



115th STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSEMBLY
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

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Executive Summary

Amending the Code of Rules and Procedures to Enact Part 1 of the SG Transparency Act of 2021

This bill aims to reinforce current rules regarding executive stipends and tuition. The code already states that a monthly stipend report must be filled out in order to receive their monthly stipend and this bill would make that report public. It would be made public in order to create transparency with the student body and Student Government. This bill also recommends that tuition reimbursements for the Student Body President and Vice President only be given if, when in combination with other scholarships, the total does not go over the cost of tuition. This bill does not intend to take any tuition or stipends away but instead to make sure that the Student Government is completely transparent with how money is being spent. If the SG Transparency Act of 2021 passes it is our greatest intention to accomplish the two following things:

1. Work on implementing a student government scholarship fund with the money that is not awarded to the President and Vice President upon denial of the funds. This scholarship would be available by application to any member of SG. We believe that this scholarship would allow for all student government positions to be more accessible.
2. Work on finding appropriate changes to stipend allotments to the executive board, while also recognizing that the executive board works strenuously to accomplish tasks each month.

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. Is this a current problem?
 - a. It is not the intention of this bill to expose or elicit current situations where this may be happening. This bill is merely designed to be proactive and encourage appropriate use of Student Government funds in the future.
2. Why is this an important initiative for the Assembly?
 - a. Each year, the Code of Rules and Procedures grants the budgetary approval authority to the Assembly. This power allows representatives to take an active role in ensuring transparency and accountability for financial means in Student Government. This Bill is yet another tool that representatives can apply to continue transparency throughout administrations. This bill is not aimed to make the appropriation process

more difficult. In fact, it is more aimed to make the approval process easier as accountability is easier to track.

3. What if the overage money that is meant for tuition (not stipend money) is needed for extenuating circumstances (e.g. medical bills, rent, family issues)?
 - a. The goal of Student Government should never be to punish or discourage students from receiving aid in extenuating circumstances. If money is needed for extenuating circumstances, nothing in this bill stops administrations from using tuition money, but it merely discourages it. The money granted for tuition should be used only for tuition because that is what the Assembly has approved the use of that money for.
4. How do you prove “financial need” in a written letter?
 - a. Financial need is very easily proven in this bill. Simply, there is no need to provide confidential financial information to prove financial need. What this bill would do is simply mandate that the Student Body President and Vice President send a written letter to the FAC Chair asking for their tuition money. This letter can be as simple as: “Hi, I would like to request the full \$5,200 for tuition reimbursement for this semester.” In cases where full tuition is not needed the letter could be as simple as: “Hi, I would like to only request \$1,500 for tuition reimbursement based on other financial circumstances for this semester.” It is never the goal to make the money appropriation process more difficult, and this letter is only allowing for more transparency and accountability.
5. Would this bill affect people who are out-of-state or who take loans out differently?
 - a. No.
6. What types of things should be included in a stipend report? What shouldn’t be included?
 - a. The stipend report should include a list of meetings attended in the month and what the meetings were about as well as a list of tasks they completed towards their initiatives and events.
 - b. The stipend report should not include dates, times, and locations of meetings. Nor should it require any sort of “clocking in” or “clocking out.”
7. Do you foresee this drastically changing the way that funds are released or used for the Executive Board?
 - a. No. This bill reinforces the already codified rule that Stipend Reports must be filled out monthly in order to receive a stipend. In terms of tuition reimbursement, this bill recommends that the Student Body President and Vice President use their funds to best promote transparency and the best interests of the student body.

