



Student Government Association

Sam Houston State University

A Member of the Texas State University System

★ Box 2476 ★ Huntsville, Texas 77340 ★

936-294-1938 ★ SGA@shsu.edu



S23-7

Reversal of Graduation Stage Decision

Author: Dylan Jircik

Sponsor: Joseph Chavez

Date: May 8, 2023

- Whereas:* The Sam Houston State University Student Government Association acts as the “Official Voice of the Student Body”; and,
- Whereas:* The students of Sam Houston State University (SHSU) express their concerns and discontent regarding the decision to eliminate the graduation stage for the upcoming commencement ceremony; and,
- Whereas:* We believe this decision undermines the significance of our accomplishments and diminishes the experiences of all graduating students, particularly first-generation college graduates and 2020 Coronavirus high school graduates; and,
- Whereas:* The university's justification for removing the stage, citing accessibility and safety concerns, fails to acknowledge the potential fallacies in their reasoning; including the fact that a local high school is still utilizing the stage at our university for their graduation ceremony; and,
- Whereas:* We firmly believe that the importance of the graduation stage goes beyond mere logistics and directly impacts the emotional and symbolic value of the ceremony; and,
- Whereas:* The online petition expressing our dissatisfaction with this decision has garnered over 23,000 signatures, demonstrating the widespread support for the restoration of the graduation stage; and,
- Be It Resolved:* We, the students of SHSU, demand the immediate reversal of the decision to eliminate the graduation stage for the upcoming commencement ceremony; and,
- Be It Further Resolved* We urge the university administration to reconsider its stance and acknowledge the importance of the graduation stage in recognizing the achievements of the graduating students; and,
- Be It Further Resolved* We believe that the university's assertion that moving the stage to the floor will not hinder the audience's view of the graduates is flawed. A stage provides a raised platform that allows for better visibility and ensures that each student is properly seen and celebrated.; and,
- Be It Further Resolved* We challenge the notion that the removal of the stage is necessary for accessibility and safety purposes. For with adequate planning and accommodations, it is entirely possible to maintain accessibility while preserving the dignity and significance of the ceremony; and,

Be It Further Resolved

We emphasize that the significance of the graduation stage extends beyond practical concerns. It represents a tangible symbol of our hard work, perseverance, and success, and its absence diminishes the value of our achievements; and,

Be It Further Resolved

We urge the university administration to engage in open dialogue with student representatives to find a suitable compromise that upholds both accessibility and the emotional significance of the graduation stage; and,

Be It Further Resolved

We remain hopeful that the university administration will heed our collective voices, prioritize the concerns of the student body, and restore the graduation stage for the upcoming commencement ceremony; and,

Be It Further Resolved

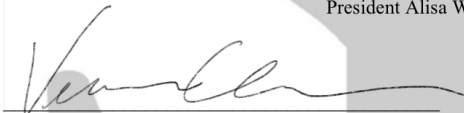
We propose that university administration implements a solution where all graduates who are willing to assume the risks sign a waiver, allowing them the privilege to walk across the stage to receive their diploma.

Be It Further Resolved

We suggest an increase to the current fine regarding any disturbances or excessive celebration that occur on the commencement stage.

Be It Finally Resolved:

This legislation will be sent to The Commencement Committee, The Houstonian, and Channel 7 News. Copies of this legislation will be sent to Dean of Students Chelsea Smith, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs Drew Miller, the President's Office, University President Alisa White, and Student Body President Veronica Calderon.



Student Body President

Calderon, Veronica



Secretary

Cheng, Piper