

August 28, 2025

Hon. Stephen West, Co-Chair
Interim Joint Committee on Education
702 Capital Avenue
Annex Room 228
Frankfort, KY 40601

Hon. Scott Lewis, Co-Chair
Interim Joint Committee on Education
702 Capital Avenue
Annex Room 367B
Frankfort, KY 40601

Hon. James Tipton, Co-Chair
Interim Joint Committee on Education
702 Capital Avenue
Annex Room 313
Frankfort, KY 40601

Office of the Attorney General
Kentucky State Capitol
700 Capital Avenue, Suite 118
Frankfort, KY 40601

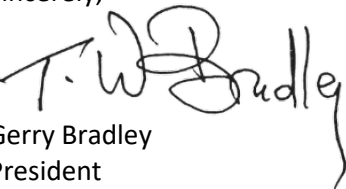
Sent via email: steve.west@kylegislature.gov
scott.lewis@kylegislature.gov
james.tipton@kylegislature.gov

Dear Members of the Legislative Research Commission and Attorney General Coleman:

On behalf of the University of Louisville ("University"), and in accordance with Kentucky's Act Relating to Initiatives Regarding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (the "Act"), enclosed is the report of the University detailing its compliance with the Act. Please refer to the Interim Joint Committee on Education, as appropriate.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Gerry Bradley
President

Enclosures

**University of Louisville
Report to Legislative Research Committee and Attorney General (August 2025)**

For its report to the Interim Joint Committee on Education, referred via the Legislative Research Committee, and to the Attorney General in accordance with Kentucky's Act relating to Initiatives regarding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion¹, the University submits the following:

I. A detailed description of the University's compliance with each provision of the Act applicable to institutions that certifies the status of the University's compliance with each provision, the steps taken by the University to achieve compliance with each provision, and the guardrails put in place to ensure future compliance with each provision.

As submitted to the Budget Review Subcommittee on Education in July², the University is in compliance with the Act. The University acknowledges that compliance is an ongoing, dynamic process as a large, complex, Research 1 institution, and continues to evaluate questions or clarifications as they emerge.

To ensure compliance by the effective date of June 30, 2025, the Office of the Provost partnered with the Office of University Counsel to offer training and guidance to key stakeholders in the campus community. Specifically, in April 2025, the two Offices led a daylong Legislative Guidance Retreat to provide training and guidance to university deans, vice presidents and other key leaders regarding new HB4 requirements.

Awareness and understanding of HB4 were only part of the University's response. The President also established four workgroups to focus on key compliance areas: 1. Position Analysis Workgroup 2. Policy Analysis Workgroup 3. Admissions, Financial Aid and Scholarship Workgroup 4. Athletics Workgroup. Each work group included a broad cross-section of University stakeholders to observe fundamental principles of shared governance, and each group had an assigned legal representative to provide legal counsel and legal recommendations. These recommendations were reviewed by Senior Leadership before recommending approval to the President.

Once approved, these recommendations were forwarded to project implementation managers who were empowered to work across University departments and units to ensure and confirm that approved compliance tasks were completed by the June 30, 2025 deadline. Some of these measures included realignment of departments to better serve the University's mission of student success (e.g., the Department of Inclusive Excellence was realigned as the Office of Access and Opportunity and placed under the Office of the Provost), while others included the dissolution of specific advisory groups to better serve the University's overall mission (e.g., the

¹ 2025 Ky. Acts ch. 120, § 17

² A copy of the University's report to the Budget Review Subcommittee on Education is enclosed, and is reaffirmed as part of this compliance report.

Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Diversity and Racial Equity were dissolved, and stakeholders will be invited to serve on the new Presidential Commission on Climate, Culture and Wellbeing).

The University's commitment to full compliance also extended to our Board of Trustees. Recognizing that certain changes would require Board review and approval, the acting Board Chair appointed certain trustees to serve on the Ad Hoc HB4 Implementation Committee to provide Board input in implementing new requirements, such as the University's Viewpoint Neutrality Policy³, and to make comprehensive recommendations to the full Board to ensure that the University met the legislative compliance deadline of June 30, 2025.

Beyond the effective date, the University's work has continued to ensure ongoing compliance. For example, the Office of University Counsel continues to offer training and guidance to pertinent stakeholders (e.g., admissions committees), and is working to centralize scholarship administration to ensure consistent and compliant practices across campus. Additionally, the University has centralized investigations of Bias Incident(s), as the term is defined in the Act, to similarly ensure consistent and compliant practices, as well as to allow for a streamlined process for the required General Counsel certifications.

