

Committee on Democratic Civic Engagement

Senate of the Associated Students 89th Session

Agenda for Friday, March 4, 2022 at 5:15 p.m.

JCSU Room 405 & Zoom Meeting (Email Olivia Ngo senatorngo@asun.unr.edu for Link)

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

3. PUBLIC COMMENT (INFORMATION ONLY)

Items heard under public comment may be for items either on or off the agenda. Action may not be taken on items raised under public comment until specifically included on an agenda as an action item. Public comment may be limited to three minutes per person at the discretion of the Chair. Public comment may be taken on each action item.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES (FOR POSSIBLE ACTION)

a. The Committee will consider the approval of the minutes from February 11, 2022. The Committee will discuss the minutes of February 11, 2022 and may choose to amend or edit the minutes. Upon conclusion of the discussion, the Committee may choose to approve the minutes.

5. REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS (INFORMATION ONLY)

Per the Statutes of the Associated Students, the Director of Legislative Affairs is required to attend all meetings for the Committee on Democratic Civic Engagement. The Director is recognized to give a report to the Committee on recent activities, events or ideas the Director has been working on.

6. OLD BUSINESS (INFORMATION ONLY/FOR POSSIBLE ACTION)

a. NASC Service Fair Updates

The Committee will discuss progress on contacting community partners and other relevant event updates.

7. NEW BUSINESS (INFORMATION ONLY/FOR POSSIBLE ACTION)

a. S.R.89 A Resolution in Support of the Department of Legislative Affairs D.C. Action Trip

The Committee will discuss and consider favorably recommending the legislation.

b. S.R. 89 A Resolution in Support of the Basic Assistance for Students in College Act

The Committee will discuss and consider favorably recommending the legislation.

c. S.R.89 A Resolution in Support of Student Loan Forgiveness

The Committee will discuss and consider favorably recommending the legislation.

8. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS (INFORMATION ONLY)

The Chair will recognize Committee members requesting the floor for a period not to exceed two minutes for the purpose of miscellaneous reports and requests.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT (INFORMATION ONLY)

Items heard under public comment may be for items either on or off the agenda. Action may not be taken on items raised under public comment until specifically included on an agenda as an action item. Public comment may be limited to three minutes per person at the discretion of the Chair. Public comment may be taken on each action item.

10. ADJOURNMENT

11. NOTES.

Agenda items may be considered out of order at the discretion of the Chair. The Committee may combine two or more agenda items for consideration. The Committee may remove an item from the agenda or delay discussion relating to an item on the agenda at any time.

The Associated Students supports providing equal access to all programs for people with disabilities. Reasonable efforts will be made to assist and accommodate physically handicapped persons desiring to attend the meeting. Please call ASUN at (775) 784-6589 in advance so that arrangements may be conveniently made.



Posted at the ASUN Offices in the Joe Crowley Student Union, Frandsen Humanities Building, the Pennington Student Achievement Center, the Mathewson IGT Knowledge Center and online at www.nevadaasun.com. Requests for supporting material for an agenda item should be directed to the Archives of the Associated Students. All other inquires should be directed to Senator Olivia Ngo at senatorngo@asun.unr.edu.

[DISCUSSION DRAFT]

88th SESSION
2020-2021

S. Res. 89-

**A Resolution in Support of the Department of Legislative
Affairs's D.C. Action Trip**

IN THE SENATE OF THE ASSOCIATED STUDENTS

FEBRUARY 9, 2022

SUBMITTED BY SPEAKER SCHEIN TO THE COMMITTEE ON DEMOCRATIC CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

A Resolution in Support of the Department of Legislative Affairs's D.C. Action Trip

1 *Whereas*,; The Department of Legislative Affairs will be going on an Action Trip to Washington,
2 D.C;

3 *Whereas*, This trip will occur from March 13 to March 19th;

4 *Whereas*, On this trip the Department of Legislative Affairs will be lobbying on affordable
5 education through supporting the Student Borrower's Bill of Rights;

