Bill 18-13 seeks to implement the position of “Homecoming King” in the Fall General Elections hosted by the Associated Student Body. The legislation states one reason for the implementation of a “Homecoming King”

“WHEREAS, male members of the student body deserve to be recognized and elected during the Associated Student Body Fall personality elections;”

I vetoed Bill 18-13 for a few reasons. First, the reasoning clause for implementation of a “Homecoming King” implies that there is an underrepresentation of men at the University of Mississippi. While this may be the case in fall personality elections, more broadly this is untrue through the history of Ole Miss. However, there has been an underrepresentation of non-Greek students and students of color throughout our university’s history. This bill takes our student body a step forward, but nowhere near the right direction.

While I have no particular qualms with the spirit of the bill or even with the election of a homecoming king, (in fact many peer institutions recognize students with this title), I do take issue with the extent to which this bill seeks to make personality elections more equitable. Fall personality elections have always been explicitly based in popularity, and it is clear that there is an implicit emphasis on campus involvement. It is time for legislation to be presented which places student involvement and service as primary and popularity as secondary.

Without a revision of the election process, the title “Homecoming King” will simply widen the gap between the underrepresented and the demographic majority. If the ASB senate seeks to enfranchise more students, more effort needs to be put forth to ensure that the entire election process gives opportunity to more students.