

Memorandum

December 18, 2020

To: Dr. Mary Ellen Cavitt, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs  
Via: Dr. Vincent E. Morton, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs/Dean of Students  
From: Kathryn A. Weiser, Assistant Dean of Students *KaW*  
Subject: Student Government Senate Resolution Legislation 2020-2021

Ten pieces of passed 2020-2021 Senate Resolutions from Student Government are attached and listed below.

**S.R.2020-2021.10 Resolution in Support for The Texas State Employees Union's Petition**

This legislation intends to call for Texas State to accept the demands of the TSEU (CWA Local 6186) in full to ensure that Texas State adequately

**S.R.2020-2021.11 Resolution Calling for The Texas State University President to Formally Request That the San Marcos District Attorney Drop All Charges Placed Against the Student Protestors Arrested in May 2018 and 2019**

This legislation calls for University President Trauth, and all other relevant University administrators, to make a public and formal request for the San Marcos District Attorney to drop all outstanding charges placed against the students and release a public apology for the actions of the University in those instances, in an effort allow healing to take place on campus. Please note that the Student Body President did not veto this legislation, but indicated disagreement with it in his cover memo for the piece of legislation.

**S.R.2020-2021.12 Resolution Calling for the Establishment of a Cultural Activities Fee**

This legislation intends to recommend that the University implement a \$5.00 Cultural Activity fee for students enrolled for courses at the San Marcos campus and that students may attend productions and events relating to the fine arts free of charge, and the fee will be overseen by a committee of students and faculty. Please note that the Student Body President did not veto this legislation, but indicated disagreement with it in his cover memo for the piece of legislation.

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*This letter is an electronic communication from Texas State University.*

**S.R.2020-2021.13 Resolution Calling for the Theatre Department to Adjust its Curriculum to Better Accommodate Students**

This legislation intends to call for the Theatre Department to adjust courses TH4390 through TH4393 to be less strenuous for students.

**S.R.2020-2021.16 Resolution Calling for the Installation of Artistic Murals**

This legislation intends to recommend the university to commission more artistic work on campus and to commission students to do the artwork.

**S.R.2020-2021.17 Resolution Calling for Updated Calorie and Diet Specific Information in Dining Halls**

This legislation intends to recommend Chartwells provides more updated dietary information to be posted in dining halls.

**S.R.2020-2021.18 Resolution Calling for the Creation of Cultural Diversity Flagged Course in Required Curriculum**

This legislation intends to recommend the University to flag specific types of cultural diversity courses in the student enrollment system and require two flagged courses for graduation.

**S.R.2020-2021.19 Resolution to Leverage Bobcat Trace to Further Mental Health Outreach from the University**

This legislation intends to recommend the University reformat Bobcat Trace to be used as a way for students to assess their mental health state, and potentially get on track to receiving aid streamlining the scheduling process.

**S.R.2020-2021.20 Resolution Calling on Free Masks in Major Student Service Buildings**

This legislation intends to recommend free masks at entrances of student service buildings such as Alkek, LBJSC, and the Student Recreation Center.

**S.R.2020-2021.21 Resolution to Encourage Fee Transparency When Registering for Classes, Through an Online Code Pledge**

This legislation intends to have a pledge that will be sent out to professors so they can choose to sign it or not, in an effort to be more transparent about course fees.



Memorandum

To: Dr. Vincent Morton Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students

Kathryn A. Weiser, Assistant Dean of Students

Date: December 17, 2020

From: Catching Valentinis-Dee, Student Body President

Subject: Student Government Passed Legislation: Senate Resolutions

With the intention of honoring the senate's role as a representative body, no resolution passed by the senate during the year 2020 was vetoed. However, I hold my strongest reservations about two particular pieces. I request that my reservations be attached to these selected pieces.

Legislation Passed: S.R.2020-2021.11 Resolution Calling for The Texas State University President to Formally Request That the San Marcos District Attorney Drop All Charges Placed Against the Student Protestors Arrested in May 2018 and 2019

Number of Vote: 19 voted in favor, 11 voted in opposition, 0 voted to abstain

**Acceptance of this legislation by the TXST Administration would be a direct incentivization of unlawful action and disobedience by students. Secondly, the content of this legislation was misrepresented before the senate by its author and sponsors during consideration.**

Legislation Passed: S.R.2020-2021.12 Resolution Calling for the Establishment of a Cultural Activities Fee

Number of Vote: 26 voted in favor, 4 voted in opposition, 0 voted to abstain

**This legislation recommends the introduction of a universal fee for a service already available to students at "a highly reduced cost", in the words of the piece. At this time, the greater student population is wholly uninterested in increasing the cost of attendance for this purpose.**

Acknowledged are the following pieces considered and passed by the Student Senate.

