

## **STUDENT SENATE BILL 2020-1012**

### **TITLE: Allocation of Reserves for Off-Campus Rent Relief Fund**

**AUTHOR:** Student Body President Trevor Pope and Internal Affairs Nominee Branden Pearson

**SPONSORS:** Student Body Vice President Lauredan Official, Student Body Treasurer Jessica Jesurajan, Senate President Kyle Garner, and Senate President Pro Tempore Cooper Brown

**AMOUNT:** \$500,000.00

### **Off-Campus Rent Relief Fund:**

**Background:** In March 2020, the University of Florida transitioned all coursework to an online format and encouraged students to return home in response to COVID-19. In addition, Alachua County declared a local state of emergency on March 16th and issued a stay-at-home order on March 24th. Later, on April 1st, Governor DeSantis issued a state-wide stay-at-home order for the state of Florida. This has impacted the local and state economy. Today, many off-campus students struggle to find the financial resources to pay their lease agreement due to the negative financial impact of the virus.

**It is the goal of Student Government to ensure students do not breach their lease agreement.** The execution of this reserve transfer bill will fund rent relief for students living in off-campus housing. Rent relief will be administered in partnership with the Office of Off-Campus Life. The criteria to qualify for rent relief and the maximum award amount will be established by the Office of Off-Campus Life, subject to approval by the Student Body President. An independent committee comprised of faculty and staff will review and approve requests from the rent relief fund. The independent committee will be jointly appointed by the Student Body President and Vice President of Student Affairs.

The rent relief fund will continually accept applications until the transferred funds have been exhausted and/or until the end of most students' final lease date on July 31, 2020. Any unused funds will remain in Student Government Reserves.

**Intent:** To ensure those students who reside in off-campus housing and face financial uncertainties as a result of COVID-19 do not breach their lease agreements.

*Proviso: This allocation is a one-time reserve transfer which will be continually disbursed on an application basis until the transferred funds have been exhausted. The funds are scheduled to be completely allocated prior to the end of most students' final lease date on July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020.*