

Office: Representative for Congressional District 1

Candidate: Dina Titus

Party: Democratic

Campaign website: dinatitus.com

**Q: Public funding of higher education has declined in relative terms over the past two decades while student fees and tuition have increased and student debt has rapidly expanded, both nationally and in Nevada. How should these issues be addressed?**

**Titus:** I believe we need to make college more affordable so more of our high school students, regardless of their economic backgrounds, can have access to higher education that gives them a chance for good, well-paying jobs. That is why as a member of Congress I have supported increases in Pell Grants, scholarships for disadvantaged students, student loan forgiveness, and a greater level of federal support for higher education. I also have supported tuition-free community colleges so more of our students can complete the first two years of college debt-free before entering a public university. I believe the federal government can improve the quality and cost of public universities by investing in research that helps build our state and national economies. Higher education should be a partnership among public institutions and state and federal governments that improves the quality of education our students receive.

**Q: The recruitment and retention of state employees, including faculty and staff in our public colleges and universities in Nevada, has become a crisis. Reasons cited for widespread vacancies include lagging compensation and cuts to healthcare benefits. What solutions do you have to restore and retain the higher education workforce in Nevada?**

**Titus:** As a member of Congress, I support a higher level of federal grants to higher education that allow public universities to better compensate their faculties. I also will voice my support for the Nevada Legislature to address compensation and healthcare benefits issues because I believe we must do all we can to attract and retain quality faculty members who are critical to the kind of higher education we need to prepare our students for the economy of the future.

**Q: Do you support collective bargaining rights for professional employees in our public colleges and universities?**

**Titus:** Yes. I have been a staunch champion of protecting and expanding collective bargaining rights for educators and workers. I am endorsed by the Nevada State and National Education Associations, which represent teachers and education support professionals across the country. I also have the support of AFL-CIO, the Nevada Central Labor Council, and nearly 30 other labor unions that promote the right for workers and public employees to collectively bargain. Additionally, I am an original cosponsor of the PRO Act which offers the strongest upgrade to workers' collective bargaining rights in nearly a century. I have had a long-standing position of supporting collective bargaining rights for state employees, and professional employees in our public colleges and universities should be no exception.

**Q: Do you support the principle of academic freedom that protects faculty members from political interference in their teaching and scholarship? (For more information see the AAUP 1940 Statement on Principles of Academic Freedom and Tenure.)**

**Titus:** Yes. As a former UNLV professor, I understand the importance of academic freedom. It is a key element of a free society.

**Q: Thank you for your responses. What else, if anything, would you like to communicate to NFA members?**

**Titus:** I would like to thank Nevada Faculty Alliance members for persevering during the pandemic to continue providing our students with a good education through remote classes and other measures. They ensured that

students could still progress in spite of the most trying circumstances.

(Submitted 7/27/2022)