

Introduced By: GAP Chair Vasquez
Sponsored By:
Contact: sgagap@ucf.edu
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 April 3, 2025
Committee Action: Passed 6-0-1
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 Passed 26-0-0
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Final Vote: Passed 26-0-0



University of Central Florida
Fifty-Sixth Student Body Senate
Resolution 56-35

[Resolution Advocating for Housing Affordability and Environmental Efforts at the State Level]

WHEREAS, Senate Rule 2.04(D)(1) states the Governmental Affairs and Policy (GAP) Committee shall pass measures pertaining to local, state, or federal government affairs;

WHEREAS, Article 2.05(C) of the Student Body Constitution states that the Student Body Senate shall express the will and sentiments of the Student Body Senate through legislation;

WHEREAS, The topic of Housing Affordability was the topic most written in, by students who took the Legislative Priority Survey, conducted and made by the GAP Committee in the 2024-2025 session, with 51% of students choosing Public Welfare as the topic most important to them;

WHEREAS, On the survey, topics under Public Welfare included: Food and Housing Insecurity, Insurance Affordability, Toll Relief, Transit, Mobility, and Walkability, and Predatory Loan Practice Safeguards;

WHEREAS, The topics most chosen under Public Welfare were: Food and Housing Insecurity, Insurance Affordability, and Transit, Mobility, and Walkability;

WHEREAS, The topic of Environment and Sustainability had 54% of students choosing Public Welfare as the topic most important to them;

WHEREAS, The topics most chosen under Environment and Sustainability were: Green Energy, Water Quality Improvements, and Environmental Protections for State Parks;

WHEREAS, House Bill (HB) 879 and Senate Bill (SB) 584 titled “Young Adults who are Homeless or were in the Child Welfare System” and “Young Adult Housing Support”, respectively, introduced by the Career and Workforce Subcommittee and Senator Garcia, respectively;

WHEREAS, The bills aim to requires each state college and university to develop a plan prioritizing placement of students who are or were formerly in foster care or who are homeless or at risk of experiencing homelessness in residence halls owned or operated by the institution which the student attends;

WHEREAS, The bill also requires that if a state college or university implements a priority system for assigning students to housing or work-study programs, it must give first priority to students who are eligible for a tuition and fee exemption due to their involvement with the child welfare system or classification as a homeless child or youth;

WHEREAS, Additionally, would require departments to develop programs and supports to help young adults 28 years of age or younger who were in the child welfare system after the age of 14 with accessing available federal programs and vouchers relating to housing and housing stability;

WHEREAS, The bill requires the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability to conduct a study relating to barriers that young adults involved with the child welfare system or experiencing homelessness who are not enrolled in a state college or university face when trying to obtain housing;

WHEREAS, Florida law defines student homelessness as “a student who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence or whose primary nighttime residence is a public or private shelter designed to provide temporary residence for individuals to be institutionalized, or a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.”;

WHEREAS, The 2023 FAFSA identified 41,243 students nationwide as unaccompanied homeless – a subcategory of homelessness. 2,546 of those students were reported in Florida. Student homelessness has increased 22.5% over the last five years;

WHEREAS, Nationally, around 60% of community college students and 48% of four-year college students face housing insecurity – which is defined as the inability to pay rent or utilities, or the need to move frequently;

WHEREAS, Florida has the highest rate of students facing housing insecurity compared to other US States, with 29% of students reporting they have no place to stay;

WHEREAS, In the 2017-2018 school year, 95,873 children and youth in Florida were identified as experiencing homelessness.

WHEREAS, At the start of the 2023 school year, 1,360 students were reported as homeless in Seminole County, and 1,500 in Orange County. Reported to be an 80% increase since the start of the 2022 school year, and greater than the numbers reported during the pandemic;

WHEREAS, The greatest demographics of homeless students come from migrant children, children with disabilities, unaccompanied children, and children with limited English proficiency;

WHEREAS, The true number of homeless college students is larger than what reports show and is difficult to quantify accurately.

WHEREAS, UCF provides resources for students facing housing insecurity and hunger, for example, Student Care Services and Knights Helping Knights Pantry. In addition to Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) that engage in community outreach, such as Hearts for the Homeless Orlando Chapter, SALT Outreach at UCF, Hands and Hands;

WHEREAS, There is a clear need for housing affordability and support among degree-seeking students, hence we strongly advocate for the passing of HB879/SB584;

WHEREAS, HB295 and SB1148 titled “Comprehensive Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan” and “Carbon Sequestration” respectively, introduced by Representatives Casello and Hart and Senator Rodriguez;

WHEREAS, The bills aim to require the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to develop a statewide comprehensive waste reduction and recycling plan based on the recommendations in its 2020 report on Florida’s recycling goal;

WHEREAS, Recycling is any process by which solid waste, or materials that would otherwise become solid waste, are collected, separated, or processed and reused or returned to use in the form of raw materials or intermediate or final products;

WHEREAS, These materials or products include, but are not limited to, crude oil, fuels, and fuel substitutes;

WHEREAS, Local governments are responsible for collecting and transporting solid waste to solid waste processing facilities where the recyclables are separated by category;

WHEREAS, The bills create the Carbon Sequestration Task Force as an adjunct to the Department of Environmental Protection to provide recommendations for the development of a statewide carbon sequestration program;

WHEREAS, The bill appropriates \$350,000 from the Department of Environmental Protection’s Administrative Trust Fund for fiscal year 2025-2026 to support the task force;

WHEREAS, Capturing and sequestering carbon dioxide is one way to defer the effects of atmospheric warming and is viewed as an essential part of solving climate change;

WHEREAS, UCF aims to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050, become a zero-waste campus, and integrate sustainability across all disciplines;

WHEREAS, UCF focuses on designing, building, and maintaining facilities that meet or exceed LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards, reducing energy consumption, promoting renewable energy, and increasing the number of commuters using environmentally preferred transportation methods;

WHEREAS, UCF aims to recycle 75% of its waste and manages its lands and waters sustainably, including xeriscaping, planting Florida-friendly vegetation, and reducing nitrogen levels in fertilizers; and

WHEREAS, There is a clear need for housing affordability and support among degree-seeking students, hence we strongly advocate for the passing of HB295/SB200 and HB1063/SB1148.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That it is the opinion of the Fifty-Sixth Student Senate of the University of Central Florida that the bills being addressed in the 2025 Day at the Capitol Advocacy Agenda, HB879/SB584, HB295/SB1148 revolving around the topics of Housing Affordability and Environment and Sustainability Efforts be advocated for or against, on behalf of the UCF Student Body; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to Gray Robinson Representatives, Chris Carmody, Kylee Anzueto, and the UCF Government and Community Relations Office, Vice President Janet Owens, Senior Associate Vice President Fred Kittinger, and Manager of Public Affairs Austin Wilson, Vice President of Student Success and Well-Being Addrienne Frame, University President Alexander Cartwright.

AUTHORIZING SIGNATURES



Allison Pohlmann
Senate President

4/4/2025

Date



Danishka Morissette
Senate President Pro Tempore

4/10/2025

Date