

Introduction

This semester the Governmental Affairs office focused on local and state advocacy, with a concentration on disseminating information to students and the GA. We were able to make great strides in community policing, participate in important discussions in the city, and make headway on election related issues for the fall. We were pleased to make headway on a new initiative to increase student engagement in the state government, which will be able to begin next semester. Soon, we will be in Washington D.C. for Big Ten on the Hill, where we will continue to advocate on behalf of students.

Community Policing/Policing Survey

After the veto of a bill in the fall, we took up the mantle of police/student relations. Involving GA Reps, our first steps was to meet with the MSUPD Chief to discuss potential paths to bettering the relationship between the MSUPD and students. We did extensive research into community policing best-practices, finding one solution to be community input boards. In January we held a Community Policing forum, bringing new ideas to light and gauging support and feedback on a student advisory board to the Police. After thais, we worked with GA Representative Roderick Bullard to write a bill outlining the suggested board, making sure to meet with CORES and COPS groups for final approval and comments on the bill. Prior to the bills passage we reached out again to MSUPD Chief Roudebush, who was happy to help us set up standing times for the board to meet in the coming year. We have reached out to CORES and COPS groups, and are working to have the board meet at least once this semester, and regularly in the fall.

After noting the positive reception the student advisory board received, we met with East Lansing PD Chief Larry Sparkes, who was happy to discuss setting up a similar board for ELPD. With the help of Representative Bullard, we wrote a similar bill and have continued meeting with Chief Sparkes to better student relationships with ELPD.

Finally, over the course of the semester we implemented a Policing survey. We asked students about their experiences with both MSUPD and ELPD, along with a series of other questions to gauge student knowledge of local regulations and policies. We are working with the marketing department to publish these results.

Voter Registration Prep for Fall

As the November city council elections approach we have been brainstorming innovative ways to register students in the fall. With the passage of proposition 18-3, online voter registration require a new approach. To prepare, we met with Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson, who agreed to have early voting locations on campus, and also offered us a seat on her own election student advisory board. We also secured the use of the ASMSU owned iPads for door to door dorm knocking in the fall, and have maintained an active presence on MSUVote, who we will be joining in New Student Orientation voter registration efforts. Finally, we have been working to get a voter registration link added to LiveOn, and hope to see that agreed upon by the end of the semester.

Election Day

Following the passage of a bill in the fall, we have been advocating for the university to make Election Day a university holiday. So far, we have been able to meet with multiple trustees, who have agreed to bring the issue forward at the upcoming Board of Trustees meeting. We are pleased to have the support of at least three, likely five, board members.

We have also worked in conjunction with the city of East Lansing, as they are attempting to make Election Day a city wide holiday. We intend to speak at their upcoming meeting on the issue, and hope to continue advocacy as the new MSU president steps into their role.

Events

As is customary in the spring, we put on the Night of Listening and will soon have the Community Reception. Our state liaison, Megan Kiefer, did a wonderful job getting state

legislators to show up for the event, and we were able to discuss many important student issues, such as college textbook affordability and affirmative consent education. Our community liaison, Darryl Ervin, did great work setting up the annual Community Reception, which will take place April 5th.

Community Relations

This semester we had a multitude of topics relevant to students come up in the East Lansing city council. We have followed these carefully, making sure to inform the GA what is happening, and meeting regularly with city officials to maintain our relationship with the city.

- Marijuana
 - With the legalization of marijuana, the city of East Lansing has begun approving dispensaries around the city, some notably close to campus. Through all of this, our main focus has centered around education. With the dispensaries not set to open this semester, we have been working to gather as much information as possible that we will be able to disseminate to students, particularly those living off campus. For example, smoking in public is prohibited, even for those over 21. Additionally, we are working with the university on a plan to ensure that students understand that marijuana is still prohibited on university property. We have met regularly with the mayor and city council, and our Community Liaison, Darryl, has kept an active presence at the University Student Commission--ensuring that students' voices are part of the discussion at all points of the process.
- Housing
 - This semester we made an effort to increase education on student housing. We met with both the MSU Community Liaison and the East Lansing Housing Administrator to lay the groundwork for a Housing taskforce to address housing issues off campus. We also are working to get a 'know you housing rights' informational campaign set up alongside the fall Housing fair.
- Taxes

- There are two initiatives we have been pursuing in the tax realm. The first deals with the newly passed East Lansing Income tax. We met with DaMar Boyd, the East Lansing tax Income Tax Administrator, and were able to build that relationship, which will be critical when the tax is implemented in the coming year. We established a plan to work with him to educate students about what they will need to do for their taxes, and we hope to establish an informational campaign that will ensure that every student is aware of what documents they will need to fill out. This will become relevant in the late fall. The second tax initiative was brought to us by the mayor. We have written a bill and, if passed, will advocate to the appropriate state legislators to make a change to the tax code that would allow East Lansing to change the local tax code, ensuring that students who make less than \$5,000 dollars and are *not* dependents, will be able to receive the same tax exemption as those students who make less than \$5,000 and *are* dependents.
- E-Scooters
 - A final point of interest has been the electric scooters. We have followed closely the e-scooters, making sure to inform the GA of what is happening in the city, and what ordinances are passed. We also were purposeful about meeting regularly with city officials such as the mayor and the city manager to ensure that students were an active part of the discussion centered around scooter use.

State Relations

Besides continued, direct advocacy on bills passed from our state liaison, Megan, we have begun work on a new initiative. Our Emerging Leader, Maddie Clear, worked on a new program that would increase student involvement and access to our state capitol. After administering an incredibly successful interest survey, she was able to propose a few suggestions that we can hit the ground running with in the fall. The first is a Day at the Capitol, something many other Big Ten schools do. This would involve a tour of the capitol, meetings with legislators, and other

advocacy. Due to tours filling quickly we were unable to reserve one within the semester. She also laid plans for a rides or tours of the capitol program where we would offer monthly tours of the capitol, and meetings with legislators, to students.

Census

With the census just a year away, we have been asked to participate in census preparation from both the city and the university. We have sat in on meetings discussing how the census count will happen, and have gathered information to disperse to students in the fall and spring of next year. It's critical that there is an accurate count, and we are working to let students know important information and to keep students involved in these census discussions.