

3/22/2023

To the Minnesota House Ed. Finance Committee

We are writing on behalf of ourselves and the University of Minnesota's Center for Race, Indigeneity, Disability, Gender, and Sexuality (RIDGS) Studies in support of the Ethnic Studies for All bill (HF1502 Sencer-Mura, SF1476 Kunesh).

Skillfully designed Ethnic Studies courses are the most impactful way to foster connection and solidarity within a diverse student body, and to allow young people to explore the importance of their experiences in Minnesota, in American culture, and in the world. But Ethnic Studies is not solely about the BIPOC experience. Ethnic Studies represents the diversity of humanity that cuts across race and nationality. Within RIDGS, our students and faculty members use Ethnic Studies methodologies to create scholarship and effective pedagogy in disciplines as diverse as History, Political Science, Geography, Sociology, Psychology, Philosophy, Comparative Literature, Economics, Gender and Sexuality Studies, Language Studies, Curriculum and Instruction, Disability Studies, Criminal Justice, Public Policy, and many others. The Ethnic Studies for All bill would help raise new generations of Minnesotans with a far more nuanced understanding of our individual and collective history and culture than what we have currently. This is the first step in building a truly diverse and equitable Minnesota. We urge you to support this bill.

Best Regards,

Keith Mayes, Director of the Center for RIDGS Studies

Jimmy Patiño, Associate Director of the Center for RIDGS Studies

Erika Rodriguez, Associate Director-in-Residence of the Center for RIDGS Studies

Jacob Oertel, Program Coordinator for the Center for RIDGS Studies