Finally, because on-going compliance is a University-wide effort, each member of the University's Executive Leadership (e.g., vice presidents) and Council of Academic Officers (e.g., deans) have signed attestations acknowledging their understanding of and their respective office/units' compliance with the provisions of the Act.

II. A detailed description of the University's strategy for attracting and retaining faculty members with diverse perspectives and points of view.

The University is committed to attracting and retaining faculty members with diverse perspectives and points of view. We are guided by our CARDINAL Principles⁴, in which our celebration of diversity of thought, perspectives and life experiences is acknowledged.

The University of Louisville seeks the recruitment of high-quality faculty with diverse perspectives and points of view. To apply for a faculty position, we do not require the submission of evidence of one's personal beliefs or identities, but we do require evidence of rigorous academic training and scholarly activity.

The following are examples of activities related to attracting high quality faculty:

- Offer competitive compensation and benefits
- Continuously strengthen research infrastructure
- Foster a culture that values academic freedom and innovation
- Host seminars and colloquia offering diverse perspectives

³ <https://louisville.edu/policies/policies-and-procedures/pageholder/pol-viewpoint-neutrality>

⁴ <https://louisville.edu/about/mission>

Examples of faculty retention activities include:

- Review faculty compensation to assure competitive salaries relative to the market
- Offer faculty development activities in areas such as leadership development, grant writing, teaching workshops
- Recognize faculty achievements with awards and honors
- Provide clear pathways for promotion and leadership roles

As described in our Equal Opportunity Statement⁵, the University is committed to and will provide equality of educational and employment opportunity for all persons regardless of race, sex, age, color, national origin, ethnicity, creed, religion, diversity of thought, political viewpoint, social viewpoint, disability, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and expression, marital status, pregnancy, or veteran status. The University aims to achieve, within all areas of the University community, a diverse student body, faculty, and staff capable of providing for excellence in the education of its students and for the enrichment of the University community.

Finally, consistent with its Viewpoint Neutrality Policy⁶, the University does not discriminate on the basis of an individual's political or social viewpoint, and promotes intellectual diversity within the University. As the Policy states, no individual shall be required to endorse or condemn a specific ideology, political viewpoint, or social viewpoint to be eligible for hiring, contract renewal, tenure, promotion, admission, or graduation. To that end, the University continues to review policies and procedures to ensure a focus on individual merit, rather than on ideological views, in the hiring, contracting, and admissions processes.

III. A description of the University's strategy for fostering a campus environment where the free exchange of ideas is a prized value and where ideas can be freely discussed and debated in accordance with First Amendment principles and without intimidation.

The University is committed to protecting the academic freedom of all members of its community. As provided in Section 2.5.1 of the University Redbook⁷, the University's Board of Trustees affirms the belief that "[m]embership in the academic community imposes on students, faculty, staff, administrators, and trustees of the University an obligation to adhere to standards of academic honesty, to respect the dignity of others, to acknowledge their right to express differing opinions, and to foster and defend intellectual honesty, freedom of inquiry and instruction, and free expression both on and off the campus."

The University of Louisville seeks to foster an inclusive, supportive and intellectually vibrant environment through the implementation of a comprehensive strategy built on culture, policy, education and leadership. The following are some elements of this strategy:

⁵ <https://louisville.edu/hr/employeerelations/eeo>

⁶ <https://louisville.edu/policies/policies-and-procedures/pageholder/pol-viewpoint-neutrality>

⁷ <https://louisville.edu/provost/redbook/contents.html/chap2.html#SEC2.5.1>

- We publicly affirm the university's commitment to free expression and academic freedom – a message that the President and the Provost model and reinforce.
- The University's Board of Trustees formally adopted a neutrality statement at its June 2025 meeting. The University is guided by its policy that no individual shall be required to endorse or condemn a specific political ideology viewpoint, or social viewpoint, to be eligible for hiring, contract renewal, tenure, promotion, admission, or graduation.
- We have policies that protect free speech while prohibiting harassment, threats and discrimination. We further offer due process in handling speech-related complaints.
- We offer workshops through our Center for Teaching and Learning on civil and respectful discourse about a variety of topics.
- We seek intellectual diversity in speaker series.
- Campus media and digital platforms highlight examples of constructive dialogue and debate, and feedback mechanisms offer opportunities for campus to voice concerns or suggestions.

Finally, the University fully acknowledges the rights of its community members to exercise their rights afforded under the First Amendment and the Campus Free Speech Protection Act, KRS 164.348.

