



Associated Student Government
Graduate Student Congress
University of Arkansas

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Saturday, December 6, 2014

Fayetteville, ARK. – ASG Graduate Student Congress (“GSC”) regretfully announces it will no longer be able to offer shuttle service from campus to the Washington County Courthouse during early voting for the Fayetteville special election on Monday, December 8th. GSC’s intent was to raise awareness on campus about the Fayetteville City Council Ordinance 5703, Chapter 119, known as the "Civil Rights Ordinance," and to encourage students to participate in the election process.

On November 19, 2014, GSC passed Resolution No. 3, a resolution in support of Fayetteville’s Civil Rights Ordinance and against repeal. GSC believes this ordinance provides critical protections for graduate students who live and work off campus in Fayetteville. These protections already exist for graduate students who live and work on campus.

On November 19, 2014, GSC separately passed its Motor Voter Appropriation: December 2014 Special Election to provide shuttle bus service for early voting from campus to the Washington County Courthouse. GSC’s appropriation provided funds for shuttle service for all students, regardless of whether they intended to vote for or against repeal of the Civil Rights Ordinance. No early voting or polling location exists on campus.

On Friday, December 5, 2014, GSC received the following communication from the university’s Vice Provost for Student Affairs. The email stated that shuttle service for early voting will no longer take place due to reasons explained in the Vice Provost’s email below, addressed to Rudy Trejo, Assistant Director for Student Government Leadership.

The GSC never intended to restrict the shuttle service solely to individuals planning to vote against repeal of the ordinance. Furthermore, the decision to cancel the bus service was made without consultation of the GSC or its officers. Although the GSC disagrees with the Vice Provost’s decision, we will accept it as final. The Graduate Student Congress continues to encourage all students to participate in the election process and cast ballots in Tuesday’s special election.

From: Danny Pugh
Sent: Friday, December 05, 2014 3:21 PM
To: Rudy G. Trejo
Cc: Mary L. Skinner; Lori Lynn Lander; Melissa Harwood-Rom
Subject: ASG GSC "Motor Voter Appropriation Bill"
Importance: High

Mr. Trejo —

The Associated Student Government Graduate Student Congress has approved legislation to fund bus service to the Washington County Courthouse in connection with the special election scheduled for this coming week. ASG has previously funded special bus service to facilitate early voting in the spirit of encouraging student participation in the electoral process, on a completely non-partisan basis. In this instance, proposed and actual communications issued by GSC or its representatives have made it clear that the funding is intended to support voting in favor of a particular side in the referendum. I have concluded that this is an impermissible use of funds that would possibly violate state law (Arkansas Code § 7-1-111(b)), which prohibits the expenditure of public funds to support or oppose a ballot measure. ASG and GSC are free to pass resolutions supporting a particular view on the campaign and to advocate for their views, but the student-fee funded charter bus service planned for next week will not take place. Normal Razorback Transit bus service serving the downtown area will continue to be available.

DJP

Daniel J. Pugh, Sr., Ph.D.
Vice Provost for Student Affairs
& Associate Professor of Higher Education

