

MEMORANDUM

TO: President James W. Crawford, III

FROM: Melissa Flores, J.D., Ph.D.

DATE: August 17, 2026

RE: Senate Bill 17 Annual Presidential Compliance Memorandum

Reporting Period: September 1, 2025 – August 31, 2026

Executive Summary

This memorandum summarizes the University's compliance with Texas Education Code § 51.3525 (Senate Bill 17) and provides the legal basis for recommending whether the President can execute the University's annual statutory certification.

Statutory Background

Senate Bill 17 (88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023), codified primarily at Texas Education Code § 51.3525, establishes restrictions on the creation, operation, and support of certain diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) offices, programs, and employment practices at Texas public institutions of higher education. The legislation reflects the Texas Legislature's policy determination that institutions may not establish or maintain offices or engage in activities that promote or require differential treatment or preferential consideration based on race, color, ethnicity, sex, or national origin, except as otherwise authorized by law. At the same time, the statute expressly preserves numerous academic, constitutional, and federally required activities that remain permissible.

Texas Education Code § 51.3525

Section 51.3525 prohibits public institutions of higher education from establishing or maintaining a DEI office; employing or assigning personnel to perform duties that are prohibited by the statute; requiring or soliciting diversity statements in connection with employment decisions; providing preferential treatment in employment based on protected characteristics except where required by law; and sponsoring or compelling participation in programs or activities that violate the statutory restrictions. The statute also requires each governing board to adopt policies and procedures reasonably designed to ensure institutional compliance.

Annual Certification Requirement

Section 51.3525 requires the governing board of each public institution of higher education submit an annual certification of compliance affirming that the institution has adopted policies consistent



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with the statute and has complied with its requirements during the applicable reporting period. The certification is submitted to the Texas Legislature, with a copy provided to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and serves as the institution's official representation that it has undertaken reasonable measures to comply with the law.

Institutional Compliance Obligations

To support the annual certification, the University must exercise reasonable institutional oversight to ensure continuing compliance with Senate Bill 17. As part of that process, Texas Southern University conducts an annual compliance review that includes, as applicable:

- reviewing policies and procedures governing hiring, recruitment, onboarding, training, procurement, committee appointments, scholarships, and other operational areas;
- evaluating University-sponsored programs, initiatives, offices, and activities that may implicate Senate Bill 17;
- reviewing employment practices to confirm that prohibited diversity statements and prohibited employment preferences are not utilized;
- obtaining compliance certifications from executive leadership and administrative divisions;
- reviewing newly implemented programs and initiatives for legal compliance; and
- documenting corrective actions, where appropriate, before the President executes the University's annual certification.

This review is intended to provide a reasonable factual basis for the University's annual certification and to identify and address potential compliance issues before certification is submitted.

Statutory Exceptions

Senate Bill 17 does not prohibit every activity involving diversity, culture, or protected characteristics. The statute expressly preserves a number of institutional functions and activities, including those that are required or protected by other legal authorities. Examples include:

- academic course instruction and classroom teaching;
- scholarly research and creative works;
- student organizations and their expressive activities;
- guest speakers and programs protected by the First Amendment;
- compliance with federal law, including Title VI, Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Clery Act, and other applicable federal requirements;
- activities required by accreditation standards, grants, contracts, or other legal obligations; and
- other activities expressly authorized by Texas Education Code § 51.3525.

Accordingly, the University's annual compliance review includes an evaluation of programs and activities that may implicate Senate Bill 17 to determine whether they are prohibited by the statute or fall within one or more applicable statutory or constitutional exceptions.



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Certification Support

In performing this year's review, we have collected and engaged in the following:

