A University-Wide Opinion Resolution Opposing the Passage of Georgia Senate Bill 241 and Georgia House Bill 531

Introduced by: Senator Danny Mai  
Sponsor(s): Senator(s) Mai, Le  
Submittal Date: 11 March 2021  
Sent to: President Thomas  
First Reading: 03/11/2021  
Date Voted On: 03/26/2021

WHEREAS, the Student Government Association serves as the official voice of the students at Georgia State University, and,

WHEREAS, the Georgia Senate approved the passage of a bill that would “require reasons for absentee voting”¹, effectively repealing no-excuse absentee voting as seen in HB 244 passed in 2005, and,

WHEREAS, because of the effects of the Novel Coronavirus (colloquially known as COVID-19) has demonstrated a need for alternative ways to partake in the civil right of enfranchisement, and,

WHEREAS, according to the Pew Research Center “Roughly 50.3% of the total votes [casted were by] absentee/by mail”² ultimately revealing the dire need for absentee voting during these times, and,

WHEREAS, Then Senator Brian Kemp supported no-excuse absentee voting in 2005 touted “Georgia as a national leader in election law because of the state’s absentee rules, automatic voter registration and at least 16 days of in-person early voting” thus signaling to the efficiency and security of absentee voting, and,

WHEREAS, the Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger stated that “Georgia continues to set records for voter turnout and election participation, seeing the largest increase in average turnout of any other state in the 2018 midterm election and record turnout in 2020, with over 1.3 million absentee by mail

¹ (Senators Dugan of the 30th), https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/60009  
voters and over 3.6 million in-person voters utilizing Georgia’s new, secure, paper ballot voting system.”³, and,

WHEREAS, Georgia House Bill 316, signed by the Honorable Gov. Brian Kemp “updated Georgia’s voting machines, lengthened the time before someone can be removed from the voter rolls, limited last-minute changes to polling places and other overhauls after the 2018 governor’s race”.⁴

WHEREAS, according to Georgia Public Broadcasting “Voter registration shot up dramatically in the following years, with Georgia leading the nation in new automatic registrations, culminating in a record 7.6 million registered voters as of October 2020“, and,

WHEREAS, ultimately the state of Georgia was prepared for any upcoming, and past, elections based on what reputable and trustworthy sources, and,

WHEREAS, the Student Government Association at Georgia State University believes that by providing stricter guidelines to absentee voting, this would result in a lesser turnout in voter participation across the state of Georgia, and,

WHEREAS, based on the research and information of the aforementioned articles, the passing of SB 241 & HB 531 would ultimately contribute to voter disenfranchisement as many people would ultimately be unable to partake in their civic duties as an American Citizen, and,

WHEREAS, the Student Government Association opposes the actions pursed by the Legislators of the State of Georgia believes that the passing of SB 241 & HB 531 would definitively disenfranchise the vast majority of voters who vote by absentee vote.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE UNIVERSITY-WIDE SENATE OF THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY THAT

Section 1: This resolution shall be known as the “Opposition to the State of Georgia Senate Bill 241 & House Bill 531.”

Section 2: Based on the research and information of the aforementioned articles, the passing of SB 241 & HB 531, the Student Government Association at Georgia State University denounces passing of SB 241 & HB

³ (Raffensperger); https://sos.ga.gov/index.php/elections/state_election_board_invites_dominion_voting_systems_to_discuss_2020_statewide_voting_system_implementation
⁴ (Representatives Fleming of the 121st); https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/54991
Section 3: We, the Student Government Association serving as the voice of the student body, urge civil leaders to withdraw their support of SB 241 & HB 531.

Section 4: A copy of this resolution shall be sent via email and letter, by President Kaelen Thomas, to the Honorable Brian Kemp, Governor of the State of Georgia, the Honorable Geoff Duncan, Lieutenant Governor of the State of Georgia, Mike Dugan, Majority Leader for the Georgia State Senate, Gloria Butler, Democratic Leader of the Senate, Jon Burns, Majority Leader for the Georgia State House, James Beverly, Minority Leader for the Georgia State House

Section 5: This legislation shall take effect immediately upon passage by the Student Government Association, the welfare of the students requiring it.

ACTION TAKEN BY THE STUDENT SENATE: VOTE for 18 against 0 abstentions 0

ACTION TAKEN BY THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

Signature _____________________ _____________________ Date 05/03/2021