



## 2021 ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION 32

April 6, 2021 - Introduced by Representative MURPHY, cosponsored by Senator JACQUE. Referred to Committee on Rules.

1       **Relating to:** declaring April to be Freedom of Expression Month across Wisconsin.

2               Whereas, the First Amendment to the United States Constitution protects the  
3 right of free speech; and

4               Whereas, freedom of speech is a cornerstone of liberty, ensuring that public  
5 debate is necessary for any healthy republic; and

6               Whereas, freedom of speech is under constant threat from those wanting to  
7 silence debate; and

8               Whereas, recent surveys by the Knight Foundation of college students, who  
9 represent our nation's future, show deeply concerning views about freedom of speech,  
10 including the belief that speech that makes them feel uncomfortable should be  
11 restricted; and

12               Whereas, a survey conducted by the Thompson Center for Public Leadership  
13 in October and November of 2020 found that 63 percent of University of  
14 Wisconsin–Madison students believed hate speech should be punished by the  
15 government; and

1           Whereas, our state and nation currently face challenges to free speech that  
2 have never emerged before, including speech codes, cancel culture, and corporate  
3 technology giants who censor the primary outlets for most Americans to express  
4 themselves; and

5           Whereas, in September 2019, the Chief Judge of the Eastern District of  
6 Wisconsin, United States District Court, ruled that Northeastern Wisconsin  
7 Technical College had violated a student’s First Amendment rights; and

8           Whereas, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit ruled in March 2021  
9 that University of Iowa officials could be held personally liable for violating  
10 free-speech and expressive-association rights of students, noting that  
11 administrators were either “plainly incompetent or they knowingly violated the  
12 Constitution”; and

13           Whereas, the United States Supreme Court ruled 8 to 1 in March 2021 in favor  
14 of two former Georgia public college students who sued the public institution over  
15 restrictive campus speech policies, noting in the opinion that the student  
16 “experienced a completed violation of his constitutional rights when respondents  
17 enforced their speech policies against him”; and

18           Whereas, taxpayer dollars spent on public colleges and universities that  
19 proliferate negative views of freedom of expression and religious liberty represents  
20 a diminishing return on investment; now, therefore, be it

21           ***Resolved by the assembly, the senate concurring, That*** the members of the  
22 Wisconsin Legislature declare April to be Freedom of Expression Month across  
23 Wisconsin.

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(END)