



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Committee hearing on Critical Race Theory not rooted in reality

Madison, WI - Today, Senate Universities and Technical Colleges Committee Chair Roger Roth has chosen to hold an informational hearing on critical race theory in higher education. The exercise is a tremendous waste of public resources and will do nothing to further the goal of improving higher education in Wisconsin. Instead, it merely serves as an opportunity to throw red meat to the extreme fringe of the GOP base.

A little over a year ago, if you were to ask any person outside the farthest reaches of academia what critical race theory is, you'd be hard pressed to find anyone who knew what the heck you were talking about. Today, turn on right-wing talk radio and you'd be convinced CRT was the founding principle of all public education in America. What changed over the past year? Perhaps we should ask one of the featured speakers at this farce of a hearing, Christopher Rufo.

Rufo, a right-wing operative who declared himself the leader of a "one-man war against critical race theory," last July, began appearing on Fox News and other outlets, and caught the ear of then-President Donald Trump, convincing him to end racial sensitivity training in all federal agencies. Now, he's caught the ear of Wisconsin's legislative Republicans, and they rolled out the red carpet for him with this sham hearing.

But is CRT being taught in our schools? Nobody can seem to find an example of it in K-12, and in higher education, you'll only see mention of it in a few graduate-level programs that deal with racism in institutions.

The fact that so few people actually know what CRT is works to the benefit of those seeking to weaponize it for their own ends. It involves racism, which makes people uncomfortable, and telling people that their children are being indoctrinated by it plays into the basest fears of those who are fine with the racial hierarchy as it exists right now, and who fear what a more just and equitable society might mean for their own livelihoods.

The committees of the Wisconsin State Senate have a great deal of power at their disposal, and informational hearings can be a great way to frame the debate on the most pressing issues of our time. They should not, under any circumstances, be used to spread propaganda about fake threats to our



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educational system featuring fake experts who have made their livelihoods attacking our public institutions in service of an extreme right-wing agenda.

That's not why the people of Wisconsin elected us, and it's time to put a stop to it. Instead of fighting tooth and nail against the teaching of racism and inequality, perhaps we'd be better off investing our resources in addressing racism and inequality. Maybe then Wisconsin wouldn't be among the most segregated places in the nation, and would no longer be the [worst place in America to raise a black child.](#)