



PRESIDENT'S LEGISLATION FOLLOW-UP REPORT

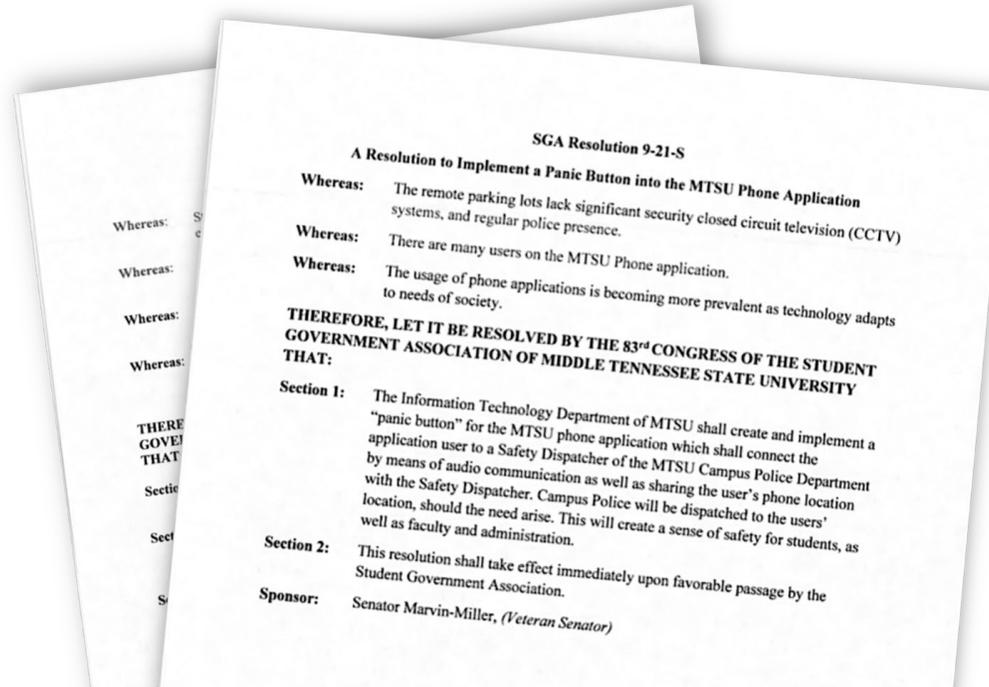
Legislation from the 84th Congress – Fall Semester

Delivered 1/27/2022

**MIDDLE
TENNESSEE**
STATE UNIVERSITY

WHAT IS LEGISLATION?

Legislation is a way for the Student Government Association to express a sentiment of the Senate, request the assistance or action of a University department, require a mandate from Senate, or to amend the constitution of the Student Government Association.



RESOLUTION 1-21-F

In response to SGA Resolution 1-21-F, I appreciate the commitment to free speech and to maintaining an environment that supports and celebrates the rich diversity of the MTSU campus that are both represented within this resolution. As an institution, we, too, share those ideals. Further, MTSU is required to support the Free Speech rights of our campus community and outside entities when they are utilizing campus space they have properly reserved.

Regulations regarding the reservation of space and the hosting of speakers on campus are regulated by MTSU Policy 100. I will share this feedback from SGA with MTSU legal counsel for his consideration in the next review of that policy.

Specifically regarding the language related to the registering of event categories, as I've shared previously, the large numbers of events hosted on campus each year would make evenhanded, content-neutral monitoring of every event impossible. Moreover, the proposed inclusion of a priority system in the Student Organization Handbook would not apply to facility users who have rented space from the University. Entities reserving and renting space on campus to hold outside events have the right to use the property they have leased as they deem to be appropriate, including determining who is allowed to attend their events. As long as their use of the space does not violate University policies, MTSU's control over their use of the rented space is limited.

Instead, as is currently the case, if the exercising free speech at an event escalates to language or actions that violate university policy and/or the law, individuals involved will be held accountable for engaging in such behavior through university judicial processes and/or local law enforcement authorities.

As I said, I will share these recommendations with our legal counsel for consideration at the next revision of Policy 100.

Danny Kelley, Ast. VP of Student Affairs 12/2/2021

A Resolution to Create Event Categorization and Priority Types

- Whereas:** Organizations have the ability to reserve space on campus at MTSU by completing a request form.
- Whereas:** MTSU has no way to gauge the admittance of events hosted by student organizations.
- Whereas:** It is possible for campus organizations to exclude and discriminate attendees based on non-legally-protected groups.
- Whereas:** Paragraph 3 of Section 5 of TN Code § 49-7-2405 (2019) states:
"Free speech" means speech, expression, or assemblies protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or Article I, Section 19 of the Tennessee Constitution, verbal or written, including, but not limited to, all forms of peaceful assembly, protests, demonstrations, rallies, vigils, marches, public speaking, distribution of printed materials, carrying signs, displays, or circulating petitions. "Free speech" does not include the promotion, sale, or distribution of any product or service;
- Whereas:** Paragraph 7 of Subsection A of Section 6 of TN Code § 49-7-2405 (2019) states:
Although all students and all faculty are free to state their own views about and contest the views expressed on campus, and to state their own views about and contest speakers who are invited to express their views on the institution's campus, they may not substantially obstruct or otherwise substantially interfere with the freedom of others to express views they reject or even loathe. To this end, an institution has a responsibility to promote a lively and fearless freedom of debate and deliberation and protect that freedom;
- Whereas:** Paragraph 4 of Subsection A of Section 6 of TN Code § 49-7-2405 (2019) states:
It is for an institution's individual students and faculty to make judgments about ideas for themselves, and to act on those judgments not by seeking to suppress free speech, but by openly and vigorously contesting the ideas that they oppose;
- Whereas:** Sub-Section E of Section C of the Planning Programs Section of the Student Organization Handbook states:
Organizations planning social activities must comply with all University policies and standards, and with local, state, and federal laws and ordinances.
- Whereas:** Organizations who choose to prevent a student from attending an event for reasons other than non-compliance with Policy 540: Student Conduct are in violation of TN Code § 49-7-2405 (2019) and University Policy as outlined in the Student Organization Handbook.

