

STUDENT SENATE BILL 2020–1046

TITLE: Resolution memorializing those that were lost in the August 3rd El Paso shooting

AUTHORS: Latinx Caucus Co-Chair Kevin Trejos, Senator Monica Lea, Latinx Caucus Co-Chair Santiago Clavijo Gomez, Senator Matthew Rodriguez

SPONSORS: Senator Hannah Elmattougui, Senator Carlos Estrada, Senator Bryan Momin, Senator Faith Allen, Judiciary Chair Franco Luis, HSA President Victoria Grant, HSA Vice President of Programming Mary Faas, Member Leadership Program Fall Executive Director Brian Nunez, Member Leadership Program Spring Executive Director Julia Echemendia, Hispanic Student Association, Senator Marcus Nelson

WHEREAS, on August 3, 2019, 23 people were killed and dozens more were injured by a single gunman in a Walmart store in El Paso, Texas [1]; and,

WHEREAS, these victims were: Javier Rodriguez, Arturo Benavides, Jordan Anchondo, Andre Anchondo, David Johnson, Ivan Manzano, Angie Englisbee, Sara Esther Regalado, Adolfo Cerros Hernández, Jorge Calvillo García, Elsa Mendoza, Gloria Irma Márquez, Maria Eugenia Legarreta Rothe, Ivan Filiberto Manzano, Juan de Dios Velázquez Chairez, Leonard Cippeda Campos, Maria Flores, Raul Flores, Alexander Gerhard Hoffman, Luis Alfonzo Juarez, Maribel Loya, Margie Reckard, Teresa Sanchez [2]; and,

WHEREAS, the El Paso shooter demonstrated white nationalist motivations for his actions including targeting individuals he perceived to be Mexican [3] and had a series of online posts characterizing Hispanic/Latinx immigrants as invaders threatening American jobs and arguing to “send them back,” [4]; and,

WHEREAS, a mass shooting is defined as a shooting consisting of four or more people excluding the shooter and can act as method of domestic terrorism. 2020 has seen an alarming number of mass shootings consisting of 305 shootings with 60 occurring in May and 95 in June [5]; and,

WHEREAS, from 2013 to 2019, the frequency of mass shootings in the United States has increased by 65% resulting in the country suffering 2,341 mass shootings in that time period [5]; and,

WHEREAS, as COVID-19 continues to be one of the largest public health crises in the United States, public attention should not neglect the increasing rate of gun violence as a serious public health issue [6]; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida has a large population of Hispanic/Latinx students, with the number of Hispanic and Latinx students increasing from 11.6% of the student body in 2006, to 19.11% in 2018 [7]; and,

WHEREAS, in 2001, during the UF SG campaign of Gil Sanchez, “No Spics for President,” was spray painted on the side of the Institute of Hispanic-Latino Culture (“La Casita”) demonstrating that UF is not immune to acts of hate against the Hispanic-Latinx Community [8]; and,

WHEREAS, August 3, 2020 marks the one-year anniversary of the shooting; then,

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes this shooting was a hate crime against Hispanic/Latinx people.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate commends the individuals who acted in ways to protect others and saved lives during this tragic incident.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate acknowledges the devastating impact of gun violence, especially on minority communities.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate acknowledges that hate crimes and acts of racism are still a present reality on the University of Florida campus.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate condemns white supremacy, white nationalism, xenophobia, Hispanophobia, and racism.

THEREFORE, LET IT FINALLY BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate will continue to support efforts by UF gun-violence prevention organizations and cultural organizations to end gun violence and hate crimes, respectively.

Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to President Kent Fuchs; Provost Joseph Glover; Student Body President Trevor Pope; Hispanic Student Association President Victoria Grant, Black Student Union President Symphany Lindsay, Asian American Student Union Co-President Zachary Raad, Asian American Student Union Co-President Britney Rengert, Students Taking Action Against Racism Co-Chair Gabriela Pombo, Students Taking Action Against Racism Co-Chair Julianah Cleopha, and March for Our Lives Gainesville President Alyson Moriarty.

[1] <https://www.cnn.com/2020/04/26/us/el-paso-walmart-shooting-victim-death/index.html>

[2] <https://www.insider.com/el-paso-shooting-victims-walmart-2019-8#mexican-authorities-said-several-of-the-victims-were-mexican-nationals-7>

[3] <https://apnews.com/456c0154218a4d378e2fb36cd40b709d>

[4] <https://apnews.com/df6dc60f37664833ba3b953927ef835d>

[5]<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/07/21/2020-is-shattering-gun-violence-records-we-must-act/>

[6]<https://www.michigandaily.com/section/opinion/op-ed-covid-19-has-not-stopped-mass-shootings>

[7]https://www.alligator.org/news/number-of-latinx-students-at-uf-almost-doubled-in-the-last-decade/article_e727e69e-3eff-11ea-8924-7be0785213c1.html

[8] <https://oral.history.ufl.edu/2014/02/28/february-25-2014-no-spic-for-president/>