



PRESS RELEASE

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Endorsement of Joint Statement of Legislative Efforts to Restrict Education about Racism in American History

WESTFORD, Massachusetts – ARLIS/NA endorses the American Historical Association, the American Association of University Professors, the Association of American Colleges & Universities, and PEN America’s Joint Statement on Legislative Efforts to Restrict Education about Racism in American History.

Statement:

The Art Libraries Society of North America joins 130 other organizations in signing on to the American Historical Association, the American Association of University Professors, the Association of American Colleges & Universities, and PEN America’s Joint Statement on Legislative Efforts to Restrict Education about Racism in American History. The statement is a repudiation of various legislative efforts in more than 20 states to “suppress teaching and learning about the role of racism in the history of the United States.” Although the specific legislation varies, states have already passed bills that censor what can be taught in both K-12 and higher educational institutions. This is in clear opposition to the Society’s stated core values as well as the ALA Code of Ethics.

The Society agrees with the authors of the joint statement that “[e]ducators must provide an accurate view of the past in order to better prepare students for community participation and robust civic engagement. Suppressing or watering down discussion of 'divisive concepts' in educational institutions deprives students of opportunities to discuss and foster solutions to social division and injustice.” Furthermore, these legislative actions are a dangerous intrusion into the intellectual and academic freedom required for a just, democratic society. As concluded in the Joint Statement, “[a] free and open society depends on the unrestricted pursuit and dissemination of knowledge.” ARLIS/NA agrees with the authors of the Joint Statement that these government mandates for a “white-washed” view of history must be opposed in all forms for a society that treats its citizens as equals.



About the Art Libraries Society of North America

Founded in 1972, the Art Libraries Society of North America (ARLIS/NA) is a dynamic, international organization of close to 1,000 individuals devoted to fostering excellence in art and design librarianship and image management in the United States, Canada and Mexico. The membership includes architecture and art librarians, visual resources professionals, artists, curators, educators, publishers, students, and other interested in visual arts information. To serve this diverse constituency, the Society provides a wide range of programs and services within an organizational structure that encourages participation at every level.

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