



PRESS RELEASE

May 3, 2024

For Immediate Release

Contact: Julie Lane

Phone: (208) 426-1906

julielane@boisestate.edu

AMERICAN JOURNALISM HISTORIANS ASSOCIATION CALLS ON STATES TO PROTECT ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The American Journalism Historians Association has issued a statement in response to state laws that infringe on educators' freedom to teach history. The organization also has joined efforts by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the Learn From History coalition to prevent political interference in higher education.

"We need to be sure legislators and voters understand the importance of academic freedom to a democratic society," AJHA President Tracy Lucht said. "Professors must be free to teach, and students must be free to learn. That's how we create knowledge."

Citing laws targeting Critical Race Theory and the analytical framework of intersectionality, the AJHA Board of Directors approved the Statement on Legislative Bills Targeting Academic Freedom in April. The statement "calls on public officials and voters to protect higher education from those who seek to limit open inquiry, rigorous research, and honest debate, which advance knowledge in a democratic society." The full [statement](#) is available on the AJHA website.

The AJHA also joined more than 250 scholarly and educational organizations that have endorsed the [Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure](#) issued by the AAUP and the Association of American Colleges (now the American Association of Colleges and Universities) in 1940. The statement was published "to promote public understanding and support of academic freedom and tenure and agreement upon procedures to ensure them in colleges and universities."

"The principles of academic freedom outlined in 1940 are just as important today," Lucht said. "Adding our name seemed like a small but timely step we could take."

According to the statement, "The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition."

Organizations including the American Historical Association and the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication have voiced their opposition to recent attempts to censor educators. The AJHA joins them as part of the [Learn From History](#) coalition, which promotes the teaching of fact-based, accurate history in K-12 classrooms. The coalition includes groups representing parents, students, teachers, school system leaders, and community leaders.

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Founded in 1981, the American Journalism Historians Association seeks to advance education and research in mass communication history. Members work to raise historical standards and ensure that all scholars and students recognize the vast importance of media history and apply this knowledge to the advancement of society. For more information on AJHA, visit <http://www.ajhaonline.org>.

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Contact email: AJHAconvention@gmail.com

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