

Senate Bill 24-2

Senator Hayden Pierce, At-Large  
Chair, Ad Hoc Committee on Housing  
Senator Wesley Templet, University-Sponsored  
Vice Chair, Ad Hoc Committee on Housing  
Senator Hayleigh Lutz, Graduate  
Ad Hoc Committee on Housing  
Senator Kaitlyn Skeen, Liberal Arts  
Committee on Governmental Operations  
Abigail Wilbur  
Director of Internal Operations

A BILL OF THE ASSOCIATED STUDENT BODY SENATE FOR THE ADDITION OF A BUREAU OF HOUSING BY AMENDING TITLE I SECTION 103 (5) AND ADDING OF TITLE I SECTION 103 (7), WHICH FOR THE SAKE OF BREVITY AND IN INTEREST OF BEING MORE DESCRIPTIVE, THE CURRENT AND ALTERED FORM MAY BE FOUND ATTACHED.

WHEREAS, the Associated Student Body (ASB) is responsible for serving and representing The University of Mississippi student body;

WHEREAS, the responsibility of housing concerns are currently limited to the Bureau of Infrastructure and Environmental Affairs in the ASB Code;

WHEREAS; the current bureau cannot properly address the housing situation due to the other substantial duties within their scope;

WHEREAS, housing has become an issue that needs its own focus as the student and city population grow at a high rate;

WHEREAS, the programming and advocacy functions of the Residential Housing Association would be significantly strengthened from having a student liaison within The Associated Student Body; AND

WHEREAS, the establishment of a Bureau of Housing would greatly benefit the student body of the University of Mississippi, and be a beneficial contribution to the Associated Student Body and their efforts to advocate for student needs.

THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED THAT THE ASSOCIATED STUDENT BODY SENATE AMENDS TITLE I SECTION 103 (5) AND ADDING OF TITLE I SECTION 103 (7) PER

RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS AND THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON HOUSING.

<u>Governmental Ops</u>	<u><i>Madison Waldrop</i></u>	<u>02-21-2024</u>
Committee	Committee Chair	Date
<u>02-20-2024</u>	<u>Passed Unanimously</u>	<u><i>Sellers Shockley</i></u>
Date of Introduction	Action of Student Senate	Clerk Signature

Acknowledgment of Senate Presiding Officer:

<u><i>Mason Greenwald</i></u>	<u>02-22-2024</u>
Vice President Mason Greenwald Senate Presiding Officer	Date

Approval of Associated Student Body Elected President:

<u><i>Sara Austin Welch</i></u>	<u>02-21-2024</u>
Sara Austin Welch ASB President	Date

Acknowledgment of Campus Administration:

*Brent Marsh*

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Dr. Brent Marsh, Ph.D.  
Dean of Students

*Charlotte Pegues*

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Dr. Charlotte Pegues, Ph.D.  
Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs

Receipt of Chancellor's Office:

*Glenn Boyce*

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Dr. Glenn Boyce, Ed.D.  
University Chancellor



**The University of Mississippi  
Memorandum for Bill 24-2  
Vision and Goals for The Bureau of Housing**

**VISION**

Per the ASB Code, all members of the President's Cabinet shall seek student input, improve student and campus life, and advance the relevant agenda items of the ASB President. Upon passage of Senate Bill 24-2, the Bureau of Housing accordingly should seek the input of students living on-campus and improve their on-campus housing experiences in line with the President's agenda. The Bureau of Housing should work closely with the Department of Student Housing and housing student leadership, namely Student Housing's Student Leadership Committee, to promote governance, advocacy, and programming for students living on-campus.

Given the recently redesigned model for housing student governance, the Bureau of Housing should work in the short and long term to strengthen the model so that hall councils are adequately equipped to foster engagement with and between residents, listen to their concerns, and relay those concerns to the Department of Student Housing. The Principal of Housing should also ensure that Student Housing is held accountable for any issues that may arise and works towards solutions that are favorable for on-campus student residents. To help inform its work, the Principal of Housing should utilize the data and final report of the ASB Student Housing Experience Survey of 2023 and the concerns expressed by students about on-campus housing experiences.

