First Reading: March 19th

Second Reading: March 26th

Pass: YES
Fail:

Other:

Resolution 2-19-S. Resolution to Support the Establishment of a University Holiday on all Official Primary and General Election Days Beginning Fall 2019

PURPOSE: For the Student Government Association of Western Kentucky University to Support the establishment of a University Holiday on all official primary and general

election days beginning Fall 2019.

WHEREAS: While youth voter turnout is anticipated to be the highest in a century, data shows that youth voters are historically underrepresented in elections, moreso in southern Kentucky. If allowed more access and support, youth can play a vital role in shaping local, state, and federal government, and

WHEREAS: Any and every student, faculty, and staff who is willing and able to vote should not be penalized, discouraged, or prohibited by Western Kentucky University or its class and work activities in pursuing the most fundamental of civic duties. Western Kentucky University should take this opportunity to set precedent for other institutions by offering students the basic access and support needed to make it to the polls, and

WHEREAS: The Reg 2 Vote campaign was a non-partisan, student-led initiative, organized by Western Kentucky University students Francis Wilson and Francisco Serrano, that encouraged students to register to vote and challenged the university to better support student voters by cancelling class on Election Day. The Reg 2 Vote campaign aligns with the mission of the Student Government Association of Western Kentucky University, and

WHEREAS: According to Reg 2 Vote data, over 2,000 petition signatures from Western Kentucky University students, faculty, and staff were collected by the Reg 2 Vote campaign in support of the cancellation of class on election day, and

WHEREAS: Data collected through the Reg 2 Vote petition shows that 48% of signatories planned to vote outside of Bowling Green, Kentucky in the 2018 Midterm Election, and

WHEREAS: Data shows 40% planned to vote in Bowling Green, while 10% planned to vote absentee, and

WHEREAS: Data from this petition also shows 65% of signatories strongly agreed and 21% agreed that classes would restrict their voting, and

WHEREAS: Data shows only 8% of signatories disagreed or strongly disagreed that classes would restrict their voting, and

WHEREAS: Resolution 5-18-F, a Resolution to Support the University Wide Cancellation of all Official Class Activities on November 6, 2018 for the 2018 Midterm Elections was passed by the Student Government Association of Western Kentucky University on September 18, 2018, and

WHEREAS: On October 15, 2018, Faculty Senate Executive Committee of Western Kentucky University voted to not take Resolution 5-18-F to Faculty Senate floor due to possible schedule conflicts if the bill were to pass leaving professors limited time to prepare, and

WHEREAS: According to Western Kentucky University policy 4.6801, a university holiday is defined as “New Year’s Day, Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Birthday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Wednesday preceding Thanksgiving Day, Friday following Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve Day, Christmas Day, New Year’s Eve Day”, and

WHEREAS: “Presidential Election Day (every four years)” is not officially defined by 4.6801 Section 1 as a university holiday, and is incorrectly placed under Section 2, which reads “Six additional days scheduled during the Christmas/Winter Break each year”. “Presidential Election Day (every four years)” should be removed from 4.6801 Section 2 and placed under 4.6801 Section 1, and

WHEREAS: 4.6801 Section 1 should include “Primary Elections (each Spring)” and “General Elections (each Fall)” in defining university holidays, and

THEREFORE: Be it resolved that the Student Government Association of Western Kentucky University Support the establishment of a University Holiday on all official primary and general election days beginning Fall 2019.

AUTHORS: Francis Wilson, student

SPONSORS: Matt Barr, Campus Improvements Committee Chair

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CITATIONS: Student Needs Report

 <https://franciswilson.space/reg-2-vote/>

 WKU University Holiday Policy

 <https://www.wku.edu/policies/docs/144.pdf>