

53-R-10

A Resolution to Call on The Ohio State University and Ohio Legislature to Reaffirm the Voting Rights of Students

Lauren Sutherland (for herself, Teresa Lebowitz, Gabe Myers, and Halle Nahoum) introduced the following resolution to the Governmental Relations Legislative Committee, where it passed. Then to the Steering Committee, where it passed, and the floor, where it passed.

* * *

Whereas the Undergraduate Student Government represents all undergraduate students at The Ohio State University, and

Whereas the fundamental values and goals of The Ohio State University embrace the mission of preparing a diverse student body to be leaders and engaged citizens,¹ and

Whereas voting is a critical civic duty that impacts the well-being of individuals and our community by helping us realize the ideals of a vibrant democracy, and

Whereas the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the challenges that students, faculty, and staff already face when attempting to vote, including transportation, the ability to vote in-person, and having the right kind of ID, and

Whereas only 38.6% of The Ohio State University undergraduate students voted in the 2018 election,² and

Whereas a 2016 survey found that 27% of white youth and 38% of youth of color did not vote because they did not have transportation to their polling place,³ and

¹ <https://oaa.osu.edu/mission-vision-values-and-core-goals>

² <https://activities.osu.edu/posts/documents/2014-2018-nslve-report-ohio-state-university.pdf>

³ <https://circle.tufts.edu/latest-research/why-youth-dont-vote-differences-race-and-education>

Whereas OSU Votes provided transportation to the Franklin County Board of Elections during the 2018 Election early vote,⁴ and

Whereas The Ohio State University has partnerships with Lyft⁵ and the Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA)⁶ to provide students with discounted or free transportation around Central Ohio, and

Whereas a 2016 survey found that 17% of white youth and 28% of youth of color did not vote because of problems with Voter ID laws in their state,⁷ and

Whereas 34 states explicitly allow some form of student ID to be used for voting, with some other states not requiring ID at all or conducting their elections entirely by mail,⁸ and

Whereas while all college students have a student ID, some might not have easy access to other forms of ID, and

Whereas Ohio law requires a valid voter ID to have an expiration date and current address, two things that the BuckID does not currently have,⁹ and

Whereas Ohio has made exceptions to this requirement for military IDs which often have an expiration date but no current address,¹⁰ and

Whereas studies have repeatedly shown that making voting convenient improves turnout.¹¹

⁴ https://activities.osu.edu/involvement/osuvotes/early_voting_transportati/

⁵ <https://ttm.osu.edu/ride-smart>

⁶ <https://ttm.osu.edu/bus/cota>

⁷ <https://circle.tufts.edu/latest-research/why-youth-dont-vote-differences-race-and-education>

⁸ <https://www.vote.org/voter-id-laws/>

⁹ <https://www.voteriders.org/states/ohio/>

¹⁰ <https://www.ohiosos.gov/elections/voters/id-requirements/>

¹¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/24/us/voting-college-suppression.html>

Therefore, Let it Be Resolved that the Undergraduate Student Government encourages The Ohio State University to provide some form of free, safe, and socially distanced transportation to the Franklin County Board of Elections for students who wish to vote early in-person from October 6 to November 2, and

Let it Further Be Resolved that the Undergraduate Student Government calls on the Ohio Legislature to amend Ohio law to allow student IDs to be used as valid form of voter ID, and

Let it Further Be Resolved that the Undergraduate Student Government calls on The Ohio State University to publicly support and advocate that student IDs be made a valid form of voter ID in Ohio.

Floor Vote: Aye: 26 Nay: 0 Present: 31



Roaya Higazi
President



Nathan Rush
Speaker of the 53rd General Assembly

Date Adopted: September 16, 2020