6 *Whereas*, The Department of Legislative Affairs will also be lobbying on food insecurity;

7 *Whereas*, This is important due to UNR's status of a food desert;

8 *Whereas*, By lobbying for these causes the Department of Legislative Affairs is representing the
9 voice of UNR students on these issues;

10 *Be it resolved that*, The Associated Students of the University of Nevada, Reno supports the
11 Department of Legislative Affairs in their lobbying efforts;

1 *Be it further resolved that*, a copy of this resolution be sent to the following:

- 2 ○ ASUN Director of Legislative Affairs, Robert Resnik
- 3 ○ ASUN President, Austin Brown
- 4 ○ CSE Director, Dr. Sandra Rodriguez
- 5 ○ CSE Associate Director, Amy Koeckes
- 6 ○ Vice President of Government Relations and Community Engagement, Michael Flores
- 7 ○ University President, Brian Sandoval

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[DISCUSSION DRAFT]

89th SESSION
2021-2022

S. Res. 89-

A Resolution in Support of the Basic Assistance for Students in College Act

IN THE SENATE OF THE ASSOCIATED STUDENTS

FEBRUARY 22, 2022

SUBMITTED BY SENATOR NGO AND NOBLE TO THE SENATE OF THE ASSOCIATED STUDENTS

A Resolution in Support of the Basic Assistance for Students in College Act

- 1 *Whereas*, basic needs such as food, housing, transportation, child care, healthcare, and
2 technology are essential for student success and survival at the college level;
3 *Whereas* , the Basic Assistance for Students in College, hereafter known as the BASIC Act,
4 (S..2004)¹ was first introduced in the U.S. Senate by California Senator Alex Padilla on June 10, 2021,
5 and was subsequently referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions;
6 *Whereas*, S. 2004's counterpart H.R. 3857, was introduced by Norma Torres of California's
7 District 35 on June 11, 2021 in the House of Representatives and was referred to the Committee on
8 Education and Labor;

¹<https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/2004/actions>

Whereas, the BASIC Act directs the U.S. Department of Education to award planning and implementation grants on a competitive basis to higher education institutions to support the basic needs of students through initiatives such as the following²:

1. Conducting research regarding the level of unmet needs, with attention to the institutional barriers affecting different racial/ethnic, income, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and first-generation status subgroups;
2. Creating a basic needs steering committee of appropriate stakeholders such as students with basic needs challenges, student government representatives, staff, faculty, administration, and government agency representatives, who in turn will create and approve an institution-wide basic needs strategy based off the aforementioned research;
3. Providing free or subsidized on-campus access to basic needs;
4. Extending collaboration to local, State, and national assistance programs to educate and connect students with governmental resources;

Whereas, additionally, within ninety (90) days upon passage of this bill, the Secretaries of Education, Agriculture, Housing and Urban Development, and Health and Human Services must implement a data-sharing agreement to identify students who may be eligible for federal programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicaid, as well as coordinate efforts to facilitate the enrollment of higher education students into such programs;

Whereas, financial difficulties are the most common cause of student dropouts at the collegiate level³, which has only been exacerbated by the considerable financial strain generated by COVID-19 Pandemic⁴;

² <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/3857/text?r=66&s=1>

³ <http://uopeople.edu/blog/prevent-students-from-dropping-out-of-college/#:~:text=While%20financial%20issues%20are%20probably,that%20are%20beyond%20their%20control>

⁴ <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/issue-briefs/2021/12/how-the-pandemic-could-affect-the-rise-in-student-debt>

1 *Whereas*, college-aged people are disproportionately likely to be unemployed, take on debt, and
 2 live below the poverty line⁵;

3 *Whereas*, this is reflected in nationwide data, which indicates that the proportion of
 4 impoverished undergraduate students has risen considerably over the past 2 decades⁶;

5 *Whereas*, a sizable portion of students' monthly financial resources go towards paying for basic
 6 accommodations and necessities⁷;

7 *Whereas*, financial hardships coupled with lack of access to basic needs and services routinely
 8 impairs students from finding academic success⁸;

