

UNIVERSITY of  
**HOUSTON**

Student Government Association

**To:** Dr. Richard Walker  
Vice Chancellor / Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Services  
**CC:** Keith Kowalka  
Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs - Student Life

**From:** Shaun Smith  
Speaker of the Senate

**Date:** 16 February, 2015

**Subject:** Tier One Freshman Housing Act

The Student Government Association Senate proposed this legislation when a formalized plan for a mandatory housing for freshmen university students was developed by student leaders and other University stakeholders. Data derived from student performance of second and third year students in addition to various student demographics demonstrated that there was a positive correlation between GPA and students electing to live on campus their first year.

There was pushback from various members of the student body in addition to a Texas Senator who all cited the potential for this program to cause the University to lose some of its legacy as a institution of opportunity. Modifications to the requirement was made to expand the exemption clause to include all married students and those living in any contiguous county to Harris County as well as any student who can demonstrate that this measure would be counterproductive to their personal or academic success. The Senate further affirmed that a scholarship be created to facilitate first year students in their ability to afford on-campus living.

This measure was called to question on 1 October, 2014 and passed from all present and voting members with a votes:

Aye – 24

Nay – 1

Any further questions or inquiries regarding the nature or process of this legislation can be directed to myself. Thank you for your time in reviewing this measure.

All my best,



Shaun Smith  
Speaker of the Senate

**HOUSTON'S CARNEGIE-DESIGNATED TIER ONE PUBLIC RESEARCH UNIVERSITY**

**Label:** UB – 51005

**Date Introduced:** August 26, 2014

**Date Passed:** October 1, 2014

**Author(s):** Sen. Matthew Ramirez, Sen. Nelson Raymond-Grajales, Sen. Louis Adam, Sen. Nathan Alsbrooks

**Sponsor(s):** Sen. Brianna Mills, Sen. Sepi Zimmer, Sen. Lauren Tolat, Sen. Sarah Aimad, Sen. Clement Agho-Otoghile, Sen. Clint Kirchhoff, Sen. Tanzeem Chowdhury

**Committee:** Student Life

**Version:** Final

### **Tier One Freshmen Housing Act**

**WHEREAS**, the University of Houston has been recognized as a Tier One research institution by the Carnegie Foundation; and

**WHEREAS**, the University of Houston has recently become the university with the second-highest residential student population in the state of Texas and has made significant efforts to improve student life and campus culture; and

**WHEREAS**, residential life is a crucial part of the student experience and strongly influences retention rates, graduation rates, and student success; and

**WHEREAS**, state funding of the University of Houston is tied to retention and graduation rates; and

**WHEREAS**, it is imperative that the University of Houston improve its graduation rate, retention rate, and student life; and

**WHEREAS**, freshmen who live on campus take more credit hours, have higher GPAs, have a higher retention rate, and are more likely to graduate and do so on time;

**THEREFORE BE IT ENACTED** the 51<sup>st</sup> administration of the University of Houston Student Government Association supports a mandatory freshmen housing requirement; and

**BE IT FURTHER ENACTED** that any incoming freshmen who lives at home with their parents in Harris County or contiguous county, is married and/or has children, or have any reason that this policy is counterproductive to the student's success be exempt from this mandatory freshmen housing requirement; and

#### **HOUSTON'S CARNEGIE-DESIGNATED TIER ONE PUBLIC RESEARCH UNIVERSITY**

**BE IT FURTHER ENACTED** that a \$1 million scholarship fund be established before this mandatory freshmen housing requirement go in to effect in order to offset the potential cost.

**BE IT FURTHER ENACTED** that the University of Houston Student Government Association shall submit the proposal hereto written to the Faculty Senate of the University of Houston. We request our Faculty Senate support this legislation.



Shaun Smith  
Speaker of the Senate  
University of Houston – Main Campus

Date of Senate Approval: 1 OCTOBER 2014



Charles Haston  
Student Body President  
University of Houston – Main Campus

**APPROVED**

Date of President's Approval: 10/2/14

Pursuant to Student Government Association Constitution Article IV, § 11, Clause 2, this legislation will be presented to the President of the University. Approval or disapproval by the President of the University, and their response, will be recorded in the Senate Journal on additional signature attachments to be included with this legislation.



**DISAPPROVE** \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

If the President of the University disapproves of the legislation, the Student Government Association requests that President record their comments below or an additional attachment.

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