

# The Columbus Dispatch

**LETTERS | Opinion** *This piece expresses the views of its author(s), separate from those of this publication.*

## Gordon Gee's merit for Ohio State job as questionable as center he will help lead | Letters

**Letters to the Editor** Columbus Dispatch

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### Key Points

Tainted Gordon Gee's "perfect" fit for far-right endorsed Ohio State center.

No time for complacency

### Gee's questionable merit

News that Ohio State's President Ted Carter plans to [install Gordon Gee](#) into a new position within the Salmon P. Chase Center is an object lesson in why that center is so problematic.

Recall that Gee's legacy includes the recent [evisceration](#) of West Virginia University, where budget cuts in the wake of his unrealistic growth predictions led to elimination of entire majors, termination of faculty, and a vote of [no confidence](#) by the faculty assembly.

Given these credentials, it's unclear what service Gee will bring to Ohio State, which he left in disgrace [in 2013](#).

Then again, the Chase Center was never about improving higher education.

**Need a break?** [Play the USA TODAY Daily Crossword Puzzle.](#)

From inception, the center has been a thinly veiled attempt to inject far-right

viewpoints into academia. In a time of dwindling state support for education, the center was created by the legislature (over [the objection](#) of Ohio State's Faculty Senate), at a cost of [\\$5 million](#) per fiscal year for three years and with long-term costs [projected](#) to be even higher.

Its tenure-track faculty appointments were purposefully created to exist outside of [normal hiring procedures](#).

Its director, Lee Strang, is a [constitutional "originalist"](#) and a [Christian Nationalist](#) who fought to keep [abortion rights](#) out of the Ohio Constitution and authored an [amicus brief](#) in support of outlawing abortion rights.

This is the context in which "intellectual diversity" and the Chase Center should be understood. It is sadly consistent with Ohio State's [proactive cancellation](#) of diversity initiatives and Carter's embrace of an anti-education agenda that has [festered for years](#) in right-wing circles.

Although Carter has vowed to make hiring decisions [based on merit](#), his actions suggest that he's in on the ruse.

*John M. Herbert, Columbus*

## **No time for complacency**

At a discussion concerning the state of democracy today, a question was asked of the group: "When do you remember being complacent?"

For years, I participated as a voter in federal election years, but not as regularly in the "off years." My local politics didn't seem as critical. Democracy did not appear to be threatened by these political decisions; I didn't value the power of my vote.

Those who seek influence have known for a long time that it is in the grassroots where power is seeded. Due to my inattention and that of many others, elected officials are in place in the state and local levels who are undermining our Democratic principles.

We must act now.

Those who say, “My one vote doesn’t matter,” aren’t paying attention.

Expensive advertising campaigns and politicians’ prevarications are designed to secure your precious vote. Voter suppression and gerrymandering are employed to deny it.

The deadline to register to vote in the Ohio Nov. 4 election is [Oct. 6](#). Check with the Ohio Board of Elections to be sure your name has not been purged from the voter rolls.

Your vote is your voice. This is no time to be complacent.

*Kathy Juliano, Medina*