9 *Be it resolved that*, the Senate of the Associated Students of the University of Nevada directs and
 10 empowers the Department of Legislative Affairs to advocate in support of the Basic Assistance for
 11 Students in College Act on behalf of the Association throughout the duration of their lobbying
 12 efforts in Washington D.C. this spring;

13 *Be it further resolved that*, basic needs advocacy continues to be actively pursued by the full rights
 14 and powers of the Senate body, and is to be hereafter considered representative of the will of the
 15 Association and of the University of Nevada, Reno's student body;

16 *Be it further resolved that*, a copy of this resolution be sent to the following:

- 17 ○ ASUN Director of Legislative Affairs, Robert Resnik
- 18 ○ University President, Brian Sandoval
- 19 ○ Nevada House District 1 Representative, Dina Titus
- 20 ○ Nevada House District 2 Representative, Mark Amodei
- 21 ○ Nevada House District 3 Representative, Susie Lee
- 22 ○ Nevada House District 4 Representative, Steven Horsford

⁵ <https://www.macrotrends.net/1377/u6-unemployment-rate>

⁶ <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2019/05/22/a-rising-share-of-undergraduates-are-from-poor-families-especially-at-less-selective-colleges/>

⁷ <https://www.lexingtonlaw.com/blog/credit-cards/college-student-spending-habits.html>

⁸ <https://www.unr.edu/main/pdfs/verified-accessible/divisions-offices/president/truth/climate-study-final-report.pdf>

- 1 ○ U.S. Senator for Nevada, Catherine Cortez-Masto
- 2 ○ U.S. Senator for Nevada, Jacky Rosen
- 3 ○ Chair for the House Committee on Education and Labor, Representative Bobby Scott
- 4 ○ Chair for the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, Senator
- 5 Patty Murray

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[DISCUSSION DRAFT]

89th SESSION
2021-2022

S. Res. 89

A Resolution in Support of Student Loan Forgiveness

IN THE SENATE OF THE ASSOCIATED STUDENTS

FEBRUARY XX

SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOJAN TO THE SENATE OF THE ASSOCIATED STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEVADA

A Resolution in Support of Student Loan Forgiveness

1 *Whereas*, The total amount of federal student loan debt stands at over 1.5 trillion dollars with
2 over 42 million borrowers with a average graduate debt of \$38,147 for a bachelor's degree¹;

3 *Whereas*, over 27 million borrowers of federal loans are in forbearance or default resulting in a
4 default rate of 15%²;

5 *Whereas*, students of color are disproportionately negatively impacted by student loans and have
6 higher default rates with the disproportionate amount of debt taken by students to finance their
7 education reinforcing the racial wealth gap³;

8 *Whereas*, tuition is outpacing students' ability to pay, and the share of students taking out loans
9 to finance their degrees rose from roughly half (49%) to over two-thirds (69%) from 1993 to 2012,

¹ <https://www.nerdwallet.com/article/loans/student-loans/student-loan-debt>

² <https://educationdata.org/student-loan-default-rate>

³ <https://www.brookings.edu/research/student-loans-the-racial-wealth-divide-and-why-we-need-full-student-debt-cancellation/>

1 according to the Pew Research Center. Between 1993 and 2020, the average loan amount grew nearly
2 three-fold, surpassing \$30,000 while in the past 30 years, the cost of a college degree has skyrocketed
3 with college tuition and fees have increased by 1,200%⁴;

4 *Whereas*, student loan debt contributes to rising generational wealth inequality and impacts
5 borrowers over time by raising debt burdens, lowering credit scores and ultimately, limiting the
6 purchasing power of those with student debt leading to inability to get on the housing ladder and
7 fully participate in the economy⁵;

8 *Whereas*, ProgressNow found that students with outstanding loan payments were 36 percent less
9 likely to purchase a house, to take out car loans and have lower credit scores⁶;

10 *Whereas*, student loans unlike other forms of debt cannot be easily discharged through
11 bankruptcy or other common means of debt relief⁷;