The jurisdiction of housing inherently intersects topics covered by other ASB positions and Senate committees. As the Bureau of Housing begins its work and fulfills its mandate, the scope of the Bureau's work and that of various ASB bodies should become increasingly clear. Notwithstanding, the Bureau of Housing should explore rather than avoid gray areas of jurisdiction, fostering cross-cabinet and cross-branch partnerships to more holistically address the complex and interconnected needs of the student body. This is particularly true of the positions and committees related to student life, infrastructure and environmental affairs, health and wellness, and inclusion and cross-cultural engagement. Due to this fact, it may become appropriate and wise for future ASB Executive Boards to appoint additional members of the Bureau of Housing beyond the Principal that may address specific needs of on-campus students. If at any point the Bureau of Housing questions this vision and the accompanying goals, the Bureau shall defer to the codified jurisdiction, the ASB President, and its own judgment to determine the best means to advocate for on-campus students' needs as they pertain to housing.

## GOALS

### Short-Term Goals

In the first term of the new Bureau of Housing, the Principal should establish relationships with the following partners and work towards the listed goals:

- ❖ The Department of Student Housing
  - Main contacts: Dr. John Yaun, [jyaun@olemiss.edu](mailto:jyaun@olemiss.edu); Ms. Bree Gates, [bngates@olemiss.edu](mailto:bngates@olemiss.edu); and Mr. Michael Brown, [mcbrown8@olemiss.edu](mailto:mcbrown8@olemiss.edu)
  - The Department of Student Housing should be the Principal of Housing's strongest partner, and the Principal shall maintain close communication with the Department to exchange updates and advocate for changes that would benefit the student body.
  - Organizational chart:  
[https://studenthousing.olemiss.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/43/2023/11/Org-Char t-.pdf](https://studenthousing.olemiss.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/43/2023/11/Org-Char-t-.pdf)
- ❖ Student Housing's Student Leadership Committee
  - Main contacts: Ms. Bree Gates, [bngates@olemiss.edu](mailto:bngates@olemiss.edu), & Mr. Michael Brown, [mcbrown8@olemiss.edu](mailto:mcbrown8@olemiss.edu)
  - This Student Leadership Committee—composed of the Principal on Housing, hall council members (at minimum the presidents), CAs, CDAs, graduate assistants, hall directors, and Student Housing leadership—serves at the direct forum between on-campus residents and the Department of Student Housing. By sitting on this committee, the Principal of Housing should ensure that the voices of student leadership and student residents are adequately heard and taken into account during decision making.
- ❖ Assessment & Engagement Committee
  - Main contact: Ms. Bree Gates, [bngates@olemiss.edu](mailto:bngates@olemiss.edu), & Mr. Michael Brown, [mcbrown8@olemiss.edu](mailto:mcbrown8@olemiss.edu)
  - This committee looks at surveys to students, events that take place in the halls, and overall program assessment. The Principal of Housing should be aware of the work of this committee and attend its meetings if deemed necessary.

During its first year, the Principal of Housing should work with the aforementioned groups on projects pertinent to the on-campus housing experience. This includes but is not limited to the following:

- ❖ Helping to establish standards for hall councils
  - Due to the new nature of the community council model, there is little guidance given to hall council leadership for how to perform their duties. The Principal of Housing should advocate for increased support of the hall councils to the Department of Student Housing, recommending more robust training programs and adequate budgets for programming needs.
  - Building off the 2023-2024 Pittman hall council, the Principal of Housing should support the development of a standardized constitution for each council that is

still flexible enough to accommodate each hall or hall community's unique needs. The Principal of Housing may support the creation or continuation of email and social media accounts to strengthen the hall councils' ability to communicate with residents and Student Housing.

