

STUDENT SENATE BILL 2023-1119**TITLE:** Resolution Advocating for the University of Florida to Make Election Day a Holiday.**AUTHOR(S):** Senator Christian Rodriguez**SPONSORS:** Senator Chalisa Budhai, Senator Raj Mia, Senate President Oscar Santiago Perez

WHEREAS, the United States had 52.2% of eligible voters participate in the 2022 midterm election and 66.3% participate in the 2020 general election [1]; and,

WHEREAS, voter turnout in the United States is among the lowest in the world with the United States being ranked 31st out of 49 countries in turnout rates for elections between 2018-2022 [2]; and,

WHEREAS, election day is not a federal paid holiday; and,

WHEREAS, election day is held on a Tuesday, when potential voters have conflicting job and school responsibilities; and,

WHEREAS, a significant reason people do not vote is that they need to spend time working and making money [3]; and,

WHEREAS, a United States Census Bureau survey found that 13.1% of registered voters that did not participate in the 2020 general election, about 1.6 million people, cited being too busy and/or a conflicting schedule [4]; and,

WHEREAS, 27 of the 36 member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) hold their elections on the weekend [5]; and,

WHEREAS, 2 of the 9 OECD countries that hold elections on a weekday make it a national holiday [5]; and,

WHEREAS, 66% of Americans support making election day a holiday [6]; and,

WHEREAS, election day is not a paid holiday in the State of Florida [7]; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida (UF) does not designate election day as an academic and/or employee holiday; and,

WHEREAS, UF achieved a 76.7% voting rate in the 2020 general election [8]; and,

WHEREAS, UF is a signatory of the All In Campus Democracy Challenge, which is a commitment to achieve 100% student voter registration and turnout [9]; and,

WHEREAS, UF should strive to achieve its goal of full student participation in elections; and,

WHEREAS, students currently have class, exams, and homework on election day; and,

WHEREAS, employees at UF, which includes student employees, currently have work on election day; and,

WHEREAS, making election day a holiday at UF would give students and employees free time to vote; and,

WHEREAS, a study found that making election day a holiday would increase turnout among non-voters with work or schedule conflicts by 50% [10]; and,

WHEREAS, the same study found that making election day a holiday could increase turnout by 16 million to 32 million votes [10]; and,

WHEREAS, UF has received national recognition for high student participation in elections [11]; and,

WHEREAS, student participation in elections makes them more engaged with government and informed of politics; and,

WHEREAS, higher student turnout increases the chances of a government that is more representative of the wants and needs of students;

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED the University of Florida Student Senate encourages full voter participation from the student body and endorses on-campus efforts to increase turnout.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED the University of Florida Student Senate requests that the University's administration make election day an academic holiday.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED the University of Florida Student Senate requests that the University's administration make election day a paid holiday for employees.

THEREFORE, LET IT FINALLY BE RESOLVED the University of Florida Student Senate encourages all UF Student Government branches, committees, and agencies, especially those associated with voter turnout such as Chomp the Vote, to advocate that the University of Florida make election day a holiday for students and employees and the Florida State Government make election day a paid holiday.

Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to University of Florida President Ben Sasse, Interim Provost J. Scott Angle, Human Resources Interim Vice President Melissa Curry, Student Life Vice President Heather White, Business Affairs Vice President Curtis Reynolds, and Student Body President Olivia Green

- [1]-<https://www.brookings.edu/articles/new-voter-turnout-data-from-2022-shows-some-surprises-including-lower-turnout-for-youth-women-and-black-americans-in-some-states/>
- [2]-<https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2022/11/01/turnout-in-u-s-has-soared-in-recent-elections-but-by-some-measures-still-trails-that-of-many-other-countries/>
- [3]-<https://www.npr.org/2018/09/10/645223716/on-the-sidelines-of-democracy-exploring-why-so-many-americans-dont-vote>
- [4]-<https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/voting-and-registration/p20-585.html>, table 10
- [5]-<https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2018/11/06/weekday-elections-set-the-u-s-apart-from-many-other-advanced-democracies/>
- [6]-<https://www.americanbar.org/news/abanews/aba-news-archives/2022/04/aba-survey-finds-support-for-election-holiday/>
- [7]-https://www.dms.myflorida.com/workforce_operations/human_resource_management/for_state_personnel_system_hr_practitioners/state_holidays
- [8]-<https://bobgrahamcenter.ufl.edu/gators-vote/full-student-voter-participation/>
- [9]-<https://allinchallenge.org/presidents-commitment-signatories/>
- [10]-<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/sigma/vol34/iss1/4/>
- [11]-<https://news.clas.ufl.edu/get-out-the-vote-uf/>

Oscar Santiago 7/31/2
Oscar Santiago Perez Date
Senate President