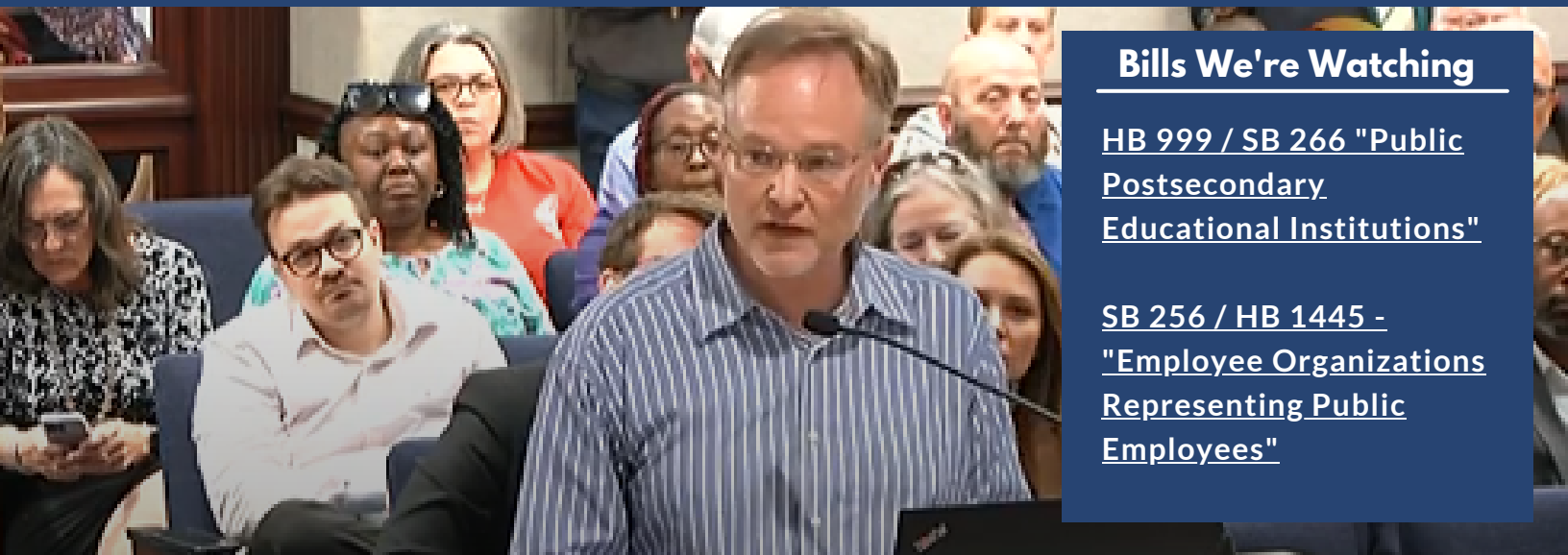


# UNITED FACULTY OF FLORIDA

2023 Legislative Session - Week 1



## Bills We're Watching

[HB 999 / SB 266 "Public Postsecondary Educational Institutions"](#)

[SB 256 / HB 1445 - "Employee Organizations Representing Public Employees"](#)

Pictured: UFF-FSU member Joseph Hellweg speaking truth to power the Florida Senate's first committee hearing on SB 256. Great job, Joseph!

## This Week in Tallahassee

### TAKE ACTION!

[Click here](#) to tell House Committee members to vote NO on HB 999!

[Click here](#) to tell the Senators who voted yes on SB 256 how disappointed you are with their actions!

On Monday, 3/13, the **House Postsecondary Education & Workforce Subcommittee** will hear **a committee substitute for HB 999** that is significantly worse than the original, promising to cut dozens of majors and programs, while further harming tenure and hiring processes at our universities. We need every UFF member to use the link in the "Take Action" box to the left to tell these legislators to vote NO on HB 999. Let 'em have it!

On Tuesday, March 7th, SB 256, this year's iteration of the bill designed to attack the rights of Floridians to join our unions, passed through its first committee hurdle in the Senate's Government Oversight and Accountability Committee, despite strong opposition. Over fifty FEA, UFF, and AFL-CIO members attended and spoke against the bill, with only three out-of-state lobbyist stooges speaking in support. You can watch the full committee hearing **here**, with the SB 256 portion beginning at the 40:00 mark.

In the "Take Action" box to the left, you will find a link that helps you contact all of the Senators who voted yes on SB 256 to tell them how upset you are that they voted against the will of the people!

## Bills We Support

**HB 311 / SB 324, "Postsecondary Intellectual Freedom and Viewpoint Diversity,"** was filed by Rep. Yvonne Hinson (D-Gainesville) in the House and Senator Tina Polsky (D-Boca Raton) in the Senate. It repeals three provisions from 2021's "Viewpoint Discrimination Law," which are also the same three provisions we are challenging in federal court: (1) the right for students to secretly record classes, (2) "anti-shielding" requirements that compel faculty speech, and (3) the state-mandated ideological survey.

**HB 1381 / SB 960, "State University Student Fee Waivers,"** was filed by Rep. Gallop Franklin (D-Tallahassee) in the House and Senator Lori Berman (D-Boynton Beach) in the Senate. This bill would exempt graduate employees from unfair pay-to-work fees that have burdened our state's graduate students for years. SB 960 has received committee assignments, and UFF leadership will be in touch with further steps to advocate for both of these bills in the near future.

## Bills We Oppose

**HB 999 / SB 256, "Public Postsecondary Educational Institutions,"** was filed by Rep. Alex Andrade (R-Pensacola) in the House and Senator Erin Grall (R-Ft. Pierce) in the Senate. It is no exaggeration to say that these bills, if passed, would destroy Florida's higher education system. They propose state-sponsored indoctrination of students, censor fields of study for political cause, assign hiring decisions to political appointees, and provide for post-tenure review at any time. As mentioned page 1, HB 999 will be heard in committee on Monday, so we are asking all UFF members to **use the resources at this link** to tell those committee members to vote NO on the bill.

**SB 256 / HB 1445, "Employee Organizations Representing Public Employees,"** was filed by Rep. Dean Black (R-Yulee) in the House and Senator Blaise Ingolia (R-Springhill) in the Senate. This bill seeks to eliminate public sector unions in the state of Florida by requiring 60% membership density, prohibiting dues deduction through paychecks, and setting onerous requirements for union certification. UFF members have already been active in opposing this legislation, and we will be calling for further mobilization in the near future. Talking points for the bills are provided **here**.

## How to Get More Involved

- **Sign up for FEA/UFF Power Hours**, held weekly on Tuesdays at 5:30 pm ET, to get up-to-the-minute updates on the legislative session and take immediate action to build union power and protect higher education.
- **Join the Higher Education Regional Outreach (HERO) team in your area** to get involved with local lobbying and political organizing efforts. HERO teams are a great way for leaders in the same geographical area to coordinate lobbying efforts.

