

Judge Rules AFT Union Members in Florida Can Challenge Senate Bill 266

06/24/24



On behalf of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), Selendy Gay secured a ruling by Judge J. Lee Marsh of the 2nd Judicial Circuit of Florida that union members may proceed with their challenge to Florida Senate Bill 266. This new law dramatically restricts the academic freedom and First Amendment rights of Florida college faculty. Among other clauses, Senate Bill 266 bans independent arbitration of personnel decisions. The case was brought by the United Faculty of Florida (UFF), an AFT affiliate, and a UFF faculty member.

The decision ensures that unions and their members will have the opportunity to hold Florida accountable for running roughshod over the state's clear contractual and constitutional obligations. Our complaint alleges that the new law would have a chilling effect on higher education in the state by limiting the academic freedom and First Amendment rights of college professors and that the new law jeopardizes the quality of education in Florida's public universities.

"This decision marks an important step in Plaintiffs' suit to ensure that university presidents cannot make personnel decisions violating professor's contractual and constitutional rights without accountability to a neutral decision maker," said Elizabeth Snow.

"The court's decision rightly rejects the Florida Board of Governors' and Florida Board of Trustees' efforts to assist the state in dodging responsibility for its attacks on Florida university faculty unions' bargained-for employment protections," said Corey Stoughton. "We look forward to continuing to fight back against efforts to undermine Florida's constitutional right to collective bargaining and unions' contractual rights."

Attorneys

- Corey Stoughton
- Elizabeth Snow

Practice

- Public Interest and Pro Bono