RESOLUTION 1920-013

A RESOLUTION CALLING UPON THE UNIVERSITY TO OBSERVE ELECTION DAY AS A PAID HOLIDAY RECOGNIZED AS THE JOHN LEWIS VOTING RIGHTS DAY

Authors: Madeleine Lomax-Vogt(.2), Government Affairs Chair; Verdaynea Eason Agondanou(.1), Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Chair

Sponsors: Executive Committee;

WHEREAS, the Council of Graduate Students is vested with authority to voice graduate student concerns and needs to the University; and

WHEREAS, the fundamental values and goals of The Ohio State University embrace the mission of preparing a diverse student body to be leaders and engaged citizens\(^1\); and

WHEREAS, voting is a critical civic duty that impacts the well-being of individuals and our community by helping us realize the ideals of a vibrant democracy; and

WHEREAS, a recent Census study indicated that 14 percent of registered voters did not vote because they were too busy or had a scheduling conflict\(^2\); and

WHEREAS, only 41 percent of The Ohio State University graduate students voted in the 2018 election\(^3\); and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the challenges that students, faculty, and staff already face when attempting to vote, including scheduling time to vote in between work, classes, and extracurricular commitments; and

WHEREAS, ample time for democratic participation on Election Day is key in preventing voting disparity between those who are constrained by work or school from voting and those who have the luxury of time and access; and

WHEREAS, the Big Ten Voting Challenge encourages member institutions to increase voter turnout and voting rates in order to “form the habits of active and informed citizenship, make democratic participation a core value on their campus, and cultivate generations of engaged citizens who are essential to a healthy democracy”\(^4\); and

WHEREAS, other Big Ten and peer institutions do not recognize election day as a paid holiday\(^5\); and

WHEREAS, election day is always held on the first Tuesday of November in the State of Ohio;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council of Graduate Students officially recommend that The Ohio State University observe election day as a paid holiday recognized as the “John Lewis Voting Rights Day”; and

---


\(^3\) 2018 Ohio State University NSLVE Campus Report

\(^4\) https://www.allinchallenge.org/how-it-works/what/

\(^5\) Except universities in Virginia and Illinois where election day is recognized as a statewide holiday.
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of Graduate Students supports the creation of an Election Day paid holiday to make The Ohio State University a leader and model of democratic commitment that other Big Ten and peer institutions may follow; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of Graduate Students supports the right to vote regardless of a citizen’s race, color, religion, gender, gender expression, age, national origin, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be forwarded to The Ohio State University President Kristina M. Johnson, Executive Vice President and Provost Bruce McPherson, Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and Dean of the Graduate School Alicia Bertone, Vice President for Student Life Melissa Shivers Calhoun, Vice President for Government Affairs Stacy Rastaukas, and the Chair of the Council on Student Affairs Jordan Vadja.

Approved: Yes/No

Date: 8/14/20

Stephen J. Post, President