

## **STUDENT SENATE BILL 2020-1050**

**TITLE: Resolution condemning Representative Ted Yoho's comments to Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Sexism in Student Government**

**AUTHORS: Senator Monica Lea, Senator Zachariah Chou**

**SPONSORS: Senator Alanis Gonzalez, Senator Santiago Clavijo-Gomez, Senator Bruce Glasserman, Senator Carlos Estrada, Senator Colin Solomon, Senator Ryan Wilder, Senator Sparsha Muralidhara, Assistant Minority Leader Sahil Patel, Minority Party Leader Shawn Zimmer, Senator Marcus Nelson**

**WHEREAS**, on July 20th, 2020, Florida Representative (Rep.) Ted Yoho accosted New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez on Capitol Hill in which he referred to her as a “f\*cking b\*tch” [1]; and,

**WHEREAS**, in 2020, of the 535 members of the United States (U.S.) Congress, 127 of members who hold seats are women. Comprising 23.7% of the U.S. Legislative Branch, 26 congresswomen (26%) serve in the U.S. Senate and 101 women (23.2%) serve in the U.S. House of Representatives [2]; and,

**WHEREAS**, of the 127 women serving in the U.S. Congress, 48 identify as women of color including Rep. Ocasio-Cortez who is of Puerto Rican descent and serves as the youngest congresswoman in U.S. history [2]; and,

**WHEREAS**, sexism, referring to the prejudice or discrimination, especially against women, on the basis of sex [3], is wholeheartedly unacceptable conduct for any elected official. Yoho's comments to Rep. Ocasio-Cortez represent a blatant use of sexist rhetoric from an elected official and should be condemned; and,

**WHEREAS**, in the case that women continue to serve as minority representatives in the U.S. government [2] and within UF Senate [4], it is necessary for the body to continue to condemn the actions of members who undermine and belittle the actions of women through sexist rhetoric and actions including verbal abuse; and,

**WHEREAS**, in the predominantly male field of politics, globally, women continue to face barriers of institutional sexism compared to their men counterparts [5]; and,

**WHEREAS**, women of color, including Rep. Ocasio-Cortez, face further backlash as a result of the compounding effects of sexism and racism. As a result, women of color in politics face

additional barriers from running for elections to serving in elected positions compared to their white counterparts [6]; and,

**WHEREAS**, on July 23rd, 2020, Rep. Ocasio-Cortez spoke on the House floor to read Rep. Yoho's comments into the Congressional Record [7]. While Rep. Yoho apologized for "the abrupt manner of the conversation," he denies accosting Rep. Ocasio-Cortez or using the words attributed to him [8]; then,

**THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED** that the University of Florida Student Senate condemns Yoho's comments toward Rep. Ocasio-Cortez made on July 20th, 2020.

**THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED** that the University of Florida Student Senate will not tolerate the presence, sentiments, and actions perpetuating sexism in Student Government by any members nor promote a culture of sexism within any other branches.

**THEREFORE, LET IT FINALLY BE RESOLVED** that the University of Florida Student Senate strives to act in a manner that uplifts women in Student Government and will continue to condemn the use of sexist rhetoric, expressions, and actions directed at women across the University of Florida.

*Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to Congressman Ted Yoho, Yoho's Chief of Staff Larry Calhoun, Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ocasio-Cortez's Chief of Staff Ariel Eckblad, UF President Kent Fuchs, Student Body President Trevor Pope.*

[1] <https://thehill.com/homenews/house/508259-ocasio-cortez-accosted-by-gop-lawmaker-over-remarks-that-kind-of>

[2] <https://cawp.rutgers.edu/women-us-congress-2020>

[3] <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sexism>

[4] <https://sg.ufl.edu/branches/legislative/senate-roster/>

[5] Haraldsson, A. & Wängnerud, L. (2019). The effect of media sexism on women's political ambition: evidence from a worldwide study. *Feminist Media Studies*, 19(4), 525-541, DOI: 10.1080/14680777.2018.1468797

[6] Sanbonmatsu, K. <https://www.politicalparity.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Parity-Research-Women-Of-Color.pdf>

[7] <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/23/us/alexandria-ocasio-cortez-sexism-congress.html>

[8] <https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/21/politics/aoc-ted-yoho-confrontation/index.html>