

STUDENT SENATE BILL 2025-1010

TITLE: Resolution Supporting Continued Access to Campus Grass Parking Areas for Tailgating on UF Campus

AUTHOR(S): Change Caucus Leader Max Banach

SPONSORS: Senator Austin Britton

WHEREAS, the University of Florida (UF) has a long-standing tradition of tailgating on campus green spaces during home football games, fostering community, school spirit, and alumni engagement [1]; and,

WHEREAS, UF's current tailgating and parking policies allow access to specific campus areas for parking and tailgating on game days, contributing significantly to the game-day experience for students, alumni, and visitors [2][3]; and,

WHEREAS, at the start of the 2024 football season, confusion arose due to abrupt changes in parking access and tailgating policies including "roped-off parking lots and grassy areas typically used by alumni for tailgating" with "yellow caution tape [marking] off several areas that are traditionally tailgating hotspots, particularly along the Lake Alice and Harmonic Woods areas on the west side of campus" resulting in public pushback and negative press coverage for the university [2][4][5][10]; and,

WHEREAS, statements from university administration acknowledged "miscommunication" in policy rollouts, highlighting the importance of transparency and consistency in preserving traditions [2][4]; and,

WHEREAS, green spaces along Museum Rd and Gale Lemerand Dr have historically accommodate tailgating activities without requiring fees, ensuring accessibility for all attendees, including students, families, and alumni [2]; and,

WHEREAS, restricting or charging for access to green spaces for parking and tailgating may disproportionately affect students and fans with limited financial means, undermining the inclusivity and community that are core to UF's values [6]; and,

WHEREAS, other major universities across the Southeastern Conference (SEC) successfully balance tailgating traditions with campus green space preservation [7]; and,

WHEREAS, UF's Police Department and Business Affairs Office have outlined detailed parking and game-day policies that demonstrate the feasibility of managing campus green spaces safely and effectively during game days [8][9]; and,

WHEREAS, UF announced in a statement on X that "all parking that has traditionally been available for tailgating will remain available for the Texas A&M game and the remainder of the season" [11]; then,

THEREFORE, LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that UF Student Senate urges the University of Florida and all its involved business units to continue allowing free access to green spaces for parking and tailgating during home football games.

THEREFORE, LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that the UF Student Senate encourages university administrators to adopt transparent and consistent policies regarding game-day parking and tailgating to prevent confusion and maintain goodwill among the UF community.

THEREFORE, LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that the UF Student Senate calls for the implementation of sustainable practices, such as post-game cleanups, mobile bathroom units, and additional waste disposal areas, to preserve the integrity of campus green spaces while supporting tailgating traditions.

THEREFORE, LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED the UF Student Senate requests ongoing collaboration between UF's Business Affairs Office, Police Department, Athletics Association, and student leadership alongside relevant alumni stakeholders to address game-day logistics and policy development.

THEREFORE, LET IT BE FINALLY BE RESOLVED that UF Student Senate reaffirms its commitment to supporting traditions that promote inclusivity, community, and school spirit, urging the university to prioritize these values in all game-day policy decisions..

Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to Interim University President Kent Fuchs, Student Body President John Brinkman, UF Transportation and Parking Services Senior Director William McDonald, University Athletic Association Director Scott Stricklin, University Athletic Association Spokesperson Steve McClain, Head Football Coach Billy Napier, Vice President for Student Life Dr. Heather White, UF Associate Vice President for Business Affairs Brandi Renton, UF Assistant Vice President for Public Safety Linda Stump-Kurnick, UF Campus Police Chief Bart Knowles, Alligator Sports Editor Jack Meyer, Gator Boosters Executive Director Phil Pharr, and Mayor of Gators Tailgating Robert Martin.

[1] - <https://www.uff.ufl.edu/gatornation/calling-all-tail-gators-a-guide-to-ufts-tailgate-party-tradition/>

[2] - <https://www.wuft.org/sports/2024-12-17/future-of-uf-campus-tailgating-still-unclear-after-early-season-controversy>

[3] - <https://businessaffairs.ufl.edu/events/tailgating/>

[4] - <https://www.alligator.org/article/2024/09/uf-game-day-parking>

[5] - https://www.alligator.org/article/2024/09/pushback-parking-bans-and-season-ending-injuries-hinder-florida-ahead-of-week-2?ct=content_open&cv=cbox_latest

[6] - <https://www.ufl.edu/about/core-values/>

[7] - <https://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/slideshows/fun-college-campuses-for-tailgating?slide=3>

[8] - <https://floridagators.com/sports/2023/9/14/uf-tailgating-policies.aspx>

[9] - <https://police.ufl.edu/how-do-i/football-game-day-information/>

[10] - <https://www.on3.com/news/university-of-florida-releases-statement-addressing-miscommunication-concerning-tailgating-parking/>

[11] - <https://x.com/UF/status/1833601059392270729?mx=2>