Resolution in Support of New Jersey's "Academic Freedom in Higher Education Protection Act" (A5018/S4324)[1][2]

WHEREAS, academic freedom and institutional autonomy are fundamental to the mission of higher education and to the advancement of teaching, research, scholarship, creative activity, and the free exchange of ideas; and

WHEREAS, academic freedom at institutions of higher education across the United States has faced increasing political interference, including efforts to restrict academic programs, curricula, teaching, research, and the expression and exchange of ideas; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey Assembly Bill A5018 (sponsored by Asm. Danielsen) and Senate Bill S4324 (sponsored by Sen. Zwicker), collectively referred to as the "Academic Freedom in Higher Education Protection Act," would protect the academic freedom of individuals engaged in teaching, research, scholarship, and other academic activities from political interference, while safeguarding the academic freedom of institutions of higher education from undue interference by the NJ State executive branch and publicly appointed governing boards; and

WHEREAS, the protection of academic freedom and institutional autonomy is essential to Rutgers University's ability to fulfill its teaching, research, and public-service missions;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Rutgers University Senate supports the principles and protections proposed in the Academic Freedom in Higher Education Protection Act (A5018/S4324) and supports enactment of the legislation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Rutgers University Senate urges the Assembly and Senate Higher Education Committees to advance A5018 and S4324, respectively; the New Jersey Legislature to pass the legislation; and the Governor to subsequently sign it into law.

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[1] https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2026/A5500/5018_I1.PDF
[2] https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2026/S4500/4324_I1.PDF