Legislation Passed: S.R.2020-2021.10 Resolution in Support for The Texas State Employees Union's Petition

Number of Vote: 20 voted in favor, 9 voted in opposition, 0 voted to abstain

Legislation Passed: S.R.2020-2021.13 Resolution Calling for the Theatre Department to Adjust its Curriculum to Better Accommodate Students

Number of Vote: 20 voted in favor, 10 voted in opposition, 0 voted to abstain

Legislation Passed: S.R.2020-2021.16 Resolution Calling for the Installation of Artistic Murals

Number of Vote: 18 voted in favor, 8 voted in opposition, 0 voted to abstain

Legislation Passed: S.R.2020-2021.17 Resolution Calling for Updated Caloric and Diet Specific Information in Dining Halls

Number of Vote: 29 voted in favor, 0 voted in opposition, 0 voted to abstain

Legislation Passed: S.R.2020-2021.18 Resolution Calling for the Creation of Cultural Diversity Flagged Course in Required Curriculum

Number of Vote: 16 voted in favor, 10 voted in opposition, 0 voted to abstain

Legislation Passed: S.R.2020-2021.19 Resolution to Leverage Bobcat Trace to Further Mental Health Outreach from the University

Number of Vote: 26 voted in favor, 0 voted in opposition, 0 voted to abstain

Legislation Passed: S.R.2020-2021.20 Resolution Calling on Free Masks in Major Student Service Buildings

Number of Vote: 28 voted in favor, 0 voted in opposition, 1 voted to abstain

Legislation Passed: S.R.2020-2021.21 Resolution to Encourage Fee Transparency When Registering for Classes, Through an Online Code Pledge

Number of Vote: 30 voted in favor, 0 voted in opposition, 0 voted to abstain

**Authors:**

Senator Halter, Colton

**Sponsors:**

Senator Haynes, KeAirra

Senator Retz, Cody

Senator Gurvitz, Shoval

Senator Cleveland, Jacob

**S.S.R 20-21.11**

**Date of First Reading: September 21, 2020**

**A Resolution**

**To be entitled "A Resolution Calling For The Texas State University President To Formally Request That The San Marcos District Attorney Drop All Charges Placed Against The Student Protestors Arrested in May 2018 and 2019" Calling for the University to use its influence to help the students who were arrested for peacefully expressing their right to Free Speech**

**WHEREAS:** In April 2018 there was intense controversy surrounding the Student Body President, Connor Clegg, due to racist posts he had made as well as his calls to defund the University Star<sup>1</sup>; and

**WHEREAS:** This led to the Student Senate filing impeachment proceedings against the President; and

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.austinchronicle.com/daily/news/2018-04-17/connor-clegg-impeached-at-texas-state/>

14 **WHEREAS:** At the scheduled trial the Senate failed to meet quorum,  
15 much to the dismay of the students present as many were keenly  
16 interested in this very publicized and important meeting<sup>2</sup>; and

17 **WHEREAS:** It seemed clear that the lack of quorum was an intentional  
18 tactic by Senators to avoid trying the President; and

19 **WHEREAS:** Students then decided to engage in their First Amendment  
20 right to peacefully assemble in response to this and organized a  
21 sit-in with demands for the University Administration to step in  
22 to resolve the conflict and force the President to face justice  
23 and to condemn the tactics of those senators that avoided their  
24 duty; and

25 **WHEREAS:** Students also used the opportunity to protest for  
26 minority representation and equity from the Administration, which  
27 had failed to make concrete progress toward equity and inclusion<sup>3</sup>;  
28 and

29 **WHEREAS:** The following week the President was convicted on six  
30 articles of impeachment levied against him;<sup>4</sup> and

31 **WHEREAS:** This represented the students anger at the University  
32 Administration and the Student Government at the time due to the

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<sup>2</sup> <https://universitystar.com/24314/news/senate-fails-to-meet-quorum-clegg-escapes-trial/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://universitystar.com/24366/news/students-sit-in-overnight-protest-university-town-hall/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.austinchronicle.com/daily/news/2018-04-17/connor-clegg-impeached-at-texas-state/>

33 inability to adequately handle racism on a campus still rocked by  
34 the white supremacist terror campaigns of 2016;<sup>5</sup> and

35 **WHEREAS:** On May 2 (the night before finals) a student was arrested  
36 and warrants were placed for three others in connection to the  
37 sit-ins; and