- The Principal of Housing should also promote and ensure structured mechanisms are in place for hall/community councils to communicate with each other to facilitate best practice sharing, strengthen advocacy, and encourage larger programming events.
- Lastly, there is no formal guidance for how hall council leadership can support the next generation of on-campus residents and leaders. Accordingly, the Principal of Housing should help establish standards for transition processes, including transition documents and at least one scheduled visit of old hall council leadership to elections for the new council in the fall.
- ❖ Promoting effective recruitment strategies for CAs
  - Because CA applicants do not receive notification of their acceptance or denial until the spring semester, they are left in a precarious position, either accepted and housed or left to find off-campus housing at a time when many places are already booked and friends already have off-campus housing plans. Thus, the Principal of Housing should work with Student Housing to develop a new timeline for CA recruitment that lessens the vulnerable status of CA applicants' housing situations.
    - Student Housing typically struggles to hire an optimal number of CAs, so the Principal of Housing should encourage better marketing of CA positions. This could include sharing applications via ASB's typical methods of public relations such as the Instagram and website and encouraging the Department of Student Housing to reach more students via methods such as UM Today emails.
  - ❖ Work towards better CA evaluation mechanisms
    - The current CA evaluation does not adequately reach residents. The Principal of Housing should encourage and work with the Department of Student Housing to develop an update to the current system, allowing for a more comprehensive and personal evaluation of each CA. Higher promotion of these evaluations, through posters and GroupMe messages from CAs, should also take place so that more students are aware and encouraged to complete the evaluations.
- ❖ Ensure CA's intentional interactions are effective
  - After talking with many on-campus residents, it is clear that CA's intentional interactions, mandated and defined by the Department of Student Housing, often are not meaningful. For example, Google Forms are sometimes used in place of in-person interactions which can allow for an unwell student to more easily conceal their struggles, effectively negating the purpose of intentional interactions.
  - Thus, the Principal of Housing should help the Student Leadership committee brainstorm ways that these interactions could be more regulated by Student Housing and beneficial for student residents who may be physically, mentally, or emotionally unwell.
- ❖ Support the health and wellness of CAs/CDAs and promote health and wellness trainings for them so that they can better serve their residents

- Given the deeply concerning incidents of overdose and suicide, it is crucial that the Principal of Housing uses its relationship with health and wellness positions in the ASB and potentially other campus actors like the William Magee Center for AOD and Wellness Education to advocate for the health and wellness of on-campus residents. This includes promoting the RA Group Therapy program offered by the University Counseling Center.
- This may require working with the Department of Student Housing to alter the training curriculum for CAs and CDAs or to leverage hall council programming so that there are also health and wellness related events. Student Housing employees and hall council officers should also be familiar with the services and resources provided by the UMatter Office, including the process of submitting CARE referrals for persons of concern, personal and academic support, and emergency housing resources.
- The Principal of Housing should also think of ways that CAs and Student Housing can promote practices of conflict resolution given that roommate problems often occur and can sometimes even lead to aggression, physical altercations, violations of Student Housing policy, and one or both roommates finding alternative housing.

## Long-Term Goals

In the next five years, the Principal of Housing should work to advocate for students living on-campus and contribute to successful on-campus housing experiences by doing the following:

- ❖ Strengthening and promoting the community council governance system of the Department of Student Housing
  - The community council model is newly developed and implemented by the Department of Student Housing, replacing the traditional Residential Housing Association (RHA) model. The RHA historically required its five-member, upperclassmen executive board to live on-campus, and the Department of Student Housing would provide free housing or, if preferred by the officer, compensate them with a stipend. However, due to a lack of upperclassmen able to live on-campus, there is little student interest in RHA executive positions even with Student Housing's promotional efforts.
  - The community council system offers a more grassroots approach to housing student leadership, but its new design comes with limitations. Over the long-term, the Principals of Housing should help remove obstacles to student advocacy for on-campus residents and contribute towards the betterment of the council system's design. Ultimately, the Principal of Housing should think through ways to help hall councils engage with and foster engagement between their residents, including programming and potentially even town halls.
  - As enrollment and on-campus housing supply change in the future, it might be more effective to bring back the original RHA model. The Principal on Housing should investigate the revival of the RHA if it seems more practical and

contribute to the design and its implementation. At the very least, the Principal should always be considerate of the community council structure and how it could be more effectively designed for the benefit of on-campus students.