RESOLUTION 2-21-F

We will add all requested links to policies on the Student Organizations & Service website <https://mtsu.edu/sos/student-org-policies.php> as “additional resources”. This will be completed by December 15, 2021. As for the training modules, we simply do not have the resources to provide specific training and confirm if it is completed by each officer for 200+ organizations each fall semester. We will continue to evaluate, as we do each year, the topics that are needed to be covered in greater detail during Presidium and Orientation Sessions.

Jackie Victory, Director of Student Organizations and Service, 12/2/2021

A Resolution to Implement Training Modules for Student Organization Leadership

- Whereas:** Student organizations are subject to university policies and guidelines.
- Whereas:** Article III, Section C of [Policy 560: Student Organization Registration and Recognition](#) states:
- The proposed organization must agree to comply with all policies, rules, and procedures established by MTSU and with all federal and state laws and regulations
- Whereas:** Student organizations are responsible for ensuring activities adhere to MTSU policies and guidelines.
- Whereas:** Ignorance of MTSU policies and guidelines does not warrant exemption as per [Policy 560: Student Organization Registration and Recognition](#).
- Whereas:** The Orientation Session section of the Conditions of Registration and Renewal Process located in the [Student Organization Handbook](#) states:
- There shall be a mandatory orientation session for presidents of campus organizations (or their designees). Student Organizations are able to choose which orientation session they are able to attend. Presidium (President's Retreat) is held before the fall semester and then several orientation sessions are held the first 3 weeks of classes with monthly options hosted thereafter. Standards of expectation for student organizations will be explained. Organizations that fail to attend the orientation session are not eligible to receive funds from the student activity fee for any semester in which the organization is not in compliance with this requirement
- Current preemptive requirements pertaining to organizations are available to only organization presidents and do not require any advisor or further officer participation.
- Whereas:** Article II, Section C, Subsection 2, Paragraph A of Policy 561: Student Organization Operations previously stated:
- An advisor should have a working knowledge of [Policy 560 Student Organization Registration and Recognition](#). As part of the advisor's duties, he/she should have a clear understanding of the role of the Center for Student Involvement and Leadership in coordinating the student organization's programming and activities.

RESOLUTION 3-21-F

I have reviewed the legislation, and at this time, this is not something I support. I am appreciative of SGA and others on this campus for their support and interest in military-connected students.

Dr. Hilary Miller, Director of Veterans Center,
12/16/2021

SGA Resolution 3-21-F

A Resolution to Establish a Designated Recreational Space for Veteran Students

- Whereas:** There are approximately 1,100 veterans that attend MTSU full time. The Fall 2021 semester there are 676 veterans and 445 Veteran dependents. The Fall 2020 semester Veterans on campus was 755 and veteran dependents was 444. The exact number of veterans on campus cannot be calculated due to veterans not self-identifying as veterans for various issues such as discrimination.
- Whereas:** The four-year graduation rate of a veteran for 2021 is at 31.6%.
- Whereas:** The Charlie and Hazel Daniels Veterans and Military Family Center provides services to veterans such as counseling, and support staff to help with veteran needs.
- Whereas:** Utilizing an administrative area for recreational purposes is not ideal and distracts from the business of the Charlie and Hazel Daniels Veterans and Military Family Center.
- Whereas:** There is interest amongst private entities to support the development of recreational space for MTSU veteran students.
- Whereas:** Student veterans and their families support the development of a designated recreational space to foster a greater sense of community locally.
- Whereas:** A veteran's social space can aid in retention of Veteran Students as well as aid in increasing enrollment for veterans. It is estimated that per 1% of student retention will [equivalate](#) into one million dollars in revenue for MTSU.
- Whereas:** Allowing veterans a social space to gather will pay for itself by reducing drop-out rates and increasing enrollment.

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED BY THE 84th CONGRESS OF THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY THAT:

Section 1: MTSU shall consider the establishment of a designated recreational space for student veterans in the University College's Andrew Woodfin Miller Sr. Education Center or any other area deemed appropriate in consultation with Veteran student groups.

Sponsor: Senator Jonathan Higgins (*University College*)

Co-Sponsor: Senator Jonathan Allen (*College of Basic and Applied Sciences*)
Senator Bill Lickman (*Veteran Senator*)

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
ON LEGISLATION CAN BE
FOUND ON THE SGA
WEBSITE**

84TH CONGRESS OF THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION



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