Senator Steve Rawlings, co-chair of the Interim Joint Budget Review Subcommittee on Education, has requested that each public postsecondary institution provide testimony at the Subcommittee's upcoming meeting on Tuesday, July 15, at 10:30 a.m., in the Capitol Annex.

The senator has asked that testimony focus on each institution's efforts to comply with House Bill 4 from the 2025 Regular Session.

Specifically, institutions should be prepared to discuss:

Measures taken or planned to achieve compliance

From the moment House Bill 4 (HB4) became law (KRS 164.2894-2899) on March 28, 2025, University of Louisville President Gerry Bradley and the entire university leadership team committed to working with care and compassion to ensure that the university would be compliant by the June 30 statutory deadline.

From the beginning, President Bradley determined that compliance would be the goal of the entire university community and would not be viewed as a purely legal initiative. To that end, the Office of the Provost partnered with the Office of University Counsel in leading a daylong Legislative Guidance Retreat to provide training and guidance to university deans, vice presidents and other key leaders regarding new HB4 requirements.

The president also established four workgroups to focus on key compliance areas:

1. Position Analysis Workgroup
2. Policy Analysis Workgroup
3. Admissions, Financial Aid and Scholarship Workgroup
4. Athletics Workgroup

Each work group included a broad cross-section of university stakeholders, and each group had an assigned legal representative to provide legal counsel and legal recommendations. Executive Vice President Angela Curry and I spent Memorial Day weekend reviewing each and every legal recommendation before recommending approval to the president.

Once approved, these recommendations were forwarded to project implementation managers who were empowered to work across university departments and units to ensure and confirm that approved compliance tasks were completed by the June 30, 2025 deadline.

The university's commitment to full compliance also extended to our Board of Trustees. Recognizing that certain changes would require board review and approval, the acting board chair appointed certain trustees to serve on the Ad Hoc HB4 Implementation Committee to provide board input in implementing new requirements and to make comprehensive recommendations to the full board to ensure that the university met the legislative compliance deadline of June 30, 2025.

Finally, as chief academic officer for the university, I am pleased to report that at every turn throughout this implementation process, the university made every effort to ensure that the principles of shared governance were observed and embraced.

Whether full compliance has been achieved; if not, the anticipated date for full compliance

Yes, we believe that we have achieved full compliance with the requirements of HB4. Having said that, the University of Louisville is a large, complex, Research 1 institution with nearly 25,000 students and over 7,000 faculty and staff members. Because of our size and complexity, compliance with any federal or state requirement is an ongoing, dynamic process as new questions are raised and new scenarios are presented. We are committed to ongoing compliance and to resolving any questions or clarifications as they emerge.

Whether any faculty or personnel have been terminated or reassigned as a result

With so many students to serve and so many mission-critical initiatives to accomplish, the university began with a goal of retaining all employees willing to serve. While certain positions required restructuring and realignment to make absolutely sure there would be no misunderstanding about our commitment to compliance, we were grateful that no employee was terminated as a result of HB4 implementation.

Whether any programs or departments have been closed

While no departments or academic programs were closed, some units were realigned to better serve the ultimate university mission of student success. For example, the Department of Inclusive Excellence was realigned as the Office of Access and Opportunity and placed under the Office of the Provost to better carry out the mission of achieving success for all university students.

Also, certain presidential commissions were dissolved and realigned in accordance with the university's overall mission. For example, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Diversity and Racial Equity were dissolved, and stakeholders will be invited to serve on the new Presidential Commission on Climate, Culture and Well-being. This new commission is dedicated to cultivating a safe, respectful and inclusive university environment.

There were also programs that were paused while the university examined the history, intent and implementation to ensure that the program complied with the letter and spirit of applicable law.

What savings have been achieved through compliance, and if there have been no savings, why not?

One of the realizations that emerged early on in our training around HB4 requirements was that our units and departments had many questions about how the law would be applied and wanted assurance that their specific approaches were in compliance. Our legal team was inundated with questions and requests for legal guidance. Recognizing that compliance is an ongoing, dynamic process, the university hired additional legal counsel, including a regulatory counsel role that is fully committed to training units and departments on HB4 requirements and assuring ongoing compliance as we carry out the university's mission.

HB4 also changed the way the university previously handled bias-related incidents involving faculty, staff and students. In light of the new requirement that the general counsel pre-certify all bias-related investigations and hearings, a senior legal compliance director position was created to assist with ensuring that all bias-related investigations and hearings are conducted appropriately.