1. Providing SB17 Human Resources and Procurement training.
2. Collection of the Annual Human Resources Compliance Acknowledgment.
 - Signed by all active members of the HR Office
 - Sr. Employee Relations Coordinator
 - HR Specialist
 - HRIS Technician
 - Sr. Benefits Specialist
 - HR Director
 - HRIS Technician
 - HRIS Analyst
 - Interim CHRO
 - Sr. Associate VP of HR
 - Sr. Employment Specialist - Not complete/ On Leave
3. Collection of the Internal SB17 Compliance Certifications from all Division/Department Leadership and College Deans.
 - Director, The Barbara Jordan Survey Center
 - Dir Online Operations
 - Director - Research and Development Partnership
 - Dir Tech Svcs
 - VP - Strategic Enrollment Management Services
 - Director, TLEC
 - Executive Director Residential Life & Housing
 - Executive Director / HLSAMP
 - Asst VP Student Enrollment and Success
 - Director of Strategic Initiatives and Partnerships
 - Associate Vice President of Student Services
 - Executive Director of Technology Transfer, Commercialization, Grants and Contracts
 - Executive Director of Emergency Management Services
 - Director of Enterprise Engagement
 - Interim Dean School of Communications
 - Acting Dean - Law School
 - Interim Dean School Edu
 - Dir Academic Assessment
 - Director of MPA
 - Vice President & Chief Financial Officer
 - Interim Dean
 - Sr. Assoc VP - Development and Alumni Engagement
 - Dir Computing Svcs



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Senior Associate Vice President, University Planning and Analytics

Executive Director TSU Online

Exec Dir Health Svcs

Director, Student Advisement and Matriculation

Director PNC Entrepreneurship Center

Executive Director of Aviation

Director, Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success

Exec Dir Advancement Services

Dir Student Conduct and Judicial Affairs

Director of Development - Jesse H Jones School of Business

Dir Enhance Faculty Research

Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs

Director of Administration and Strategic Initiatives.

Dir Assessment

Dir Earl Carl Institute

Sr Assoc VP Strategic Initiatives & Transformation

Exec Dir Grad Program Business

Director Career Pathways Center

Dir HR Payroll Svcs

Director - NIH

Exec Dir Provost Business Svcs

Director of Enrollment Systems

Exec Dir Stud Succ Advancement

Executive Director of Student Success

Director of Environmental Health & Safety

Executive Director of Provost Business Services

Executive Director TSU Foundation

Director of Payroll Services

Sr. Associate VP, Operations and Procurement

Interim VP Athletics Director

VP Research and Innovation

Director of Development

Director of Donor Relations & Stewardship

Dean School of Public Affairs

Exec Dir Title III Sponsor

Director of Development

Executive Director of Data Analytics

Dir New Student Success and Community Outreach

Dir Grants Contracts

Director of Development Communication and Marketing

Interim Dean Col Lib Arts Behav Scienc

Exec Dir Curr Grad Initiatives

Associate Vice President - Student Financial and Military Success

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Chief Campus Risk Management & Insurance Administrator
Dir Sports Information
Interim Chief Human Resources Officer
Interim Chief Internal Auditor
Acting Dean
Director of Development
Director of Dietetics
Interim Dean - Pharmacy
Executive Dir Forensic Sci
Dir Academic Stdnt Svcs
Dir Operations
Sr Assoc VP Research and Innovation
Director of Field Education
Director of University Advancement Services
Executive Director of Alumni Relations and Annual Fund
Sr Associate Provost/SAVP for Faculty Affairs & Community Engagement
Exec Dir Board Relations
Dir Counseling Cntr
Senior Vice President & Chief Administrative Officer
Director of Development
Executive Director Central Library
Asst VP Business and Finance - Controller
VP Marketing and Communications
Director of Development
Exec Dir Campus Oper and Protocol
Executive Director - Grad and Undergrad Education
Interim Assistant VP of Business and Finance
Director - Facilities Administration
Director of Academic Records
Interim Dean Graduate School
Executive Director - Campus Recreation
Executive Director of Development
Dir Procurement Services and HUB Coordinator
Exec Dir Stud Life and Engagement
Dean - COSET
VP Govt Affairs & Civic Engagement
Executive Director of Research Development and Infrastructure
Director Student Financial Success

4. Review University mandatory Human Resources training for SB17 compliance.
 4. Preparation of the 2026 Electronic Signature Acknowledgment and Consent Form for submission to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB).
 5. Drafting of the Office of General Counsel SB 17 Review Memorandum.
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Based on its review of the University's policies, practices, programs, and other relevant compliance measures, the President's Compliance believes the University has taken appropriate steps to satisfy the applicable requirements of Senate Bill 17 and Texas Education Code § 51.3525. Accordingly, Compliance believes there is a reasonable and sufficient basis for the President to certify the University's compliance for the applicable reporting period.