12 *Whereas*, student loan forgiveness has been championed by activists and was a significant issue in
13 the 2020 elections;

14 *Whereas*, On the campaign trail, Joe Biden promised to immediately cancel \$10,000 in student
15 debt per borrower but so far has not carried out that promise⁸;

16 *Whereas*, polling shows bipartisan support for student loan forgiveness with polling by Student
17 Defense showing 67% of respondents support some form of widespread student loan forgiveness —
18 whether it is universal, tied to income, or based on specific program eligibility.⁹;

⁴ <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2014/10/07/cumulative-student-debt-among-recent-college-graduates/>

⁵ <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/07/02/3-ways-student-debt-impacts-the-economy.html>

⁶ <https://scholarshipamerica.org/blog/the-far-reaching-impact-of-the-student-debt-crisis/>

⁷ <https://www.studentloanborrowerassistance.org/bankruptcy/>

⁸ <https://fortune.com/education/business/articles/2021/09/01/heres-where-biden-stands-on-student-loan-forgiveness/>

⁹ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/adamminsky/2020/09/25/new-poll-shows-substantial-bipartisan-support-for-student-loan-forgiveness-and-other-relief-for-borrowers/?sh=55d30f2b2b7c>

1 *Whereas*, the cost of attendance at UNR for a student can be over 20,000 dollars a year while the
2 average income in Nevada is just 31,206 dollars a year¹⁰;

3 *Whereas*, in Nevada there are 330,000 loan borrowers with over 11 billion dollars in debt with
4 over 44,000 delinquent borrowers¹¹;

5 *Whereas*, forgiving student loans would many positive benefits such as an increase of \$86 billion
6 to \$108 billion a year, on average, to GDP, a narrowing of the racial wealth gap, and increasing
7 college graduation rates and encouraging more students to attend higher education¹²;

8 *Whereas*, Nevada ranks 35th in the nation for college affordability and student loan forgiveness
9 will positively benefit the students of Nevada and the state overall¹³;

10 *Whereas*, The University of Nevada has 48% of it's graduates students in loan debt with a
11 average loan amount of 22,620 dollars¹⁴;

12 *Be it resolved that*, ASUN supports universal student loan forgiveness for all borrowers;

13 *Be it further resolved that*, that ASUN urges UNR and the NSHE Board of Regents to support loan
14 forgiveness and advocate on behalf of student loan forgiveness proposals;

15 *Be it further resolved that*, that ASUN urges Nevada congressional delegation: Representatives:
16 Dina Titus, Mark Amodei, Susie Lee, Steven Horsford and Senators: Catherine Cortez Masto and
17 Jacky Rosen to support student loan forgiveness in Congress and call on President Biden to fulfill his
18 promise of canceling up to 10,000 dollars in student loan debt;

¹⁰ <https://www.unr.edu/costs/first-year-resident>

¹¹ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/10ZDX6F-NrKtUhRi3W-jpAS577ZfH5EKf/view?usp=sharing>

¹² <https://www.businessinsider.com/economic-benefits-of-student-debt-forgiveness-2020-12>

¹³ <https://www.move.org/college-tuition-costs-by-state/>

¹⁴ <https://www.collegetransitions.com/dataverse/average-student-debt?>

1 *Be it further resolved that*, that ASUN urges Nevada congressional delegation to support S.1569 -
2 Student Food Security Act of 2021, H.R.4090 - Making Education Affordable and Accessible Act
3 and an enactment of the Student Loan Borrowers' Bill of Rights;

4 *Be it further resolved that*, a copy of this resolution be sent to the following: President Brian
5 Sandoval, Vice President for Administration & Finance Vic Redding, Vice President for Student
6 Services Shannon Ellis, Representative Dina Titus, Representative Mark Amodei, Representative
7 Susie Lee, Representative Steven Horsford, Senator Catherine Cortez Masto, Senator Jacky Rosen,
8 Chancellor Dr. Melody Rose, Office of the NSHE Board of Regents, Director Sandra Rodriguez;