- ❖ Contributing towards more robust and more frequent practices of sustainability in on-campus living
  - This involves working with infrastructure and environmental related positions and committees within the ASB, as well as community councils and the Department of Student Housing to develop sustainability-oriented education regimes, more options for recycling, etc.
  - This also could include working with external affairs related positions and committees within the ASB as well as the City of Oxford to ensure that recycling services are effective and accessible.
- ❖ Advocating for an increased number and higher quality of measures that promote safety, accessibility, and inclusivity in students on-campus living experiences
- ❖ Working with Michael Brown, Assistant Director of Academic Initiatives, and other leaders of the Department of Student Housing to strengthen educational and community-building aspects of on-campus living
  - This includes using data and findings from the ASB Student Housing Experience Survey to inform Student Housing of students' interests in Living-Learning Communities (LLC) and how they can be more successful. This may involve improving certain aspects of LLCs including admission, connections with LLC-relevant faculty, and even advocating for new LLCs that match the interests of students.

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## 5) Bureau of Infrastructure & Environmental Affairs

- a) Duties of the Bureau of Infrastructure & Environmental Affairs:



~~(1) Assist with ASB activities regarding the housing application process and assisting the Office of Student Housing in publicizing changes to the process~~

~~(2) Assist with ASB activities regarding housing or maintenance improvements by working with the Office of Student Housing and Residential Housing Association~~

(1) Assist with ASB activities involving the Office of Facilities Management

(2) Promote environmental affairs and sustainability on campus

(3) Assist with sustainability awareness and education on campus

(4) Assist and operate the Green Fund in conjunction with the Office of Sustainability

(5) Serve as a liaison to environmental student organizations on campus

(6) Assist with ASB efforts regarding University capital improvements to student facilities

(7) Coordinate all ASB initiatives regarding University Parking Services

(8) Maintain regular communication & collaboration with the Senate Committee on Infrastructure & University Development

b) The Principal of the Bureau of Infrastructure & Environmental Affairs shall serve as ASB's representative to the Green Fund

#### 6) Bureau of External Affairs

a) Duties of the Bureau of External Affairs:

(1) Represent the issues of the student body in correspondence and meetings with local, county, state, and national officials

- (2) Organize meetings with the Mayor of Oxford to discuss ASB initiatives and report back on City of Oxford policies
- (3) Regularly update the President and the President's Cabinet on state and local affairs affecting the student body
- (4) Routinely communicate and collaborate with the Senate Committee on External Affairs
- (5) Plan ASB efforts at SEC D.C.

## 7) Bureau of Student Housing

### a) Duties of the Bureau of Student Housing:

- (1) Assist with ASB activities regarding the housing application process and assisting the Office of Student Housing in publicizing changes to the process
- (2) Assist with ASB activities regarding housing or maintenance improvements by working with the Office of Student Housing and housing student leadership
- (3) Serve as a liaison between the ASB President's Cabinet and housing student organizations on campus
- (4) Promote governance, advocacy, and programming for students living on-campus via housing student leadership
- (5) Maintain regular communication & collaboration with the Senate Committee on Housing

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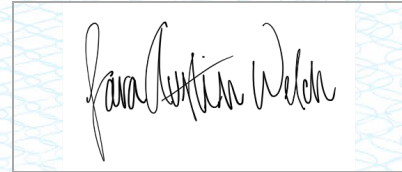
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