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Committee: Student Life

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Support in the Relocation of the New VSO Office

Whereas, the University of Houston has a student veteran population of more than 1,600 in addition to its veteran alumni, faculty, and staff employees; and

Whereas, the Veterans Service Office (VSO) should serve as an inclusive and welcome sanctuary for veterans at the University of Houston where it houses the resources that provide vital assistance to its student veterans; and

Whereas, the Veterans Service Office in the new University Center should be designed with the veteran student in mind utilizing features such as direct access from the outside that allows veterans to bypass large crowds, a sound-dampened study lounge, a computer lab, and private break room; and

Whereas, of the two million sent to fight in Iraq and Afghanistan, studies suggest that 30 percent or more return home with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). This reflects a potential for a significant number of University of Houston students diagnosed with these disorders; and

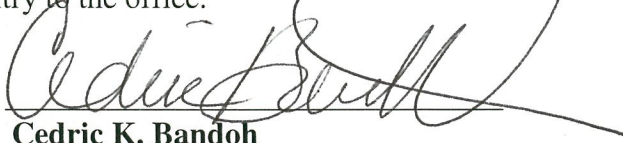
Whereas, symptoms of PTSD and TBI such as hyper-arousal, jumpiness, flashbacks, and more can be triggered by an environment such as proposed for the VSO with a window-less, bunker-like office that is adjacent to the expected high traffic areas of the bowling alley, food court, coffee shop, and bookstore.

THEREFORE BE IT ENACTED by the 50th Senate of the Student Government Association of the University of Houston:

That this representative body ardently supports the Veterans Service Office be relocated to a location that is designed to meet the complex needs of veterans students and one that will continue to facilitate providing the resources available to them. This location should possess characteristics that are conducive to a mental-health friendly environment, by providing windows, quiet lounge spaces, and direct outside entry to the office.



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Cedric K. Bandoh
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