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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: UFF Press

UFFPress@floridaea.org

United Faculty of Florida Condemns Executive Order Dismantling the U.S. Department of Education

The United Faculty of Florida (UFF), representing over 25,000 faculty members, professionals, and graduate assistants across Florida's public universities and colleges, strongly condemns the executive order issued by the Trump administration to dismantle the U.S. Department of Education. This reckless and ideologically-driven action poses an existential threat to public education, undermines the foundation of academic freedom, and jeopardizes the future of millions of students across the nation.

For over four decades, the Department of Education has played a vital role in ensuring equal access to quality education, enforcing civil rights protections, and advocating for marginalized communities. Eliminating this essential institution will dismantle safeguards that protect vulnerable students, reduce federal oversight of education standards, and weaken the nation's commitment to fostering an informed and educated citizenry.

A Threat to Academic Integrity and Equity

Dismantling the Department of Education will leave public institutions vulnerable to political interference, strip resources from underfunded schools, and exacerbate educational inequities. Without federal oversight, the responsibility for upholding educational standards and protecting students' rights would be left to state and local authorities, potentially resulting in inconsistent policies that further widen the gap between privileged and marginalized communities.

Protecting Higher Education and Academic Freedom

Higher education, which thrives on intellectual rigor, diversity of thought, and a commitment to truth, faces an unprecedented assault. Faculty, researchers, and educators who work tirelessly to prepare the next generation of leaders are witnessing the dismantling of a system designed to promote educational opportunity and safeguard academic freedom. This action sends a chilling message to educators, undermining their ability to teach, research, and speak truth without fear of political reprisal.

Call to Action: Defend Public Education

The United Faculty of Florida stands in unwavering solidarity with educators, students, and communities across the country who are committed to preserving public education as a cornerstone of our democracy. We call on Congress, state leaders, and all citizens to oppose this executive order and work to protect the fundamental right to education for all.

**The Higher Education Affiliate of Florida Education Association, National Education Association,
American Federation of Teachers, and AFL-CIO**

Our commitment remains steadfast: We will continue to advocate for policies that ensure access, equity, and opportunity in education while defending the principles of academic freedom and shared governance.

“We at the United Faculty of Florida are deeply concerned about the way in which the Department of Education is being dismantled. Without federal oversight and guardrails in place to ensure checks-and-balances, our public education institutions will be left even more vulnerable than they are now to the political overreach we’ve already seen in Florida’s public institutions. It can leave our most vulnerable students exposed to deeper education inequities and our underfunded schools exposed to fewer needed resources. This entire endeavor undermines the promise of education as a public good and the purpose of our public education institutions, which is to provide high-quality, independent, and evidence-based education to all.”

- UFF President Teresa M. Hodge, Ph.D.

In Defense of Democracy and Education,

The United Faculty of Florida

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The United Faculty of Florida represents over 25,000 faculty at all 12 public universities, 15 colleges and Saint Leo University, along with graduate assistants at four universities.