

# UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

## STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

### President Cameron Barrett (SGA) to Chancellor Khator: Summary and Analysis of the Proposed Fee-Cap Increase

#### Summary:

On September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018, the Student Government Association Senate passed, with a vote of 24-0-2 (two abstentions), and the President signed, a University Bill to enact student service fee maximum of \$300 each Fall, Spring, and Summer. This was a total increase of \$30 to the fee maximum, up from \$270.

#### Purpose:

Currently, the student service fee stands at \$260, at most, depending on the number of credit hours a student is enrolled and the individual need of the student. This means there is only, potentially, \$10 to increase the fee further to fund the outstanding student life and services of the University of Houston. The student service fee funds many campus services and organizations. Traditions like Frontier Fiesta to need-based services like those offered by the Urban Experience Program are funded by this fee.

Due to being so close to the cap, certain discussions are not possible. Things like the implementation of a fee going towards the Transit Service or expanding the Student Center North are purely theoretical, should these proposals be funded through the student service fee versus a dedicated fee. The 55<sup>th</sup> Student Government Association believes, during this time of expansion in both status and enrollment of the University of Houston, the fee-cap must increase to ensure a constant and expansive student life and student services.

The Students Unite Party, which captured around two-thirds of the Senate seats and the Student Government Presidency, ran on a narrative of expanding financial aid and services towards students. It is the same Senate and President which pushed to increase the fee-cap. The governing structure of student fees in the State of Texas does not allow fees charges to students to increase without substantial merit. I and the Senate of the Student Government believe an increase in the fee cap is necessary to ensure discussions on expanding fee-funded departments, organizations, and services are possible. The sensitivity of students to fee increases is warranted, but the rigorous, transparent, and in-touch, process the University of Houston has developed will ensure merit in any fee increase.

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**Label: UB-55011**

**Date introduced: August 22nd, 2018**

**Author(s): Pres. Barrett**

**Sponsor(s): Chair Bryan, Fmr. Chair Aguilar, Sen. Vicklund, Chief Harricharran,  
Legislative Chief of Staff Do**

**Committee: Administration and Finance**

**Draft: Final**

**Review and Action on the Student Service Fee Cap**

**Whereas, the University of Houston, currently, charges a Student Service Fee to students in proportion to the number of semester credit hours for which a student registers;**

**Whereas, the Student Service Fee is currently capped at \$270 per semester;**

**Whereas, the Student Service Fee currently stands at \$260 per semester for students registered in six or more semester credit hours;**

**Whereas, student fees are a vital part of student life on campus;**

**Whereas, student fees promote currently, and further, a vibrant student experience at the University of Houston;**

**Whereas, immediately after approval by a majority vote of the student government senate, delivery from the speaker, and a signature from the Student Government President, this proposal must seek final approval from the President of the University of Houston, Dr. Renu Khator;**

**Whereas, the Texas Education Code Section 54.5061 currently states: "If, in an academic year, the total compulsory fees charged under this section are more than 10 percent higher than the previous year's compulsory fees, the increase is not effective unless approved by a majority vote of the students voting in an election called for that purpose or by a majority vote of the duly elected student government."**

**Therefore, be it enacted by the Senate of the Student Government Association of the University of Houston:**

That the Student Service Fee cap be increased to \$300, with the same requirements established under Section 54.5061 of the Texas Education Code;

Be it further enacted, that the Student Government seeks final approval for this \$300 Student Service Fee cap from the University of Houston President.

Cameron Barrett

Cameron Barrett  
Student Government President

Date of President's Approval: 9/5/18

APPROVED

Andrew Trinh

Andrew Trinh  
Speaker of Senate

Date of Senate Approval: 9/5/18