A.B. 08

Amending the Code of Rules and Procedures to Enact Part 1 of the SG Transparency Act of 2021

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BE IT ENACTED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN STUDENT GOVERNMENT:

SEC 1: Amend Title 2, Article 4, Chapter 1, Sec. 2.2 in The Code of Rules and Procedures as follows:

Sec. 2.2 **Student Body President Stipend.** The Student Body President is eligible to receive an annual stipend not to exceed six thousand eight hundred forty dollars (\$6,840.00) or five hundred seventy dollars (\$570.00) a month and a payment of tuition and fees not to exceed five thousand two hundred dollars (\$5,200) **if the monthly stipend report is filled out in a timely and appropriate manner.**

SEC 2: Add Title 2, Article 4, Chapter 1, Sec. 2.3 in The Code of Rules and Procedures as follows:

Sec. 2.3 **Student Body Vice-President Stipend.** The Student Body Vice-President is eligible to receive an annual stipend not to exceed six thousand eight hundred forty dollars (\$6,840.00) or five hundred seventy dollars (\$570.00) a month and a payment of tuition and fees not to exceed five thousand two hundred dollars (\$5,200) **if the monthly stipend report**

is filled out in a timely and appropriate manner.

SEC 3: Add Title 2, Article 4, Chapter 1, Sec. 2.4 in The Code of Rules and Procedures as follows:

Sec. 2.4 **Executive Board Stipends.** Each member of the Executive Board is eligible to receive an annual stipend not to exceed one-half (1/2) of Presidents **if the monthly stipend report is filled out in a timely and appropriate manner.**

SEC 4: Add Title 2, Article 4, Chapter 1, Sec. 2.7 in The Code of Rules and Procedures as follows:

Sec. 2.7 **Stipend Approvals and Reports.** Any officer wishing to receive a stipend must submit an agreement (See Appendix) to the Financial Affairs Committee prior to the issuance of any stipend (for the term lasting from May through February) by a deadline set by the Financial Affairs Committee Chair.

- a. Upon completed review of the agreement by the Financial Affairs Committee, stipends shall be incorporated into the operating budget according to the budgetary process.
- b. If the Financial Affairs Committee finds an applicant to be undeserving of the stipend due to false documentation and/or failure to fulfill duties, as prescribed in the UTSG governing documents, then the Financial Affairs Committee may recommend the Assembly to issue a probationary warning to the specific officer receiving a stipend. **If an applicant has the sufficient financial means to not necessitate a tuition payment, then the Financial Affairs Committee Chair may recommend, based on feedback from the written letter (or lack thereof), that the Assembly revoke, remove, or reduce the amount granted to their tuition payments through the budget.** If the Financial Affairs committee finds an officer undeserving of the stipend due to false documentation and/or failure to fulfill the duties as prescribed in the UTSG governing documents a second time, then the Assembly suspends the stipend via a motion requiring super favorable majority of the Assembly.
- c. Throughout the issuance of the stipend, proof of the fulfillment of duties as prescribed by the governing documents for the office in question shall be made available to the Financial Affairs Committee for review each month via a stipend report.
- d. Stipends allocated to officers shall be reviewed once a month by the Financial Affairs Committee in the form of a stipend report through Hornslink. Stipend reports are to be submitted to the Financial Affairs Committee Chair by a deadline set a month in advance by the Financial Affairs Committee Chair. **Stipend reports shall be made public and posted on the SG Google Drive by the Financial Affairs Committee Chair.** Failure to submit a stipend report by the determined deadline without prior approval will result in no stipend being issued for that month. Approval shall be defined as acknowledgment of the late submission via email to the Financial Affairs Committee Chair. The Stipend Report form shall ask for officers to report meetings they attend and tasks they complete for their initiatives and events.
- e. Within one business day after review of the stipend reports by the Financial Affairs

Committee, the Financial Affairs Committee Chair shall send the reports to the Senior Administrative Associate from the Office of the Dean of Students to keep on file.

- f. Financial need for tuition checks can be demonstrated by a written letter to the Financial Affairs Committee Chair at the start of each semester. This letter shall remain as private communication, and should not be posted publicly.
 - i. If the SG tuition reimbursement, in combination with the Student Body President or Vice President's other scholarships from the University, exceeds their total cost of tuition, they shall be recommended to decline the overage from the SG tuition reimbursement.

SEC 5: This bill shall be sent to the Dean of Students, the Deputy Advisory to the Dean of Students and the Vice President of Student Affairs. This bill shall take immediate effect until and unless one or more of those entities objects.

SEC 6: The Assembly Clerk shall update the Code of Rules and Procedures and provide an electronic copy to the Communications Director, who shall update the SG website accordingly.