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UCSA Meets at UCLA to Consider Voter Registration, Mental Health, Legislation

LOS ANGELES, CA - The UC Student Association Board of Directors met on the UCLA campus March 5-6. The Board passed several resolutions addressing statewide student concerns, including a call for UC-wide adoption of an at least \$15 living wage that applies to students working less than 20 hours per week, support for the establishment of a cross-cultural safe space hub at UC Merced, insourcing of UC workers and the end of UC's use of contracted labor, condemnation of recent "coordinated monitoring" data privacy violations by the UC, and support for automatic student voter registration. All resolutions passed by the UC Student Association are available at www.ucsa.org/activities/resolutions/.

The Board adopted support for legislation, most pressingly AB 2017 (McCarty). UCSA's Government Relations Chair **Adam Robak** commented on the legislation: "Throughout our evaluations of student mental health services, the UC Student Association has realized with urgent clarity that we are failing to care for California's college students. AB 2017 is exactly the first step we need to fund the services students need to not fall through the cracks." Undergraduate Chair **Mohsin Mirza** further contributed: "We are tired of long wait times, limited access to space and resources, and counselors who do not understand the diversity of our needs. We must not only endure, but thrive in our time at the UC."

UCSA also discussed basic needs security through UC's guarantee of affordable housing and sustainable food options for students. "Last week, CSU published a study about housing and food with the results showing 24% of students are hungry and 12% experience housing insecurity. UC should study and release the same data. It is the responsibility of our university leaders to care for students' basic needs." said **Kevin Sabo**, UC Student Association President and spokesperson.

Paul Monge-Rodriguez and Cindy Dinh, UC Berkeley Law students, presented an initiative that will be moving through the state legislature to authorize automatic registration of student voters based on their academic registration information. The Board strategized on how to best bolster this legislation by urging the UC to support its passage and voluntarily implement the initiative as soon as possible. As one student said with parody, "this is probably the best opportunity we've ever had to make America great again" (Ralph Washington Jr, UC Davis Graduate Student Association President).

Kevin Sabo discussed the initiative, "While language for the legislation has not yet been released, the potential to enfranchise students across California is exciting. Building student voter registration will do justice to the 14.5% of constituents who are aged 18-24 and deserve the meaningful attention of those who run for office to represent us."

UCSA also discussed a draft budget and values for future expenditures of student fees collected for collective student advocacy. Finally, the organization announced the hiring of a new Executive Director, Peter Wright. Previously Wright served as a Policy and Programs Officer for the California School Boards Association and is an Adjunct Professor at the University of San Francisco's School of Management. He also brings experience from five years at the California Community Colleges.

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