

Resolution in Support of the UTK Pride Center

A resolution from the UTK Faculty Senate Executive Committee (approved June 21, 2016)

WHEREAS, the University of Tennessee, Knoxville Faculty Senate passed a recent resolution in support of the UTK Office of Diversity and Inclusion,

AND WHEREAS, recently enacted Tennessee Public Chapter 1066 has resulted in the defunding of the UTK Office of Diversity and Inclusion which has caused drastic cutbacks to the UTK Pride Center resulting in the loss of its director, a graduate assistantship, and imperiled the Safe Zone Training program for faculty, staff and students,

AND WHEREAS, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) members of our university community, like members of the LGBT community nationally, are at high risk for hate crimes – as evidenced by the recent events in Orlando, Florida and abundant statistical evidence – and because we want our campus to be a place where the wellbeing of all members of the community is a paramount concern,

AND WHEREAS, parents of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students seek a campus setting that will provide resources and a community supporting their needs,

AND WHEREAS, a diverse and inclusive campus helps the university recruit and retain qualified students, faculty, and staff, enriches the educational experience, and can only enhance our university's reputation,

AND WHEREAS, the University of Tennessee's stated diversity goals are to create a campus that is "Welcoming to all and hostile to none," while also making diversity and inclusion a key part of the Vol Vision 2020 Strategic Plan,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the UTK Faculty Senate Executive Committee urges Chancellor Jimmy Cheek to show his commitment to our university's declared values by making possible the immediate reopening of the UTK Pride Center, and by reestablishing a director, expanding the operating budget, providing a larger and enhanced space for gathering, employing a Graduate Assistant, and reinitiating Safe Zone Training.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Chancellor Cheek convey this resolution to UT President Joe DiPietro and the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees.