Governor Stitt,

We urge you to veto HB1775.

**If this bill becomes law it will have serious implications on teaching the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre in schools**, as well as much of the history of the U.S. which is rife with racism, sexism and discomfort. In addition to prohibiting mandatory diversity training, it prohibits teachers from doing their job when it comes to teaching history, literature and other subjects where race or gender might cause discomfort, guilt or anguish.

At face value there are many elements of the bill that we support – for example that no race or sex is inherently superior to another race or sex, and that people should not be discriminated against because of race or sex (agree!). These protections, however, are already law. What is not yet law is prohibiting any course content that creates psychological stress on students based on their race or sex. American and Oklahoma history is uncomfortable; and reconciliation requires truth and processing that is not comfortable. Our entire mission and work is centered in this necessary discomfort.

HB1775 would not only interfere with the teaching of Black history, but the entire history of the United States. If teachers are unable to help students process the implications of our Nation’s history without discomfort how can we teach about the Trail of Tears? How can we teach about Women’s suffrage? How can we teach about the Civil War?

This bill will make it more difficult for teachers, no matter their race or gender, to do their job – while making it easier to fire them for it. At the same time it provides an option for all students, no matter their race or gender, to opt out of learning when uncomfortable.

We must do better for our children, our students, our future.

Please veto HB1775.

Sincerely,

Phil Armstrong