



Missouri House of Representatives

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Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives Stripped From Higher Education Funding

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – State Representative Dirk Deaton, Chair of the House Budget Committee, announced today the formal filing of the appropriations bills for the 2025 legislative session. Included in the bill that appropriates money for public colleges and universities is language to ensure that state funds will not be used for contracts, programs, positions, or organizational entities within institutions of higher education that are solely focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) or similar initiatives.

“Tax dollars should be used to advance education and workforce readiness in our colleges, not to promote divisive ideologies,” Rep. Deaton, R-Seneca, said. “We want to ensure that our universities remain focused on preparing students for success in their careers and contributing to Missouri’s economy, rather than funding programs that sort people based on identity categories rather than merit.”

This provision included with Governor Mike Kehoe’s budget recommendations reflects a broader effort to prioritize resources toward academic excellence, workforce development, and merit-based opportunities.

“I appreciate Governor Kehoe’s leadership on this important issue which includes the recent signing of Executive Order 25-18 and the recommendation of language to be included in the budget for the Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development.”

The House Budget Committee will review and refine the budget bills in the coming weeks before passing them out of the chamber. They will then work with their Senate counterparts to ensure the budget is passed by its constitutional deadline of 6 p.m. on Friday, May 9.

Representative Deaton represents McDonald and Newton counties (District 159) in the Missouri House of Representatives and chairs the House Budget Committee. For more information, contact Rep. Deaton’s office at 573-751-9801 or by email at Dirk.Deaton@House.Mo.Gov.

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