion policies, programs, or practices when making accreditation decisions related to institutions of higher education in this state; and to provide remedies.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

1 Sec. 1. This act may be cited as the "keep accreditation about
2 academics act".

3 Sec. 2. As used in this act:

4 (a) "Accreditation" means the status of public recognition

1 that an accrediting agency grants to an educational institution or
2 program that meets the agency's standards and requirements.

3 (b) "Accrediting agency" means a legal entity, or a part of a
4 legal entity, that conducts accrediting activities and makes
5 decisions concerning the accreditation or reaccreditation status of
6 institutions of higher education, their programs, or both.
7 Accrediting agency includes any national, regional, or programmatic
8 accrediting agency.

9 (c) "Diversity, equity, and inclusion policy, program, or
10 practice" means a policy, program, or practice established for any
11 of the following purposes:

12 (i) To influence hiring or employment practices at an
13 institution of higher education with respect to race, sex, color,
14 or ethnicity, other than through the use of colorblind and sex-
15 neutral hiring processes in accordance with any applicable state
16 and federal antidiscrimination laws.

17 (ii) To promote differential treatment of or provide special
18 benefits to individuals on the basis of race, color, or ethnicity,
19 including for the purposes of hiring, evaluating, or promoting
20 administrators, employees, or teachers.

21 (iii) To promote policies or procedures designed or implemented
22 in reference to race, color, or ethnicity, other than policies or
23 procedures approved in writing by an institution of higher
24 education's general counsel and its governing board for the sole
25 purpose of ensuring compliance with applicable court orders or
26 state or federal laws.

27 (iv) To conduct trainings, programs, or activities designed or
28 implemented in reference to race, color, ethnicity, gender
29 identity, or sexual orientation, other than trainings, programs, or

1 activities developed by an attorney and approved in writing by an
2 institution of higher education's general counsel and governing
3 board for the sole purpose of ensuring compliance with applicable
4 court orders or state or federal laws.

5 (d) "Diversity statement" means any written or oral
6 communication describing views on matters related to race,
7 ethnicity, color, or national origin that is not required by
8 applicable state or federal law.

9 (e) "Governing board" means the person or body that supervises
10 and controls an institution of higher education. Governing board
11 includes those boards described in sections 5, 6, and 7 of article
12 VIII of the state constitution of 1963.

13 (f) "Institution of higher education" means a degree- or
14 certificate-granting public or private college or university,
15 junior college, or community college in this state. Institution of
16 higher education includes any program or school operated by the
17 institution. For purposes of this definition, an institution of
18 higher education is located in this state if it has a physical
19 campus in this state or offers online classes and more than 25% of
20 its online students are residents of this state.

21 Sec. 3. (1) When taking any action on the accreditation or
22 renewal of accreditation of an institution of higher education, an
23 accrediting agency shall not do any of the following:

24 (a) Base its accreditation decision in any way on a review or
25 consideration of the diversity, equity, and inclusion policies,
26 programs, or practices of the institution.

27 (b) Collect information related to the diversity, equity, and
28 inclusion policies, programs, or practices of the institution.

29 (c) Include any requirement related to diversity, equity, and

1 inclusion, such as, but not limited to, requiring a diversity
2 statement from the institution or any employee or contractor of the
3 institution.

4 (2) An accrediting agency considering the accreditation or
5 renewal of accreditation of an institution of higher education
6 shall implement policies to ensure that any person with decision-
7 making or recommendation authority related to that accreditation or
8 renewal of accreditation does not collect and is not presented with
9 any information regarding the diversity, equity, and inclusion
10 policies, programs, or practices of the institution.

11 Sec. 4. (1) Section 3 may be enforced through a civil action
12 brought against an accrediting agency by any past or present
13 student or employee of, or contractor with, the institution of
14 higher education.

15 (2) Section 3 also may be enforced against an accrediting
16 agency by the attorney general on behalf of this state. The
17 attorney general may investigate and seek remedies as provided in
18 the Elliot-Larsen civil rights act, 1976 PA 453, MCL 37.2101 to
19 37.2804, and the Michigan consumer protection act, 1976 PA 331, MCL
20 445.901 to 445.922.

21 (3) In addition to any other remedies available under law or
22 equity, an accrediting agency that violates section 3 shall pay all
23 of the following to a prevailing party that sues under subsection
24 (1):

25 (a) The party's reasonable attorney fees and costs.

26 (b) Damages in an amount equal to 3 times all amounts paid to
27 the accrediting agency by the institution of higher education for
28 the accrediting agency's services, whether as dues, fees, or
29 otherwise.

1 (c) Punitive damages in an amount up to \$1,000.00 per student
2 that attended the institution of higher education at the time the
3 accrediting agency violated section 3.

4 Sec. 5. As provided in section 5 of 1846 RS 1, MCL 8.5, the
5 provisions of this act are severable.