

GOP-backed bills target diversity efforts nationwide

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JACKSON, Miss. – Diversity initiatives would be defunded or banned from universities and other public institutions under a slate of bills pending in Republican-led legislatures, with some lawmakers counting on the issue resonating with voters in this election year.

Already this year, Republican lawmakers have proposed about 50 bills in 20 states that would restrict initiatives on diversity, equity and inclusion – known as DEI – or require their public disclosure, according to an Associated Press analysis using the bill-tracking software Plural.

This is the second year Republican-led state governments have targeted DEI. This year's bills, as well as executive orders and internal agency directives, again focus heavily on higher education. But the legislation also



In Oklahoma, Republican Gov. Kevin Stitt signed an executive order in December barring state agencies and universities from spending money on DEI programs.

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would limit DEI in K-12 schools, state government, contracting and pension investments. Some bills would bar financial institutions from discriminating against those who refuse to

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