

Associated Students, Inc.
California Polytechnic State University
San Luis Obispo

Resolution #21-07

RESOLUTION OF NO CONFIDENCE IN UNIVERSITY HOUSING

- WHEREAS: The ASI Board of Directors serves as the official voice of students at California Polytechnic State University (Cal Poly), San Luis Obispo, and
- WHEREAS: University Housing’s mission statement is to “provide a quality living and learning experience for a diverse population of residents”.¹ However, University Housing’s decisions, including mandatory housing, financial management, and COVID-19 safety, lack a strong commitment to their mission statement; and
- WHEREAS: Despite student disapproval, the staggered phase in of mandatory sophomore housing for all colleges has remained unchanged even with the safety and financial concerns surfaced by the COVID-19 pandemic; and
- WHEREAS: In 2015, the ASI Board of Directors passed Resolution #15-03, taking a stance against the University’s argument to implement mandatory two-year housing requirements.²
- WHEREAS: At the Academic Senate meeting held on February 11, 2020, University Housing presented an analysis used to suggest a causal relationship between on-campus housing for second year students and the outcomes of increased retention and graduation rates. According to Academic Senate Representative Dr. Steven Rein, the analysis was statistically flawed as the research did not account for household income or that students living on campus were a self-selecting group; and^{3,4}
- WHEREAS: In 2017, University President Armstrong’s decision to instate a two-year housing requirement policy was not supported by the Academic Senate; and³
- WHEREAS: A recent Mustang News Poll found that 80% of 900 respondents opposed a two-year mandatory housing requirement; and⁴
- WHEREAS: Despite the financial struggles that students are facing as a result of the pandemic, University Housing is anticipated to move forward with a 6% and 9% fee increase to residence halls and apartments for the next academic year, respectively; and
- WHEREAS: In 2017, the Equality of Opportunity Project named Cal Poly as the least income diverse CSU, with 67% of the student body coming from the top 20% incomes and 3% of the student body coming from the bottom 20% incomes. Furthermore, it was found that Cal

1 <https://policy.calpoly.edu/cap/600/cap-660>

2 <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0ByYbfOCHfNz3S29CZnZDN3Y4TVIkY3daUXkxZG9XR0tuTukw/view>

3 <https://mustangnews.net/housing-not-proven-to-increase-retention/>

4 <https://mustangnews.net/cal-poly-implements-sophomore-housing-requirement-despite-student-opposition/>

Poly students had a median family household income of \$152,900, resulting in no public universities and only nine private universities in California having higher median family incomes; and⁵

WHEREAS: University Housing through these continual fee increases has repeatedly demonstrated a lack of interest in serving a more income diverse student body to better match other CSUs; and

WHEREAS: Despite running over budget by nearly \$5 million in 2015, University Housing moved forward with starting construction on the new yak?it?ut?u housing project coming in at a projected cost of \$198.8 million; and^{4,6}

WHEREAS: Over a three-year period between 2015 to 2018, University Housing's ending fund balance diminished by nearly \$7 million to end with under \$11 million; and⁴

WHEREAS: As a result of the \$3.9 million deficit at the end of the 2019-2020 fiscal year, University Housing initially planned to undertake a seven year no-interest \$7.9 million loan from University Union (UU) reserves with no adjustments for inflation to cover this deficit as well as fund emergency maintenance and the remediation of Fremont Hall; and⁷

WHEREAS: Student government members at-large were only notified after the terms of the loan were decided; and

WHEREAS: Mandatory UU student fees are intended to serve the entire student body, and not just to benefit students living on-campus; and

WHEREAS: Cal Poly has housed more students on-campus than any other CSU at the height of the pandemic in 2021, resulting in over 4500 students living on campus, or 57.4% of housing capacity filled, which vastly exceeds the next highest CSU San Diego State University by quantity with 1700 students living on campus, or 22.7% of housing capacity filled; and⁸

WHEREAS: University Housing did not adequately implement additional infrastructure to accommodate this large on-campus population, putting most of the responsibility of maintaining COVID-19 safety on student Resident Advisors, and feedback from Resident Advisors criticized the minimal training on COVID-19 safety, unclear guidelines on their new COVID-related responsibilities, and inadequate answers on COVID-19 concerns; and⁹

WHEREAS: At the start of the academic year, Resident Advisors were not informed by University Housing if a resident was quarantined or placed in isolation, which placed Resident Advisor's health at risk

5 http://www.equality-of-opportunity.org/papers/coll_mrc_paper.pdf

6 <https://mustangnews.net/csu-board-of-trustees-moves-grand-avenue-housing-project-forward/>

7 <https://mustangnews.net/university-housing-takes-out-loan-from-the-uu-which-is-funded-by-student-fees/>

8 <https://mustangnews.net/cal-poly-housing-more-students-campus-than-any-cal-state/>

9 <https://www.sanluisobispo.com/news/local/education/article245704725.html>

due to their proximity and community walks without receiving additional compensation through hazard pay; and⁹

WHEREAS: University Housing at Cal Poly continued the implementation of a sophomore housing requirement despite the pandemic while providing no clear path to exemption for COVID-related financial hardships or safety concerns, only stating on their website that “COVID-19 concerns will not be considered for exemptions”; and¹⁰

THEREFORE
BE IT
RESOLVED:

That the ASI Board of Directors affirms a vote of no confidence for University Housing as a result of a myriad of unprincipled decisions that lack a commitment to their mission statement, lack fiscal prudence, and negatively impact the student body; and

FURTHERMORE
BE IT
RESOLVED:

As the official voice of the student body, and in the pursuit of a more perfect shared governance system, the ASI Board of Directors should be consulted as an additional stakeholder on future University Housing major decisions with broad campus impact prior to adoption and implementation; and

FURTHERMORE
BE IT
RESOLVED:

ASI urges University Housing to prioritize accessibility, incentivization, and safety for the student body in their administrative decisions, as well as center inclusive consultation processes that elevate students from marginalized backgrounds; and

FURTHERMORE
BE IT
RESOLVED:

This resolution be sent to CSU Board of Trustees; CSU Chancellor, Joseph I. Castro; University President, Jeffrey D. Armstrong; Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance, Cindy Vizcaino Villa; Vice President for Student Affairs, Dr. Keith Humphrey; Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, Cynthia Jackson-Elmoore; Interim Vice President for Diversity & Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer, Dr. Denise Isom; Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Executive Director of University Housing, Dr. Jo Campbell; and Academic Senate Chair, Dr. Thomas Gutierrez.

¹⁰ <http://www.housing.calpoly.edu/two-year-residential-program>

Certified as the true and correct copy, in witness thereof, I have set my hand and Seal of the San Luis Obispo Cal Poly Associated Students, Inc. this 21st day of May 2021.

ADOPTED at the regular meeting of the Board of Directors at San Luis Obispo Cal Poly Associated Students, Inc. this 19th day of May 2021.

Attest:

ASI Secretary

Signed:

ASI Chair of the Board

Signed:

ASI President

Authored By:

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