A Resolution to be entitled “A Resolution for Student Government Senators to become deputized” relating to the deputation of members of Student Government to register people to vote.

WHEREAS: As part of Texas State University’s mission of educating and empowering students, Student Government serves a unique and important role in encouraging students to get involved in the democratic process, with the duty of leading by example to encourage civic engagement; and

WHEREAS: A significant aspect of this is encouraging students to get registered to vote, ensuring that they understand the process, and have access to ample opportunity to become registered if they are not already; and

WHEREAS: In voter registration, Texas ranks 44th out of the 50 states and the District of Columbia, with only 68% of all eligible citizens being registered to vote. This is well below the
national leader, District of Columbia, where 82% of citizens are registered to vote (Texas Civic Health Index 2018); and

WHEREAS: Young people are statistically less likely to register to vote and to turn out in elections. Voter registration among 18-24 year olds in Texas is only 48% in Texas and 55% nationally, compared to between 60% and 78% statewide and 65%-78% nationwide for other age groups (Texas Civic Health Index 2018); and

WHEREAS: Of reasons for not voting in the 2016 election among Texas, problems with registration accounted for 4% of cases; and

WHEREAS: Campus voter registration drives have proven to be an effective way to increase civic participation among college students. On-campus registration helps students overcome the difficulties of having to travel back home or fill out an absentee ballot in order to vote. In 2008, voter registration drives by the nonpartisan Political Engagement Project and the politically aligned Bearcat Democrats at Sam Houston State University yielded a total of 562 students (447 and 115 respectively) registered to vote (PS: Political Science and Politics, Vol. 44, No. 3 (July 2011), pp. 544-551); and

WHEREAS: This, combined with other tactics such as informational brochures and email reminders had a significant impact on voter turnout during the 2008 presidential election. While about 48.5% of young people (aged 18-24) nationwide voted in the 2008 general election, more than three-quarters (about
76%) of the students who registered through the SHSU drives cast a ballot. The high level of turnout among the campus registrants even exceeded the 62% national turnout rate reported for young people with at least some college experience. (PS: Political Science and Politics, Vol. 44, No. 3 (July 2011), pp. 544-551); and

WHEREAS: In past years, Texas State University Student Government members have engaged in outreach efforts to register students. 2018, being a midterm election year, is a particularly important time to ensure that all citizens get engaged and are able to have their voices heard through the democratic process; and

WHEREAS: It is necessary, for the sake of the Texas State University campus, the state of Texas, and the United States of America, that this legislative body reaffirms its commitment to civic engagement; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED: That members of Texas State University’s Student Government who are not already so, become deputized as voter registrars in Hays County; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That with the deadline to register to vote in Texas being October 9th, voter registration should be a top priority for members of Student Government from the present time until the passing of this deadline; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: This legislation be forwarded to Student Body President for further action.