



73rd Student Senate
Student Life and Academic Affairs Committee
September 6, 2021 at 8:30pm | Zoom Meeting ID: 98246815616

Call to Order: 8:32

Members Present: Murray, Lessard, Garcia, Vanderlay, Hitchcock, Moore, Tsouroukdissian, Nemeth, Remler

Members Tardy: Preshia

Members Absent: Duchene, Moria

Guests: Brandon Gabay, Brooke Cohen

Announcements:

- Chair Murray: I hope everyone had a great weekend! You're all pretty familiar, but we'll go through the motions of how SLAA works since it's our first meeting. We also need to finalize what day and time we would like to meet for the rest of the semester.
- Vice Chair Nemeth: I'm really excited to be here and hope to have a great semester with you all!
- Brandon Gabay: Good Evening SLAA, I'm Brandon Gabay and I'm the Director of the Jewish Student Union. Since Summer 2020, the Jewish Student Union has been in Senate advocated for Jewish students, bringing us to agency status. I'm here tonight to discuss Resolution 18. While tonight is one of the most important Jewish holidays of the entire year, I'm here to make sure other Jewish students can celebrate this holiday with peace of mind and without worry. Resolution 18 started as a resolution in January, failed, and was reintroduced at the dismay of Jewish students. It has been sitting in SLAA since, without a sponsor to introduce it. As it sits here, Jewish students feel unsafe, causing mental health issues for us and other senators in past SLAA sessions. The resolution calls on the university to accept BDS, standing for boycotting, divesting, and sanctioning Israeli goods and products, also included medical, cultural, and

educational items. BDS is modeled after campaigns in Germany that led up to the Holocaust. Even if you don't believe in the state of Israel, supporting the BDS movement is antisemitic. It calls for erratic hatred of the state of Israel, which caused the elimination of half of the Jewish people in the world. According to the latest FBI statistic, antisemitism made up 57.5% of religiously biased hate crimes in US in 2020. Antisemitism is a type of discrimination that is always around, but not talked about. Just as SLAA has done in the past, please continue to support Jewish students and vote no on resolution 18. If you have any questions, please feel free to email me. Thank you.

- Brooke Cohen: Good Evening Senators, my name is Brooke Cohen and I'm the Assistant Director of the Jewish Student Union. I'm here on the first night of Rosh Hashanah, one of the holiest days of the year to discuss Resolution 18. While I could be celebrating my favorite holiday with friends, I'm here due to the urgency this resolution requires. This resolution worries me due to the potential ramifications it could have because of the vague wording that could be used to deter purchases from Jewish run businesses. This could lead to a negative impact on Jewish students at FSU stated, and as Brandon stated, the Jewish community as a whole has already suffered enough. Please thoroughly read through the legislation and vote no on resolution 18.

Committee Business:

- Resolution 18 sponsored by Senator Gonzalez: Calling on the FSU Administration and Board of Trustees to review and withdraw investments from corporations deemed unethical by the FSU student community.
- Resolution 43 sponsored by Senator Roy (P), Marcus (Co): Condemning Florida House Bill 233, which bars conversation of critical race theory in Florida's public schools.
- Resolution 46 sponsored by Senator Puwalski (P), Hautrive, T. Murray (Co): Expressing support for the people of Cuba, and the Cuban community at FSU.
- Sponsored by Senator Bowling (P), Hadley, Puwalski (Co): Pledging support for native and indigenous rights movements.

Old Business:

- **Resolution 18 sponsored by Senator Gonzalez**
 - **RESOLUTION 18 IS TABLED**

New Business:

- **Resolution 43 sponsored by Senator Roy (P), Senator Marcus (Co):**

- Opening Statement:

- I plan to make a ton of amendments, and I have written out each “whereas” clause and “may it be further resolved” clause. I came to SLAA at the last meeting before we adjourned for summer, and I wanted to split my bill into two parts: one that will address HB233, which I will propose for next week, and one that deals with the banning of critical race theory. I wanted to start with critical race theory first because, as a history major, I’ve definitely heard a lot about and researched. If anyone is unfamiliar with the situation, on June 10, 2021, the Florida Board of Education adopted a ban on the teaching of critical race theory along with any material from the Pulitzer Prize winning 1619 Project. Critical race theory is the intersection between how different things in history have impacted the laws today. Back in the day, how policies impacted people directly and disproportionately, and then going forward, how different poll taxes or voter id for example impacted communities. It tries to build up even towards today as we’ve seen things like Souls to the Polls when states were wanting to propose closing different early hours for Sunday voting which would disproportionately impact black people. You can track back how people are impacted by things today to different parts of history. In its current form, this ban says that “examples and theories that distort historical events and are inconsistent with state board approved standards include: the denial of the Holocaust and the teaching of critical race theory.” Those are the only two things. It compares it to the Holocaust. I’m not sure how it got there because it’s not political. It looks at the intersection of how people are impacted by laws today, and because Florida schools are teaching civics, this should be available to learn about. This ban prohibits students from gaining every opportunity they can from their schools. I look forward to working with you guys to find the best way to address this.

