

**The 40th Session of the Student Body Senate**

**Florida International University**

**Miami, Florida**

**S.B. 04 018**

*All About The Money*

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**IN THE SENATE**

January 16, 2024

*Senate President Kaily LaChapelle, Senator Hua Hui Vogel, Senator Haley Dawson, Senator Erika Noel, and Student Body President Alexander Sutton introduced the following resolution, which was presented on the Senate floor*

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**A BILL**

To advocate to increase the Activity and Service Fee and the Health Fee through a university-wide referendum.

*Be it enacted by the Senate of the Student Body at Florida International University assembled,*

**Whereas,** the Activity and Service (A&S) fee is a mandatory fee for all students and is part of their tuition fee each semester. The A&S fee are funds that benefit the entire student body, from funding departments like Campus Life, to student organizations like Student Programming Council, to overseeing student university centers. Every year the Student Government Association Budget is an allocation from the A&S fee. Almost all the engagement that happens on campus stems directly from the A&S fee allocation.

**Whereas,** The A&S fee is \$14.45. In 2015-2016 fiscal year, the fee was increased from \$12.87 to \$14.85. Then again in the 2019-2020 fiscal year, the fee was decreased to \$14.45.<sup>i</sup>

**Whereas,** This current fiscal year (2023-2024), the SGA Budget is \$19,524,511. The 2022–2023 fiscal year, the SGA Budget was \$19,862,560. The 2021-2022 fiscal year, the SGA budget was \$20,728,954. In the 2022-2023 fiscal year, the budget for the first time in years dropped below 20 million dollars. In this current year, there is more than \$300,000 less than the previous fiscal year, while dealing with a challenging 6.4% inflation rate on many items being requested, as well as statewide minimum wage increase.<sup>ii</sup>

**Whereas,** in the last few years, the largest complaint and area of concern for students has been the lack of funding and engagement in regard to life on campus. For three years in a row, the SGA Budget Committee has been tasked with making budget cuts to almost all entities that receive funding from A&S allocation. The A&S fee is responsible for paying stipends and salaries for some workers at FIU; with the minimum wage increase, the budget cuts will continue to affect the well-being of our students on campus that rely on services and campus engagement.

**Whereas,** “the Health fee is a mandatory fee for all students and is part of their tuition fee each semester. The health fee allows the university to provide high-quality affordable clinical preventative care and mental health services at convenient on-campus locations by various departments. These departments include: Student Health Clinics (SHC), Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), Victim Empowerment Program (VEP), Healthy Living Program (HLP), and the Disability Resource Center (DRC). They provide services such as: Primary health care, Health education, Class presentations, Health fairs, Services and accommodations for students with disabilities, Counseling for mental health concerns, Support services for victims of emotional or physical abuse. All these services are offered free or at a lower cost due to funding from the health fee.”<sup>iii</sup>

**Whereas,** The Health fee is \$93.69 flat. The health fee was last increased in the 2012-2013 fiscal year from \$83.19 flat.<sup>iv</sup>

**Whereas,** the 2022-2023 Health Fee allocation was \$11,969,990. In 2021-2022, the Health Fee allocation was \$12,323,515. In 2020-2021, the Health Fee Allocation was \$12,321,920.<sup>v</sup>

**Whereas,** According to the FIU 2022 Health and Wellness Survey Overview that surveyed 7,268 students (around 13% of the student population), 80.66% knew they paid a health fee;

however, 1,095 did not know how many services were offered. 26.59% stated that if they knew more information about services offered, they would be more likely to use them. 40.38% said the telehealth services on campus were extremely important to them. 82% of students find value in the services that Student Health and Wellness has to offer.<sup>vi</sup>

**Whereas,** The Biscayne Bay Campus (BBC) sees limited services offered under the Department of Student Health and Wellness. An increase in the health fee would allow services to be increased at BBC and allow BBC to become a priority under funding.

**Whereas,** Increasing the A&S fee to \$15 and the Health fee to \$94 will dramatically change the revenue seen being invested back on the FIU campus and services offered to students. Students have demanded to see an increase in student life and engagement on campus.

**Whereas,** under the 2023 Florida Statutes 1009.24, the Board of Trustees is responsible for establishing these fees on the main campus of the university. To increase these fees, two committees must be established: an A&S fee committee and a health fee committee. Half the representatives must be students appointed by the student body president and the other half appointed by university president. A chairperson, appointed jointly by the university president and the student body president, shall vote only in the case of a tie. The recommendations of the committee shall take effect only after approval by the university president, after consultation with the Student Body President, with final approval by the university board of trustees. An increase in the health fee or A&S fee may occur only once each fiscal year and must be implemented beginning with the fall term. The Board of Governors is responsible for adopting the regulations and timetables necessary to implement this fee.<sup>vii</sup>

**Whereas,** To compare six of the public Florida university fees and budgets, refer to Figure 1 at the bottom. Note that a flat price is a set price for every semester, versus a non-flat price means the students pay that price for every credit hour they are enrolled in.

**Whereas,** Students deserve to be well informed on where their money goes upon paying fees, and there should be utmost budget transparency on campus.

**Whereas,** When advocating to increase the amount of fees students are paying, it is important to allow the student body to have a larger input on this decision.

**Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved** by the Senate of the Student Body that the Senate is encouraged to host a Town Hall event to focus on how tuition fees, the SGA Budget, and the FIU Budget operate, before the referendum vote takes place. The timeline for this Town Hall would take place in between mid-March and early April.

**Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved** by the Senate of the Student Body that a university-wide referendum will take place from April 17 at 8AM to April 18 at 8PM. The ballot shall contain two separate questions: “Should the FIU Board of Trustees convene an A&S fee committee with the intention to raise the fee to \$15?” with only three options: “yes” and “no” and “need more information”. The other question will state: “Should FIU Board of Trustees convene a Health fee committee with the intention to raise the fee to \$94?” With only three -options: “yes” and “no” and “need more information”. Students will have the option of clicking a link to read the full text of this piece of legislation.

**Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved** that the referendum vote needs 60% approval to pass. That means 60% of the submissions would have to state “yes”.

**Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved** if the referendum passes the results and this piece of legislation will be sent to FIU Board of Trustees (BOT), the University President, and Division Leadership to take under review.

**Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved** that the Student Body Senate further calls upon the FIU Board of Trustees, University President, and Division Leadership to strengthen financial transparency and information given to students about the fees and overall capital flows at FIU through partnerships between Student Health and Wellness, Activity and Service Business Office, SGA, and BOT.

Figure 1:



2022-2023	UF	UCF	FIU	FSU	FAU	UNF
SGA Budget Total	<a href="#">\$22,574,624</a>	<a href="#">\$21,100,000</a>	<a href="#">\$19,862,560</a>	<a href="#">\$14,615,441</a>	<a href="#">\$9,853,302</a>	<a href="#">\$6,179,400</a>
A&S Fee	\$19.06	\$11.67	\$14.45	\$12.86	\$12.32	\$14.42
Last Change	2015-2016	2014-2015	2019-2020	2013-2014	2012-2013	2019-2020
Total Health Fee Allocation	Unkown	Unkown	<a href="#">\$11,969,990</a>	Unkown	Unkown	Unkown
Health Fee	\$15.81	\$14.32	\$93.69 flat	\$13.97	\$9.42	\$9.74
Last Change	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2013-2014	2011-2012	2018-2019
# of Students in 2023	55,211	69,320	56,732	43,701	29,637	16,517

## Works Cited

1. "State University System of Florida." *Fee History*, [www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Fee-History-thru-2021-22.xls](http://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Fee-History-thru-2021-22.xls).
2. Florida International University - Digital Communications. "Budgets." *Division of Academic & Student Affairs | Florida International University*, <https://dasa.fiu.edu/all-departments/activity-service-business-office/budgets/>
3. Florida International University - Digital Communications. "Student Health Fee." *Division of Academic & Student Affairs | Florida International University*, <https://dasa.fiu.edu/student-support/wellness/student-health-fee/>
4. "State University System of Florida." *Fee History*, [www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Fee-History-thru-2021-22.xls](http://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Fee-History-thru-2021-22.xls).
5. Florida International University - Digital Communications. "Reports." *Division of Academic & Student Affairs | Florida International University*, <https://dasa.fiu.edu/student-support/wellness/reports/>
6. Florida International University - Digital Communications. "Reports." *Division of Academic & Student Affairs | Florida International University*, <https://dasa.fiu.edu/student-support/wellness/reports/>
7. "The 2023 Florida Statutes ." *Statutes & Constitution :View Statutes : Online Sunshine*, [www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&URL=1000-1099%2F1009%2FSections%2F1009.24.html#:~:text=The%20university%20board%20of%20trustees%20may%20also%20establish%20a%20student,by%20the%20student%20body%20president](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=1000-1099%2F1009%2FSections%2F1009.24.html#:~:text=The%20university%20board%20of%20trustees%20may%20also%20establish%20a%20student,by%20the%20student%20body%20president)
8. "State University System of Florida." *Fee History*, [www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Fee-History-thru-2021-22.xls](http://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Fee-History-thru-2021-22.xls).

### Senate Bill Transmission Form

This bill is presented by the Senate of the Student Body at Florida International University. It is presented by the Senate President Pro-Tempore and affixed with the signature of the Senate President. Both the Senate President and the Senate President Pro-Tempore affirm that the information presented below is accurate and that the bill has successfully passed in the Senate of the Student Body. The bill is presented on this day and at this hour for signature or veto.

<b><i>SB 04 018</i></b>			
Date Introduced:	<i>01//15/2024</i>		
Committees Assigned:	(1) Graduate and Professional Student Committee (2) Rules and Administration		
Vote in Committee 1: <i>01/19/2024</i>	<b>7</b> <i>For</i>	<b>0</b> <i>Against</i>	<b>0</b> <i>Abstaining</i>
Vote in Committee 2: <i>01/22/2024</i>	<b>5</b> <i>For</i>	<b>0</b> <i>Against</i>	<b>0</b> <i>Abstaining</i>
Vote on the Senate Floor: <i>02/19/2024</i>	<b>20</b> <i>For</i>	<b>0</b> <i>Against</i>	<b>0</b> <i>Abstaining</i>
 _____ Signature of the Senate President	 _____ Signature of the Senate President Pro Tempore		

### Presidential Signature of a Senate Bill

On this day, at this time, and in this place, the Senate of the Student Body at Florida International University does hereby present this bill to the desk of the President of the Student Body for signature or veto. The Senate has passed this bill and all its accompaniments, in accordance with the Constitution and Statutes of the Student Government Association at Florida International University. It is presented in good faith, whereas the officers of the Senate have affixed their signatures to affirm that the bill has followed due procedure and is valid. The Senate will await your decision.

**SB 04 018**



*Kaily LaChapelle*, Senate President



*Tiara Campbell*, Senate President Pro-Tempore



*Karina Hernandez*, Senate Floor Leader



*Alexander P. Sutton*, Student Body President

