

NLSIU AA Statement on the amendment to NLSIU Act

The NLSIU Alumni Association (NLSIU AA) of the National Law School of India University (NLSIU), Bangalore, is a duly registered body representing the alumni of India's foremost law school, NLSIU.

The Governing Board of the NLSIU AA (Governing Board) at its emergency meeting noted with alarm the passage by both houses of the Karnataka State Legislature last week of an amendment bill to the NLSIU Act seeking to reserve at least 50% of seats for residents of Karnataka to all courses at our alma mater.

The NLSIU AA joins fully and whole-heartedly, with both the SBA and the administration of NLSIU, in expressing its unqualified opposition to this development.

The passage of this important amendment bill without barely any discussion on the floor of both houses of the state legislature or public consultation and debate, and in seemingly much haste, warrants this expression of unstinted opposition by the NLSIU AA, which we hereby make unanimously as the Governing Board; and trust that each alumnus of the NLSIU joins us in condemning this proposed amendment as regressive and unnecessary.

While the NLSIU AA notes with gratitude the support and assistance the State of Karnataka has always rendered (and hopes that the State will continue to render such support) to the institution, not least of which is the seminal role it played in ensuring India's first National Law School came to be founded in Bangalore, it cannot but express its unequivocal opposition to this piece of proposed legislation that undermines the very character and basis of the national institution that NLSIU has, through the concept that led to its establishment and dint of hard work of its various constituents, come to earn and occupy.

There is no gainsaying the fact that our alma mater is more than just a national institution established in the State of Karnataka but has become the pre-eminent law school nationally, and has earned a stellar reputation even globally that places it at the forefront of legal learning institutions and academia internationally.

The vast numbers of its alumni within India and overseas, in various positions of prominence and influence across several professions & vocations, hailing from all over India and overseas, are testament to this pre-eminence that the Governing Board wishes to strongly emphasize.

The Governing Board is committed to leading the alumni in seeking to persuade the various constituents of the State, including the Hon'ble Governor of Karnataka, to reject this proposal (through whatever legal channels are then open in particular, to the Hon'ble Governor, such as returning the bill with such opposition noted); and, in the course of such opposition, it will do whatever lies within its power to urge the court of public opinion, as well as all proper channels of political discourse within this country, to overturn the proposed amendment.

The Governing Board is also strongly committed to ensuring that all necessary and proper judicial challenges to this move are galvanised at the appropriate time, if need be (which it hopes will not come to pass), with a view to striking at, and attempting to bring forth the flaws in the legal basis underlying the proposed amendment. In this endeavour, the Governing Board is committed to ensuring that the vast weight of the alumni is brought to bear on the ground swell of opposition to this proposed amendment.

The Governing Board calls upon all alumni who feel concerned and constrained to act in this matter to reach out to it in ensuring an action committee, consisting of not just the Governing Board members but of all such alumni voices, is established to lead and anchor this challenge.

Pramod Rao, Class of 1996 and Siddharth Raja, Class of 1997, would serve as the initial co-conveners of this action committee. Please do email your interest for being part of the action committee at nlsiu.alumni.worldwide@gmail.com

We recognize that there may indeed, be differing voices about the manner and scope of the challenge (voices that we keenly wish to accommodate within this action committee), but we strongly believes that, in the principal opposition to this amendment bill, all alumni are united in pursuit of the greater success of our beloved alma mater.

For & on behalf of the Governing Board
The NLSIU Alumni Association
NLSIU Alumni Worldwide