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Unconstitutional Bill Addressing Republican-Manufactured Crisis to Pass Assembly

Republicans set to pass bill spearheaded by Speaker Robin Vos attacking free speech rights on campus

(MADISON) – Today the Wisconsin State Assembly will be taking up AB 299, an unconstitutional bill attacking free speech rights on University of Wisconsin system campuses. AB 299 is a pet project for Speaker Robin Vos, who has touted it as “[one of the most important](#)” bills the Assembly will be taking up this session, so Republicans are expected to force the bill through the Assembly on a party-line vote despite Democrats’ continued objections. State Representative Melissa Sargent (D-Madison) blasted Assembly Republicans about their plan to push AB 299 through the Assembly:

“There are plenty of severe, pervasive crises that need fixing—Republicans don’t need to manufacture new ones,” Rep. Sargent said. “If Republicans are really concerned about what’s happening on college campuses in Wisconsin, they should try fully funding higher education, helping students with crippling student loan debt, or increasing support for resources to address campus sexual assault.”

“Or, better yet, instead of wasting time and energy feigning outrage on a crisis of their creation, maybe Speaker Vos and his Republican colleagues could direct their attention to the calamitous dumpster fire in the room called their billion-dollar budget deficit.”

“Once again, Republicans are making it abundantly clear that they only care about what’s happening on University of Wisconsin campuses when it suits them: when they’re a [sounding board for what Republicans want to do](#), when they [teach students what Republicans want to have taught](#), and when they [promote values Republicans want to have promoted](#).”

“Protecting speech only when it’s conservative might be Republicans’ misguided notion of what ‘freedom of speech’ is, but it certainly doesn’t sound like any notion of ‘freedom’ that I’m familiar with, and it’s certainly not the freedom of speech that our Constitution protects,” Rep. Sargent concluded.

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Melissa Sargent is a Representative in the Wisconsin State Assembly, representing the 48th Assembly District, which covers the east and north sides of the city of Madison and the village of Maple Bluff.