

**R F2018.02**

**A Resolution Allocating Funds to the Buses to Ballots Initiative to Transport Students to Polls on Election Day**

*A bill for the consideration of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts Student Government*

19 September, 2018

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**Whereas**, the mission of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts Student Government (hereafter LSA SG) is to “actively seek the voices of LSA students and advocate their interests to improve academic and non-academic life”;<sup>1</sup> and,

**Whereas**, Students registered to vote in the city of Ann Arbor are divided among its wards and numerous precincts;<sup>2</sup> and,

**Whereas**, Although seven of Ann Arbor’s polling locations are on the University of Michigan Campus and another five are within a 15-minute walk of campus, several precincts that contain a large number of student voters have polling stations farther away from campus;<sup>3</sup> and,

**Whereas**, The University of Michigan has made its commitment to student civic engagement and voting clear through its participation in the Big 10 Voting Challenge and creation of the Turn Up Turnout (hereafter TUT) group;<sup>4</sup> and,

**Whereas**, LSA SG has repeatedly demonstrated its commitment to increasing student voter turnout and civic engagement through its past partnering with TUT and support for making Election Day an academic holiday; and,

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<sup>1</sup> The Constitution of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts Student Government. Article II

<sup>2</sup> “Precinct and Polling Place Maps”, City of Ann Arbor  
<https://www.a2gov.org/departments/city-clerk/Elections/Pages/VotingDistricts.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> “Precinct Polling Places - 2018”, City of Ann Arbor  
<https://www.a2gov.org/departments/city-clerk/Elections/Documents/2018%20Precinct%20Polling%20Places.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> “Your Voice. Your Vote.” University of Michigan Edward Ginsberg Center  
<https://ginsberg.umich.edu/BIG-voting-challenge>

**Whereas**, University of Michigan student voter turnout in midterm elections historically is lower than in Presidential Elections, with the 2014 turnout of 5,284 voting students (14%) being 30% lower than the 2012 turnout of 16,031 (44%);<sup>5</sup> and,

**Whereas**, University of Michigan student voter turnout is not only lower than that of the general U.S. citizen population for both presidential and midterm elections (approximately 50% and 35% respectively) but also the average student voter turnout at other similar institutions (47-48% and 18-19% respectively);<sup>5</sup>  
<sup>6</sup> and,

**Whereas**, in the opinion of the authors, student turnout in elections lags behind the general populous in part due to the difficulty of getting from class to a polling location, especially for polling locations off campus; and,

**Whereas**, in the opinion of the authors, student turnout in this election can be expected to rise, relative to the average midterm election, to 40% of registered voters resulting in an extra 4,000 students voting relative to 2014;<sup>7,8</sup> and,

**Whereas**, multiple organizations including TUT, the Ginsberg Center, the Big Ten Voting Challenge, Central Student Government, and other student governments are working to increase voter registration and turnout for the upcoming Midterm Elections on November 6, 2018; and,

**Whereas**, one such effort is Buses to Ballots, an initiative undertaken by University of Michigan students in cooperation with various student governments, TUT, and the Ginsberg Center; and,

**Whereas**, Buses to Ballots will run buses from 6:00 am to 11:00 pm on election day on November 6, 2018 along four routes, three starting from Central Campus by the Natural Science Building and one from North Campus at Pierpont Commons;<sup>9</sup> and,

**Whereas**, these four routes will connect fourteen off-campus polling stations, serving twenty-three precincts with a total estimated student voter population of over 12,000;<sup>8,10</sup> and,

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<sup>5</sup> “Campus Report: Student Voting Rates for University of Michigan - Ann Arbor”, *National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement*, Tufts University  
[http://obp.umich.edu/wp-content/uploads/pubdata/surveys/NSLVE\\_UMAA\\_2014.pdf](http://obp.umich.edu/wp-content/uploads/pubdata/surveys/NSLVE_UMAA_2014.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> “Voter Turnout in the United States”, *FairVote*  
[http://www.fairvote.org/voter\\_turnout#voter\\_turnout\\_101](http://www.fairvote.org/voter_turnout#voter_turnout_101)

<sup>7</sup> APPENDIX A. Estimated 2018 Voter Turnout & User Calculations

<sup>8</sup> “Democratic Voter Enthusiasm Surging”, *NBC News*  
<https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/first-read/2018-primaries-democratic-enthusiasm-surges-n897731>

<sup>9</sup> Appendix B. Buses to Ballots Initiative Route Information

<sup>10</sup> Appendix C. Buses to Ballots Initiative Route Maps

**Whereas**, in the opinion of the authors, we anticipate around 2,300 students will use this service, at a cost to LSA SG of about \$0.28 per user, or 18.67% of each users' student fee;<sup>8</sup> and,

