



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY STUDENT GOVERNMENT

The 19th Undergraduate Senate

Resolution 20-004

A Resolution to Enhance Security, Accessibility, and Equity for School of Education Students in the Spring Valley Building (The Spring Valley Building Enhancement Act)

November 07, 2024

Sponsor

Senator Paige ABBOTT, *for the School of Education*
Senator Asher HEISTEN *for the Campus At-Large*
Senator Kaden OUIOMET *for the Campus At-Large*
Senator Kasey BERNAT *for the Campus At-Large*

Co-Sponsor(s)

Whereas, American University has pledged to ensure the safety of its students,

Whereas, The School of Education is located entirely within the Spring Valley Building.

Whereas, The School of Education is the smallest school on campus by far and as such often runs the risk of being overlooked or not prioritized, with its physical location playing a factor in this dynamic.

Whereas, Other departments host many classes in the Spring Valley Building, driving hundreds of students to use the SVB each week.

Whereas, The Spring Valley Building provides not only available classrooms, but study and social gathering spaces that are often underutilized as a function of relative inaccessibility from main campus.

Whereas, There are multiple roadblocks to ensuring the safety and well-being of students in the Spring Valley Building and students that attend the School of Education.

Whereas, The walking route to Spring Valley is not accessible and for many, difficult or impossible to traverse.

Whereas, It is the direct responsibility of the university administration to ensure that students are in a healthy and effective learning environment.



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Whereas, These roadblocks to creating a healthy and safe learning environment have negatively affected the Spring Valley Building and School of Education Students' abilities to learn.

1. SVB Transportation

Whereas, The Spring Valley Building (SVB) hosts a variety of undergraduate and graduate classes, including the School of Education course load in entirety but also various courses across other schools.

Whereas, SVB is over half a mile from American University's main campus.

Whereas, American University provides the Red Route on a cycle between SVB and Tenleytown.

Whereas, The American University [shuttle services website](#) describes two shuttle services that offer ACCESS to the Spring Valley Building for student accessibility: the Red Route, running on a cycle between SVB and Tenleytown, and the Green Route, running on a [schedule](#) from Anderson Hall to Katzen to SVB and back before every class period.

Whereas, The Green Route has been demonstrated to only run consistently on times with demonstrated repeated use, as opposed to regularly per the schedule posted online.

Whereas, The Green Route regularly does not follow the location guidelines set by the website—wherefore the Green Route bus typically runs through Lydecker Tunnel rather than exiting at Fletcher Gate, rendering the bus unable to meet the listed Katzen stop.

Whereas, The Green Route regularly does not wait for pickup at the SVB stop, such that it departs before the scheduled time and students wishing to ride the bus back to South Campus— including those with successive classes on the south side of campus, often seen as a deterrent from taking classes in SVB— are unable to do so.

Whereas, The walk from the South Campus bus stop to Spring Valley takes longer than 13 minutes, such that if the Green Route fails to run, any student hoping to take the bus would inherently be late to class, indicating that an unreliable bus system poses a risk to student academic success that may lead to a hesitance to utilize the resource.

Whereas, The Green Route tracker is rarely operational on the TransLoc app widely used by students to plan commute times, further decreasing students' awareness of and likelihood to utilize the resource.

Whereas, The vehicle used for the Green Route is inconsistent in presentation, ranging from the Shuttle Services shuttle bus to a minibus to a minivan, likely contributing to perceptions of the Route as



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unreliable or inconsistent; American University has demonstrated availability of and willingness to use more accessible options including on October 7th during a vigil.

Whereas, The Red Route has been demonstrated to overfill after more populated class periods, such that Shuttle Services has recently offered additional services during these times, but concurrently altering student perceptions of the accessibility of the Red Route which will take time and efforts to repair.

Whereas, Student sentiment expressing frustration with shuttle services on campus often revolves around unpredictability and timeliness, indicating that a service like the Green Route that runs on a set schedule would be preferable to the student body and is worth investing improvement efforts into; likewise, students would benefit from a posted schedule for the Red Route.

Whereas, Students are unlikely to use a resource that (1) they do not know about, (2) has a reputation of being unreliable, and (3) has been at times unreliable.

Whereas, In a meeting on November 6, 2024, Shuttle Operations and Maintenance Manager Alef Worku communicated his eagerness to increase ridership and transparency in operations by working with AUSG.

Therefore be it resolved, The American University Student Government calls upon the Transportation Office and all relevant administrators to continue efforts to reinstate the Green Route to full operation per the schedule and route outlined on the shuttle services website.

Therefore be it further resolved, The American University Student Government calls upon the Transportation Office and all relevant administrators to collaborate with AUSG on fact-finding and advertising efforts to increase salience of, and perceived reliability of, the Green Route and Red Route.

Therefore be it resolved, The American University Student Government calls upon the Transportation Office to abide by [Resolution 19-021](#) in these reforms, with specific attention and implementation of the demands made in Article V: Physical Accessibility, Section iv. Reopening of the Green Line to the Spring Valley Building, with this specific section from Resolution 19-021 shown below...

