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**S.B.1.2018-2019**

**A Bill -**

**To be known as "Bobcat Community Service Authorization Act" to establish required volunteer hours during Senators' terms in order to contribute to the community on a larger scale.**

**WHEREAS:** Service is one of Texas State University's core values, stating that "We are student-centered. When we establish policies, make decisions or take actions, we do so with the best interest of students in mind."; and

**WHEREAS:** It is stated in the mission statement of Student Government that "Student Government will take action to positively impact the community and university on behalf of all Bobcats."; and

**WHEREAS:** The Hays County Food Bank website states that "1 in 7 Hays County residents are food insecure," and each hour of volunteer service to organizations such as the food bank can have a large impact on the lives of community members; and

**WHEREAS:** The Student Senate should adhere to the servant-leader philosophy, in which the primary way to exhibit true leadership skills is by providing committed volunteer work and leading by example; and

**WHEREAS:** It is not possible to serve the students without dedicating personal time to the betterment of the community in a capacity that surpasses the mere requirement of being a representative of students in weekly Senate meetings; and

**WHEREAS:** It is a Senator's responsibility to serve the needs of the students, which differs substantially between different student populations; and

**WHEREAS:** Students' schedules do not always permit them time to attend Student Government meetings to express their ideas or concerns during public forum; and

**WHEREAS:** Many of these concerns can be addressed by Senators actively reaching out and attending club meetings for which said Senator is not currently on the roster, and listening to the particular needs and views of the students in the club; therefore,

**BE IT ENACTED:** That Texas State University Student Government require Senators to commit no less than six (6) hours of service to the University or community per year; and

**BE IT FURTHER ENACTED:** That Senators may attend Texas State University organizations as a form of organization outreach up to two times a semester, accounting for a maximum of two hours per semester toward the six-hour total, or a maximum of four hours of Organization Outreach per session; and

**BE IT FURTHER ENACTED:** That any combination of organization outreach and volunteer service can contribute to the six-hour requirement so long as the contribution of organization outreach to the total hours does not exceed four hours; and

**BE IT FURTHER ENACTED:** That a Senator need not complete three (3) hours per semester, provided that the Senator commits a total of six (6) hours in the following semester, or any combination thereof that accumulates to a total of six (6) hours per legislative session; and

**BE IT FURTHER ENACTED:** That the end of the presidential term denotes the deadline to report service hours; and

**BE IT FURTHER ENACTED:** That the Senate Clerk be responsible for recording and keeping track of reported volunteer hours for each respective Senator; and

**BE IT FURTHER ENACTED:** That the burden of proof falls on the Senator and be substantiated by a letterhead either in physical or virtual form containing the date of service, organization for which the service was provided, and a reference who can vouch for completion of the reported volunteer hours; and

**BE IT FURTHER ENACTED:** That service hours for any University organization other than Student Government be acceptable also as service hours for the six-hour requirement, so long as it falls within the same time frame of the legislative session, because this shows previous commitment to the community; and

**BE IT FURTHER ENACTED:** What is deemed as acceptable service to community members or organizations is under the discretion of the President and Vice-President of Student Government; and

**BE IT FURTHER ENACTED:** That the number of required hours can be subject to change through amendment, if future administrations wish to raise or lower the requirement; and

**BE IT FURTHER ENACTED:** That the Student Government Code be amended to add:

**TITLE IX - STATUTES**

**SUBTITLE I- MISCELLANEOUS**

**CHAPTER 119- Bobcat Community Service Act**

**Article I- ADMINISTRATIVE**

**§1 AUTHORIZATION.** This bill is authorized by Article III

Section 10(f) of the Student

Government Constitution.

**§2 PURPOSE.** Texas State University and the surrounding community have a great need for volunteer service, which ranges from large projects to assisting understaffed

organizations with daily tasks. Student Senators, as leaders of the student body, should exemplify good citizenship in providing volunteer service to the community. Therefore, a simple requirement of volunteer service hours to be completed each legislative session will be implemented in order to establish Student Government as a reliable base for volunteer recruitment and community service. In combining the volunteer hours from each Senator, the roughly 120 hours of volunteer work has a large impact on the community and eliminates the need for any single individual to work extensive amounts of time on projects.

### **§3 ORGANIZATION.**

- a) Senators are to complete no less than six volunteer service hours per legislative session, and it is recommended that three hours are completed each semester. These hours should be completed between the first Senate meeting of a new session and the day of inauguration of the following administration.
- b) A maximum of four of the volunteer hours may be fulfilled by organization outreach, and should not exceed two hours per semester.

- c) Organization outreach is defined as a Senator attending the meeting of a club recognized by Texas State University so long as the Senator is not a member of the club.
- d) Senators who are sworn in during the semester may have their total required hours altered with approval from the President or Vice President.
- e) The Senate Clerk will have the responsibility of keeping track of the number of hours for each respective Senator, however it is up to the Senator to provide proof of completed volunteer work in the form of a physical or electronic letterhead statement from the organization or individual for which the work was completed. If it is deemed necessary, the Senate Clerk, Vice President, or President may follow-up with the organizations to verify reported hours.
- f) The President has the final say when considering what volunteer work is acceptable in counting toward the hour requirement.

**BE IT FURTHER ENACTED:** That upon passage this bill be forwarded to the Student Body President for further action.