38 **WHEREAS:** Those three students would be arrested on May 7th and  
39 8th<sup>6</sup>; and

40 **WHEREAS:** These students were all charged with obstruction of  
41 highway (a University Parking Garage) and interfering with public  
42 duty; and

43 **WHEREAS:** Peaceful assembly, protest, and accountability from  
44 Student Government Senators is necessary to maintain a true  
45 democracy; and

46 **WHEREAS:** This caused considerable harm to the students mentally,  
47 academically, emotionally, and physically; and

48 **WHEREAS:** In Spring 2019, controversy of the conservative student  
49 organization TPUSA, due to accusations of election fraud, led to  
50 legislation being passed banning the organization from campus; and

51 **WHEREAS:** This was very controversial, dozens of students on both  
52 sides attended the meeting, intense debate and discussion was  
53 carried out, and in the end the piece was narrowly passed; and

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.statesman.com/news/20181005/inside-texas-states-year-of-hate-neo-nazi-propaganda-fight>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.statesman.com/NEWS/20180503/Four-face-charges-in-student-government-protest-at-Texas-State>

54 **WHEREAS:** President Alison Castillo, who was not elected by the  
55 Student Body, decided to veto the legislation;<sup>7</sup> and

56 **WHEREAS:** The publicization of this controversy led to widespread  
57 backlash from conservative and far-right groups, culminating with  
58 Texas Nomads, a white supremacy group, pledging to march on campus  
59 on May 1st, again just before finals; and

60 **WHEREAS:** When student protestors gathered to oppose the white  
61 supremacist marchers counter-counter-protestors from various  
62 conservative organizations on campus gathered to oppose the  
63 action;<sup>8</sup> and

64 **WHEREAS:** Although there was no confrontation with Texas Nomads,  
65 as they appeared to not show up to march as was planned, possibly  
66 due to public calls to protest in opposition to them, an  
67 altercation did take place when one student stole a Make America  
68 Great Again hat from another student; and

69 **WHEREAS:** This student was arrested and charged with failure to  
70 identify, and no other charges;<sup>9</sup> and

71 **WHEREAS:** Two other students were arrested and charged with  
72 interfering with public duty and one with disorderly conduct for  
73 language; and

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<sup>7</sup> <https://universitystar.com/29074/news/student-government-president-vetos-tpusa-legislation/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.kvue.com/article/news/education/schools/four-arrested-on-texas-state-campus-after-president-urges-students-to-avoid-protesters/269-64ed2487-4398-4747-9d78-40c41394ffe6>

<sup>9</sup> <http://public.co.hays.tx.us/JailingSearch.aspx?ID=400>



74 **WHEREAS:** No students were arrested for violent offenses, no  
75 students have as of yet been convicted in a court of law, and all  
76 students were students of color;<sup>10</sup> and

77 **WHEREAS:** These arrests caused the respective students mental and  
78 physical trauma, gave them a criminal record, interfered with their  
79 studies, risked their financial aid, and caused them to lose their  
80 jobs, all before ever being charged in court; and

81 **WHEREAS:** The University, which claims to support freedom of  
82 speech and oppose police brutality, should make an effort to  
83 rectify the wrongs committed against protestors and victims of  
84 police brutality right here on campus; and

85 **WHEREAS:** It is absurd that students should have their academic  
86 career irreparably damaged without ever being formally convicted  
87 and with no violent charges placed against them; and

88 **WHEREAS:** Student Government repeatedly expressed support for the  
89 protestors, however the University Administration has refused to  
90 implement the numerous resolutions passed by Student Senate in  
91 response; and

92 **WHEREAS:** It is now, in a changed political and social climate,  
93 that it is time for the University to make concrete steps to  
94 reconcile with its own wrongdoings toward protestors and  
95 shortcomings with its own police force; therefore

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.fox4news.com/news/texas-state-identifies-students-arrested-releases-statements>

96 **BE IT RESOLVED:** University President, Denise Trauth, and all  
97 other relevant University Administrators, should make a public and  
98 formal request for the San Marcos District Attorney to drop any  
99 and all outstanding charges placed against the following students:

100 "Russell Boyd Lamon III/II

101 Journey Alayna Carnahan

102 (Addison Squares) Madison Marie Houser

103 (Nayir) Nazarene Freeman

104 Claudia Gasponi

105 Alejandra Navarrete

106 Tyvonte Davis-Williams (Spank)"

107 and release a public apology for the actions of the University in  
108 those instances, in an effort to allow healing to take place on  
109 campus; and

110 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** This resolution be forwarded to the  
111 Student Body President for further action.