1. Section iv. Reopening of the Green Line to the Spring Valley Building

- a. Due to the difficulty of many students with mobility related disabilities in reaching the School of Education Building, the university should make every effort, with no exception, to make the journey to the SOE building as accessible as possible, including but not limited to...
 - i. Making the pathway to Spring Valley as accessible as possible, as in compliance with [Section iii of this article](#)
 - ii. Reopening the Green Line to reliably run at the hours as listed on the American University shuttles website.



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2. Food Security

Whereas, Food security is a necessity for students to participate in a productive learning environment.

Whereas, It is the responsibility of the University to provide their students with sustainable options for meals.

Whereas, American University has struggled with providing students with reliable access to food sources on campus, including issues such as:

1. Not providing 24/7 food access on campus for those with a meal plan
2. The removal of District Pickle, leaving students who eat Kosher without an option
3. Lack of access to allergen or other dietary options

Whereas, Prior to 2023, the Spring Valley Building provided a Spring Valley Cafe, which distributed meals to students, faculty, and staff members who spent their days there.

Whereas, The Spring Valley Cafe was removed in early 2023 because of low customer counts and an alternative options being provided in the form of a “Well Found Foods” vending machine that provided healthy grab-and-go meals.

Whereas, The “Well Found Foods” alternative option vending machine is no longer provided in the Spring Valley Building per an email sent to Comptroller Cottone from Mike Scher: “the sales were very low, and the vendors had to pull the machines out because too much product went unsold”.

Whereas, The Spring Valley Building Cafe was removed so that alternative options could be provided. These alternative options were also removed.

Whereas, Following the closing of the Spring Valley Building Cafe, the removal of the “Well Found Foods” vending machine, and only providing unhealthy options within vending machines, students are left with no options for healthy nutrition throughout their school day.

Whereas, These unhealthy options do not come anywhere near being able to provide the recommended nutritional guidelines that college students should consume.¹

Whereas, The nearest option for meal exchanges to the Spring Valley Building is on the American University main campus, over a half-mile away.

¹ <https://health.gov/sites/default/files/2019-09/Appendix-E3-1-Table-A4.pdf>



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Whereas, In Resolution 19-005 the American University Student Government recognized food insecurity as a problem on this campus.

Whereas, In Resolution 19-005 AUSG gives American University options for how to reduce food insecurity on our campus. We reaffirm the calls in that resolution.

Whereas, The Spring Valley Building retains the infrastructure of the Spring Valley Cafe. The kitchen is now used by AU Catering.

Whereas, Several locations around the Spring Valley Building take EagleBucks, including CVS, Pizza Paradiso, Starbucks, and Wagshals.

Therefore be it resolved, AUSG calls for the university to reinstate the Spring Valley Cafe or (alternatively) reopen the “Well Found Foods” vending machine in the Spring Valley Building or (alternatively) work with members of the Student Government to find an option that provides meals for students.

Therefore be it resolved, AUSG calls upon all relevant offices and administrators to commit to ensuring that there are ***always*** accessible, reliable, and healthy food options for students in the Spring Valley Building.

Therefore be it resolved, The Administration should continuously work with the School of Education Undergraduate Council and Senator for the School of Education to promote these options.

Therefore be it resolved, The Office of Finance should always be as transparent as reasonably possible with the School of Education students as to their reasons for making financial decisions concerning their food options.

3. Spring Valley Building Security

Whereas, Student safety has both been demonstrated and stated as a primary concern of top-level AU Administration.

Whereas, Over the summer, the AU Administration made reasonable decisions to increase the safety of the Spring Valley Building, including adding AUID tap functions and closing the building after normal operating hours.

Whereas, The previous clause demonstrates the administration's willingness to work on ensuring the safety of its students in the Spring Valley Building.



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Whereas, American University prides itself on the 90-second response time for AUPD officers to Blue Light Alerts.

Whereas, Many students travel and live on the half-mile stretch along Massachusetts Avenue, and it is the responsibility of the administration to assist in ensuring those students' safety.

Whereas, There are no Blue Lights along Massachusetts Avenue between main campus and the Spring Valley Building.

Whereas, American University is classified as a semi-closed campus however, the pathway between the Spring Valley Building and main campus does not fall under that designation, meaning that AU has no guarantees or oversight as to who might be there.

Whereas, This puts students in potential danger during their journey.

Therefore, be it resolved that, AUSG encourages AUPD and any relevant administrators to implement Blue Lights along Massachusetts Avenue to the Spring Valley Building.

Therefore, be it resolved that, AUSG encourages the administration to implement these reforms in accordance with [Resolution 19-021](#) to ensure complete accessibility for all students going to Spring Valley.

Therefore be it further resolved, AUSG believes that AUPD and administration should work with the members of the School of Education Undergraduate Council, as well as the sponsors of this resolution and E-Board of AUSG on their implementation.

VOTE RECEIPT:

Enacted with a voice vote on this xx day of xxx, 20xx.

Julia Comino
AUSG Vice President

ATTESTING:

Max Morse-deBrier



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Acting Clerk