**Whereas**, even if only 1,150 students or 575 students use this service, at a cost to LSA SG of \$0.57 and \$1.13 per user respectively, this event would still have a lower cost per user than most LSA SG events, besides Study Break, while impacting more individuals at the same time; and,

**Whereas**, Buses to Ballots will collect information through surveys and other means regarding usage of the shuttle service to improve the experience for potential future efforts; and,

**Whereas**, in coordination with the shuttle service, TUT will be hosting "Parties to the Polls" near the North and Central Campus pickup locations, where volunteers will be able to inform voters of their polling locations, which bus to take, and other information; and,

**Whereas**, volunteers will also be utilized on the buses and at the major stops to encourage students to fill out surveys and be a resource for student voters using the service; and,

**Whereas**, the cost of chartering the buses is approximately \$14,050; and,

**Whereas**, Central Student Government is voting on Resolution AR 8-009, allocating \$5,000 towards Buses to Ballots<sup>11</sup>; and,

**Whereas**, the authors have already spoken with members of the LSA SG Executive Board, who have agreed to present this collaborative opportunity to the full voting body of the government.

**Be it therefore resolved**, LSA SG allocates \$650 from the General Fund to the Buses to Ballots Initiative; and,

**Be it further resolved**, LSA SG will also aid in the advertising of this opportunity to LSA students; and,

**Be it finally resolved**, the results of the survey, including data regarding number of users overall, from each polling station, etc, will be reported to LSA SG by the end of the semester and used to improve the program in the future.

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<sup>11</sup> [A Resolution to fund the Buses to Ballots Initiative to transport Students to the Polls on Election Day](#)

**APPENDIX A. Estimated 2018 Voter Turnout & User Calculations**

<b>2014 Midterm Overall Voting Rate<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>2014-2018 Voter Enthusiasm Increase -Democratic<sup>9</sup></b>	<b>2014-2018 Voter Enthusiasm Increase -Republican<sup>9</sup></b>	<b>Percent of Students: Republican<sup>12</sup></b>	<b>Percent of Students: Democrat<sup>12</sup></b>	<b>Percent of Students: Independent + Other</b>
14%	+84%	+24%	19%	54%	27%
<b>2014 Midterm Voting Rate of Registered Voters</b>	<b>Averaged Increased Enthusiasm</b>	<b>2014 Midterm Overall Rate Multiplied By 1.4992 (Estimated 2018 Rate)</b>	<b>2014 Midterm Rate of Registered Voters Multiplied by 1.4992 (Estimated 2018 Rate)</b>	<b>Estimated 2018 Registered Voter Voting Rate Multiplied by Student Voters in Affected Precincts</b>	<b>Estimated Bus to Ballots Shuttle Users (50% of Voting Students in Precincts)</b>
24%	49.92%	20.9%	35.98%	4,639 Students	2,319 Students
<b>Cost Per User - Overall</b>	<b>Cost Per User - for LSA SG</b>	<b>Percent of LSA SG Student Fee Used Per User</b>			
\$6.06	\$0.28	18.67%			

<sup>12</sup>“University student civic preferences differ from national voting averages”, *The Michigan Daily*, <https://www.michigandaily.com/section/elections/university-students-differ-national-voting-averages>

**APPENDIX B. Buses to Ballots Initiative Route Information**

<b>Red Route</b>								Total Students w/precincts on Route:	3655
Stops:	Pierpoint (1-7)	Northwood CC (2-1)	Thurston Elementary (2-9)	Logan Elementary (1-9, 1-11)	Northside (1-5, 1-6)	(loop)		Total Distance:	7 miles
# Of Students	3115	1660	400	625	970			Total Time Length:	26 minutes
<b>Purple Route</b>								Total Students w/precincts on Route:	4852
Stops:	CC Pickup	Ann Arbor District Library (5-1)	Bach Elementary (5-2)	Slauson Middle School (5-4, 5-5)	Community High School (1-2, 1-3, 1-4)	(loop)		Total Distance:	4 miles
# Of Students		890	790	750	2422			Total Time Length:	24 minutes
<b>Yellow Route</b>								Total Students w/precincts on Route:	2245
Stops:	CC Pickup	Angell Elementary (2-3, 2-4)	Tappan Middle (3-3, 3-10)	St. Clare / Temple Beth Emeth (4-5)	(loop)			Total Distance:	5 miles
# Of Students		1360	475	410				Total Time Length:	21 minutes
<b>Blue Route</b>								Total Students w/precinct	6995

								s on Route:	
Stops:	CC Pickup	U-M Coliseum (4-1, 4-3)	Mary St. Polling Station (4-2)	Pioneer High School (4-4, 4-8)	U-M Coliseum (4-1, 4-3)	AAD L Blue Stop	(loop )	Total Distance:	5 miles
# Of Students		4320	885	900		890		Total Time Length:	25 minutes
								Total Students Served:	12895

## APPENDIX C. Buses to Ballots Initiative Route Maps



