

Sponsors: Senator-at-Large Zack Thomas
Student Senate President Sailor Mayes

MOVED by Senator-at-Large Zack Thomas and SECONDED by Student Senate Vice President Jasmine Coles to APPROVE the Resolution to Open Public Access to Student Senate Meetings during the Public Comment Item.

RESOLUTION TO OPEN PUBLIC ACCESS TO STUDENT SENATE MEETINGS DURING THE PUBLIC COMMENT ITEM

WHEREAS, the Student Senate of Wayne State University seeks to comport with principles of public body accountability, transparency, public participation in public meetings, and other such principles of the [State of Michigan Open Meetings Act, MCL 15.261 et seq.](#) with its best efforts, even though the Student Senate is not a public body for the purposes of the Open Meetings Act; **and**

WHEREAS, the Student Senate has been conducting regularly scheduled meetings electronically throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic pursuant to University rules and applicable law; said pandemic has caused the public to have no means of access to the Student Senate's ordinary process of facilitating public comment; **and**

WHEREAS, the Student Senate thus has no discernible, formal process for ensuring that students and other members of the public may formally address the Student Senate during the electronic public meetings of the Student Senate; **and**

WHEREAS, public bodies within the State of Michigan, following State of Michigan guidance (see, e.g., [Executive Order 2020-15](#)), have developed procedures for determining safe, acceptable means of facilitating public comment during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Those means and that guidance today inform the changes herein proposed to the Student Senate Bylaws; **and**

WHEREAS, the Student Senate does not have any public comment policy identified in its Charter or Bylaws.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Student Senate of Wayne State University ENACTS as an addition to its Bylaws, Article VI. § 10, titled PUBLIC COMMENT POLICY, which reads:

- A. *In General.* At any and all public meetings of the Student Senate, students and all other members of the public shall be allowed to address the Student Senate during an agenda item which is listed for the purpose of public comment, subject to the requirements of this Section. Public comment shall be limited to three minutes per commenter. Members of the public wishing to address the Student Senate must provide their full name (legal or preferred names which reasonably identify the commenter shall be accepted) and whether or not they are a current student of Wayne State University before addressing the Student Senate.

- B. *Electronic Meetings.* Any and all public meetings of the Student Senate that are conducted electronically over Zoom, Microsoft Teams, or other like service must have a means by which students and other members of the public may be heard during the item designated for public comment. The Student Senate President shall, through written declaration to the Student Senate, elect to use either or both of the following procedures for facilitating public comment during such electronic meetings:
- i. *Public Comment through Actual Electronic Attendance.* If it elects this option, the Student Senate must post a conspicuous and clearly explained link to the Student Senate website for the purpose of RSVPing to the meeting. The link shall require members of the public to provide the information required in (A) of this Section, and in addition, a valid phone number or email address. The member of the public wishing to speak must RSVP at least one hour prior to the scheduled meeting time. Upon a reasonable time after receipt of the RSVP, but no later than 30 minutes prior to the scheduled meeting time, the Student Senate must provide the RSVPing member of the public means to access the meeting. The Student Senate President shall call on each member of the public who RSVP'd in attendance. The members of the public, when called, shall then be permitted to address the Student Senate, subject to the time-constraints listed in (A) of this Section. The Student Senate President may require that the commenter leave the electronic meeting after the comment has been given.
 - ii. *Public Comment through Submitting Written and/or Electronic Communication.* If it elects this option, the Student Senate must post a conspicuous and clearly explained link to the Student Senate website which contains a form for the purpose of submitting public comment to be read at an upcoming public meeting of the Student Senate. The link shall require that members of the public provide the information required in (A) of this Section. The member of the public wishing to comment at a particular meeting must submit the public comment at least one hour prior to the scheduled meeting time. During the agenda item which is listed for the purpose of public comment, the President or their designee shall read all rule-conforming written and / or electronic communications that were submitted for the purpose of commenting at the public meeting in question, subject to the time-constraints listed in (A) of this Section.
- C. Any link that is posted pursuant to (B) of this Section must appear on the Student Senate website no later than 48 hours prior to a scheduled public meeting of the Student Senate. Where it is expected that electronic meetings will be conducted regularly and in lieu of in-person meetings, any link that is posted pursuant to (B) of this Section must appear continuously on the Student Senate website until it is no longer expected that electronic meetings will be regularly conducted in lieu of in-person meetings.

- D. Comments on any live-streaming social media service used by the Student Senate to broadcast its meetings are not sufficient for the purpose of meeting the requirements of this Section.
- E. The public posting requirements of Article V. § 6(C) of these Bylaws do not apply to this Section.

FINALLY, BE IT ORDERED that that the Student Senate of Wayne State University DIRECTS its President to take all reasonable steps, including through delegation of tasks to Executive Board members, to elect and implement the means permitted by the Bylaws and this Resolution to allow for public comment during electronic meetings by June 29, 2021.

AYES:
NAYS:

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

X 

Sailor Mayes, President
Student Senate

X 

Jasmine Coles, Vice President
Student Senate