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Iowa Senate Passes Bill Allowing Taxpayer-Funded Discrimination on College Campuses

[Des Moines]—On Wednesday, Feb. 28, the Iowa Senate passed [SF 2344](#) with a full floor vote (29-20-1). The bill would allow student organizations at public institutions to access school funds and facilities while violating equal access policies.

SF 2344 is a direct response to [Business Leaders in Christ's lawsuit against the University of Iowa](#). This student organization violated not only the university's nondiscrimination policy, but the Iowa Civil Rights Act when they denied one of their members a leadership position because he was gay. The university responded by revoking the group's official student organization status, which allowed them to use school resources. Business Leaders in Christ then sued the university, and their case is currently in litigation.

One Iowa Action Executive Director Daniel Hoffman-Zinnel condemned SF 2344 in a statement.

"Freedom of speech is a necessity and bedrock principle of higher education," One Iowa Action Executive Director Daniel Hoffman-Zinnel said. "However, this bill goes farther than ensuring freedom of speech on college campuses. It gives campus groups the ability to discriminate against others because of who they are while accessing public funds and publicly subsidized venues."

"No student should be excluded from participating in groups or activities they've already paid for because of who they are, and this bill is an attempt to allow just that. This isn't fair to students paying activities fees, or taxpayers who don't want to subsidize discrimination."

"Under this bill, a student group could turn away members because of their gender, race, religious belief, or even disability status and still receive public funding. For example, if a student organization claimed their beliefs do not allow women in leadership positions, they could deny women access to those roles."

"We are disappointed that the Iowa Senate has voted to allow taxpayer-funded discrimination on our state's college campuses. We call on the Iowa House to put a stop to this unnecessary and misguided bill."

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One Iowa Action is a 501(c)(4) organization working to preserve and advance the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer/questioning (LGBTQ) Iowans through grassroots efforts, voter education and advocacy.

Find out more at oneiowaaction.org.