A resolution recognizing and allocating funding for the establishment of an on-campus polling location at the Damon J. Keith Center for Civil Rights.

Presented on the 5th of September 2019

Sponsors: Stuart Baum
Co-Sponsors: Farhana Aktar, Ryane Brown

WHEREAS, Students who live on and around campus face many barriers to registering and voting at their on-campus address; **AND**

WHEREAS, Chief among these barriers is the fact that the previous polling location serving these students was located far from the campus core;[1] **AND**

WHEREAS, The previous polling location was also situated in a facility serving as the polling location for three different precincts, thus resulting in long wait-times and lines at the polls;[2] **AND**

WHEREAS, These barriers often prevented students from exercising their right to vote and utilizing the previous off-campus polling location due to the lack of time in their busy schedules or reliable transportation options; **AND**

WHEREAS, In order to address this barrier, the Student Senate drafted *A Proposal for the Establishment of an On-Campus Polling Location at Wayne State University*; **AND**

WHEREAS, This proposal called for the establishment of an on-campus polling location at Wayne State University to serve the needs of this student population; **AND**

WHEREAS, By establishing a polling location on campus, solely to serve the precinct encompassing the vast majority of on-campus University housing, the distance and wait-time issues that the previous polling location presented for students living on and around campus could be eliminated; **AND**

WHEREAS, Since drafting the proposal, and after months of effort, official approval has been given from the administration of Wayne State University and the City of Detroit to establish an on-campus polling location at the Damon J. Keith Center for Civil Rights;[3] **AND**

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[1] *A Proposal for the Establishment of an On-Campus Polling Location at Wayne State University.*
[2] Ibid.
[3] Polling Place Agreement signed by Provost Whitfield and City Clerk Janice Winfrey.

WHEREAS, The Damon J. Keith Center for Civil Rights, the facility chosen to serve as the new polling location, meets all accessibility requirements, has adequate parking spaces available for voters, and will be free of conflicting University activities for the duration of each election day;[4] **AND**

WHEREAS, The Damon J. Keith Center for Civil Rights, itself a physical reminder of the enduring civil rights movement with a permanent installation of the *Marching Toward Justice* exhibit in its lobby, proves to be a meaningful host of the on-campus polling location and a reminder to our campus community not to take our right to vote for granted;[5] **AND**

WHEREAS, Since gaining approval to establish the on-campus polling location at The Damon J. Keith Center for Civil Rights, the Dean of Students Office has subsequently entered into an agreement with the WSU Parking and Transportation Administration to provide funding to ensure that the University can make parking available for all voters to utilize the on-campus polling location free of charge each election day;[6] **AND**

WHEREAS, With the on-campus polling location serving all registered voters living in the precinct, students and otherwise, the on-campus polling location should present a welcome relief to voters who are not part of the greater campus community by providing them with a more convenient and timely location to vote compared with the previous polling location;[7] **AND**

WHEREAS, By embracing the establishment of an on-campus polling location, the University can further signal to commuter students, as well as students who live outside of the boundaries of the precinct that will be served by the on-campus polling location, that voting and civic engagement are critical components to what it means to be a member of our campus community; **AND**

WHEREAS, It is imperative for our University to support initiatives such as this that strengthen our institutional commitment and relationship with the City of Detroit, and thereby embrace our mission to positively impact local and global communities;[8] **AND**

WHEREAS, In a country and a state with a history of enacting laws that disenfranchise student voting, and with the many present institutional barriers that prevent students from effectively

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[4] *A Proposal for the Establishment of an On-Campus Polling Location at Wayne State University*.
[5] *Marching Toward Justice* exhibit law.wayne.edu/keith-center/resources/collection/justice.
[6] WSU Polling Location Parking Agreement.
[7] *A Proposal for the Establishment of an On-Campus Polling Location at Wayne State University*.
[8] WSU Strategic Plan strategicplan.wayne.edu/.

exercising their right to vote, our University is obligated to step up and promote student civic engagement; **AND**

WHEREAS, It is further imperative for our University to promote student civic engagement as a fundamental step toward preparing students to become local and global citizens upon graduation, thus ensuring their ultimate student success; **AND**

WHEREAS, With the establishment of an on-campus polling location encouraging students who live on and around campus to register and vote using their campus address, such students can develop an even greater sense of belonging in our campus community; yet another factor encouraging their student success; **AND**

WHEREAS, it is the core mission of the Wayne State University Student Senate to support initiatives that enhance the power of students' voice at a local, regional, and national scale; and promote their student success.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Wayne State University Student Senate thanks the administration of Wayne State University and the leadership of the City of Detroit for their support for this initiative and their efforts to establish an on-campus polling location; **AND**

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Wayne State University Student Senate calls upon the University administration to work to ensure the longevity and sustainability of the on-campus polling location, and to ensure that it can operate freely on-campus in perpetuity; **AND**

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Wayne State University Student Senate calls upon the University administration to engage the student body if any alteration in the present arrangement for the on-campus polling location needs to be undertaken; **AND**

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Wayne State University Student Senate calls upon the University administration to work with the City of Detroit to ensure that an on-campus polling location is able to serve a precinct or precincts containing as large a number of student housing as practicable whenever precinct boundaries are changed; **AND**

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Wayne State University Student Senate calls upon the University administration to financially support the operation of the on-campus polling location to ensure that it can remain accessible to the campus community and all voters residing in the precinct it serves in perpetuity; **AND**

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Wayne State University Student Senate calls upon the University administration to assist in promoting the availability of the on-campus polling location, and to implement other initiatives that support the effort to ensure that all students who are eligible to do so are registered and frequent voters; **AND**

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Wayne State University Student Senate will appropriate funds to purchase materials that can be used to mark the polling location each election day, and will continue to use its voice and budget to support the successful operation of the on-campus polling location in perpetuity.

AND FINALLY BE IT ORDERED, that Wayne State University Student Senate will circulate this resolution to all relevant outlets, including the University President, the University Provost, the members of the Board of Governors, the President of the Wayne State University Academic Senate, and *The South End* student newspaper.

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Stuart Baum   *Mazen Zamzam*
President   Vice President