



Association of Texas Professional Educators
305 E. Huntland Dr., Suite 300, Austin, TX 78752
(800) 777-ATPE • (512) 467-0071 • atpe.org

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MEDIA CONTACT:
Stephanie Jacksis
ATPE Media Relations
(512) 467-0071 ext.337
cell: (281)760-8697

Anti-Teacher Bill to be Heard on Monday

Lawmakers try to silence teachers with SB 13

AUSTIN, Texas — Senate Bill 13, a bill that unfairly punishes teachers by taking away their right to use payroll deduction for association dues, will be heard by the Senate Committee on State Affairs on Monday, Feb. 13. Just in time for Valentine's Day, the Texas Senate wants to restrict how educators spend their own money. The Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE) is urging Texas educators to call their senators to oppose these anti-teacher bills.

“These bills single out teachers by taking away their rights, while protecting the dues-deduction rights of other public employees, such as firefighters, EMS workers, and police officers,” ATPE Executive Director Gary Godsey said. “The legislators supporting these bills are trying to shut teachers up, and we won’t stand for it. How teachers spend their paycheck should be their decision and theirs alone.”

Proponents of the bill say SB 13 is about “union dues,” but if that’s the case, why are they targeting Texas teachers who aren’t a part of a union? The bill also carves out exemptions for some union members. There are no conflicts of interest when teachers payroll deduct their association dues, since teachers can’t collectively bargain in Texas.

“This senate bill was designed to discourage teachers from joining groups that are active at the State Capitol,” says Godsey. “If fewer educators are able to join a professional organization, it will be harder for groups like ATPE to fight back when lawmakers try to privatize Texas public schools or cut teachers' pay and benefits.”

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The Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE) has been a strong voice for Texas educators since 1980. It is the leading educators' association in Texas with more than 100,000 members statewide. With its strong collaborative philosophy, ATPE speaks for classroom teachers, administrators, future, retired and para-educators and works to create better opportunities for 5 million public schoolchildren. ATPE is the ally and the voice of Texas public education.