- Technical Non-Debatable Questions:

- **Preshia moves to enter round-table discussion; Moore seconds**

- Round-Table Discussion:
 - Roy: I'm sending the amendments in the chat since everything is practically changed from the original legislation
 - Roy: I also changed who it's being sent to by removing three of the members of the House/Senate of Florida and replacing them with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board of Governors
 - Hitchcock: Could you also change Emmabella? The Director of Governmental Affairs position hasn't been confirmed yet, and she's left the position
 - Roy: Yes
 - Murray: Sponsor Roy, do you find these amendments friendly
 - **Nemeth moves to amend; Preshia seconds**
 - Lessard: Can we pass these by unanimous consent since we'd have to do a roll call vote for each clause?
 - Roy: I want to pass it all as one amendment, but I'm here to answer any questions or concerns
 - Hitchcock: Is this a condemnation resolution?
 - Roy: Yes
 - Hitchcock: Ok we can't pass by unanimous consent, so we can just do a roll call vote once, but I see what Senator Lessard was talking about line by line
 - **Preshia motions for a non-committee member to speak; Moore seconds**
 - Puwalski: I've done this with resolutions before, but we could just keep in the Office of Government Affairs Director position, but not specify a name and have it sent to the next Director immediately upon confirmation
 - Nemeth: I wanted to thank Sponsor Roy for submitting this resolution. I know we gave you a hard time last meeting, but it looks great and I will be voting yes after we pass the amendment
 - Hitchcock: I love this, and would love to see the amendment pass

- Roy: By the way, I did accept Puwalski's language of having it sent to the next OGA Director
 - Nemeth: Perfect
 - Vote on the amendment:
 - Yes: 9 [Lessard, Garcia, Vanderlay, Hitchcock, Moore, Tsouroukdissian, Nemeth, Remler, Preshia]
 - **AMENDMENT PASSES**
 - **Lessard moves to call to question; Moore seconds**
 - Closing Statement:
 - Thank you all for your time, and for getting this resolution to what it needs to be. I look forward to answering any questions that may arise on the Senate floor about this. This will be a great way to support the teaching of subjects in our public schools to allow teachers to have freedom to teach and answer questions if these subjects come up. Thank for for your time and have a great night
 - Vote:
 - Yes: 9 [Lessard, Garcia, Vanderlay, Hitchcock, Moore, Tsouroukdissian, Nemeth, Remler, Preshia]
 - No: N/A
 - Abstain: N/A
 - **RESOLUTION 43 PASSES**
- **Resolution 46 sponsored by Senator Puwalski (P), Hautrive, T. Murray (Co):**
 - Opening Statement:
 - This is a resolution I wrote over the summer. It was more timely over the summer, but due to the timing of the events and schedule that we had with the summer session, I was not able to be heard. However, it's still as important. This is essentially addressing the issues we saw in Cuba over the summer including the political atmosphere. The point of this resolution is to state that as a Senate, we condemn the dictatorial government. For example, according to the committee to protect journalists, authorities

were blocking reporters and journalists from even leaving their homes, leaving the Cuban people even more unaware of what was going on. The government disrupted access to internet and telephone service. Human rights NGOs identified Cuban journalists who were wrongfully detained, hundreds of them. The US has a unique position in the world to speak out against this, and as a democratic institution, we have an obligation to say something about this. I did reach out to CASA over the summer, provided them a link to the document, and asked them for feedback and to make any revisions or changes they felt necessary. They didn't get back to me or make revisions, but these were the pieces of information I was able to gather along with the cosponsors of this resolution. I hope we can come together as a Senate over this, and if you have any questions, please let me know

- Technical Non-Debatable Questions:
 - Preshia: Would you find it friendly to change the Pro-Tempore to Renee Wang instead of Abril Hunter, the Pro-Tempore over the summer
 - Puwalski: Yes
 - **Preshia moves to enter round-table discussion; Moore seconds**
- Round-Table Discussion:
 - Hitchcock: This resolution is fantastically crafted. I believe in all of the intentions behind it and what it's going to do. I talked to the sponsors and cosponsors about it. They're very passionate about this. I will be voting yes when the time comes
 - Preshia: I agree. This is a great resolution, and I will also be voting yes
 - Tsouroukdissian: I also think this is a great resolution, and I will be voting yes
 - Moore: I love everything this stands for, and I will be voting yes
 - **Preshia moves to call the question; Nemeth seconds**
- Closing Statement:
 - Thank you for your kind words and Senator Preshia for your suggestion. Even though some of these events happened a while ago, I still think it's important to address them and unify as a Senate. Hopefully we will be

hearing this on the Senate floor very soon, and I appreciate all of your support. Thank you

- Vote:
 - Yes: 9 [Lessard, Garcia, Vanderlay, Hitchcock, Moore, Tsouroukdissian, Nemeth, Remler, Preshia]
 - No: N/A
 - Abstain: N/A
- **RESOLUTION 46 DOES**

Unfinished Business:

- Resolution 18 sponsored by Senator Gonzalez: Calling on the FSU Administration and Board of Trustees to review and withdraw investments from corporations deemed unethical by the FSU student community.
- Sponsored by Senator Bowling (P), Hadley, Puwalski (Co): Pledging support for native and indigenous rights movements.

Closing Announcements:

- Chair Murray: Last Wednesday, President Harmon talked to us about how if we don't have committee business, we should be thinking about other things we can do. I think we'll always have business, but since we are Student Life, he wanted to pair with the Big Event on campus. I think that could be a really good idea, and we should talk more in our chat about different things we can do across campus to increase Senate involvement. I know we did that a lot in the past. We paired with Homecoming recently and had an event on the baseball field that was super fun. If you have any ideas, please let me know or text in the chat. It was great meeting tonight
- Vice Chair Nemeth: I meant to mention this earlier, but I sincerely apologize that we are meeting on this Jewish holiday. I'm sorry this happened, and I will make sure this does not happen again. Regardless, thank you for coming tonight and great job guys
- Chair Murray: My sincere apologies as well. This will be the last time that we do that

Next Meeting: TBD

Adjourned: 9:11

Bob Murray

Signature of Chair Murray