

STUDENT SENATE BILL 2024-1219

TITLE: Resolution Advocating for the Development of Flower Patches Near On-Campus Housing Facilities

AUTHOR(S): Senator Shawn Kapersaud

SPONSOR(S): Majority Party Leader Julia Seifer, Senator Noor Azeem, Senator Aditi Sarkar

WHEREAS, “the University of Florida strives to create a community where students’ well-being is prioritized,” and well-being is defined as one’s “physical and mental health,” among other factors [1]; and,

WHEREAS, “students report stress and anxiety are one of the biggest obstacles to their academic success,” and the University of Florida seeks to alleviate this by providing “resources and support associated with each dimension of wellness to help students find balance” [1]; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida’s Student Success webpage points to improving health and wellness by “occupying pleasant, stimulating environments,” including both “natural and built environments” [1]; and,

WHEREAS, exposure to flowers may “lower stress hormones, heart rate, and blood pressure” and have been empirically shown to improve happiness, reduce stress and anxiety, positively impact one’s short-term and long-term mood overall benefiting one’s physical and mental health [2]; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida supports campus beautification projects as they are “one of the many ways that Facilities Services helps to improve the lives and surroundings of our students, faculty and staff” [3]; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida has previously undertaken campus beautification projects, as exemplified by the 2018 makeover of the courtyard of the Academic Research Building, wherein a variety of flowering plants were planted, resulting in a “vibrant and interesting landscape;” and culminating in a courtyard that is now “full of life,” drawing individuals from all corners of the campus to revel in its beauty and serenity” [4]; and,

WHEREAS, planting more flowers in external areas of dorms, including courtyards such as the Murphree Commons courtyard, may serve to attract more students to utilize these spaces,

increasing accessible green spaces around campus while also serving as locations for students to converse, socialize, and even host events; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida is dedicated to sustainability, including native landscaping, which includes planting “more butterfly friendly and food producing plants” across campus [5]; and,

WHEREAS, flowers are vital components of “soil conservation and global wildlife preservation” and serve various roles in our environment including returning nutrients to the soil, retaining groundwater in the soil, purifying water [6], sustaining a healthy ecosystem, and providing food for pollinators which “help grow over 35% of the world’s agricultural land” [7]; and,

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes the benefits of increased flower patches near on-campus housing facilities for the well-being of students, student life, the overall beauty of the campus, and the environment; and,

THEREFORE, LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes the alignment of developing flower patches near on campus-housing facilities with UF’s stated goals regarding students’ well-being, campus beautification, and sustainability [1][3][5]; and,

THEREFORE, LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate advocates for the increase of native flower patches in close proximity to and surrounding on-campus housing facilities, particularly focusing on dorms currently lacking native flower patches; and,

THEREFORE, LET IT BE FINALLY RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate urges UF Facilities Services Grounds Department to work towards, and assist in implementing, the aforementioned flower patch initiative.

Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to Sustainability Program Coordinator Kaylee August, Sustainability Coordinator Corey Farmer, Senior Program Director for the Office of Sustainability Liz Storn, Director of Sustainability Mathew Williams, Assistant Vice President of UF Facilities Services Mark Helms, Student Campus Housing Committee Chair James Tyger, Inter-Residence Hall Association President Kara Sammetinger, Senior Director of UF Housing Tina Kuhlengel Horvath

[1] <https://studentsuccess.ufl.edu/well-being/>

[2] <https://www.shondaland.com/live/body/a44131237/embrace-the-mental-health-benefits-of-flowers/>

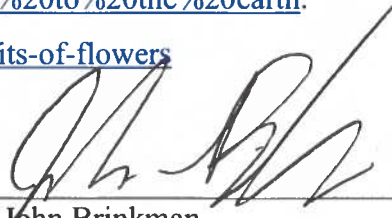
[3] <https://www.facilitieservices.ufl.edu/news/news/campus-beautification/>

[4] <https://www.facilitieservices.ufl.edu/news/achievements/facilities-services-receives-2018-public-spaces-award/>

[5] <https://www.facilitieservices.ufl.edu/information/sustainability/>

[6] <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managingland/wildflowers/pollinators/importance#:~:text=Flowering%20plants%20help%20to%20purify,it%20falls%20to%20the%20earth.>

[7] <https://wildelements.com/blogs/stories/benefits-of-flowers>


John Brinkman
Senate President


Date