

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, July 19, 2021 8:47 AM
To: Timothy Clare; Jack Stark; Robert Schafer; Elizabeth O'Connor; Paul Kenney; Robert Phares; Barbara Weitz
Cc: UNK Student Regent; UNL Student Regent; UNMC Student Regent; UNO Student Regent
Subject: Pillen Resolution

Non-NU Email

Dear Members of the University of Nebraska Board of Regents,

I urge you to reject the motion of Regent Pillen which asks the Regents to adopt a resolution “opposing any imposition of critical race theory as part of any university curriculum” for the following reasons:

First, it is an egregious attempt to limited academic freedom. It is not the role of the Board of Regents to set policy on curriculum or to establish curriculum criteria or content. To do so would be an attempt to micro-manage open discussion in the classroom and the research and discovery activities of the faculty.

Second, attempts to limit academic freedom at the university could lead to censoring of the university by AAUP or other organizations, reminiscent of the censoring of UNL in 2018 for violations of academic freedom. It could also diminish the role and acceptance of UNL in the Big Ten, making UNL disparaged among its Big Ten peers.

Third, this scheme by Regent Pillen is purely political. He is a candidate for Governor and is attempting to gain favor with a segment of the Nebraska electorate. It is an attempt at fear mongering. There is no clear definition of critical race theory or what exactly is implied by using the term. At the core is the idea that any discussion of racial differences in the US will make some people uncomfortable. In a recent opinion concerning off campus student speech, Justice Alito explained ““Speech cannot be suppressed just because it expresses thoughts or sentiments that others find upsetting.” A recent Time article pointed out that the war on CRT has nothing to do with how to talk about race but everything to do with recent political trends resulting from the last presidency.

Thank you for considering the long term prestige and integrity of the University of Nebraska in rejecting this resolution.

Sincerely,

H. Douglas Jose
Professor Emeritus, Department of Agricultural Economics, UNL