

DASB Senate supports De Anza/Foothill bus line, meeting ends with FB 'drama'

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The De Anza Senate unanimously approved a resolution endorsing a proposal to create a direct Valley Transit Authority bus line between the Foothill and De Anza college campuses, and discussed resolutions passed by the Foothill-De Anza Board of Trustees about undocumented students and other minority groups.

The meeting abruptly ended after devolving into discussion over the senate's Facebook group message, in which senate President Matthew Zarate presented prepared screenshots of a private conversation between him and Vice President Stephanie Rigsby.

It currently takes about 90 minutes to travel from De Anza to Foothill, while the proposed bus line would cut it to around 30 minutes, and was endorsed by the Foothill Student Body Senate last week.

"I know I [as a student who was lacking a reliable means of transportation] really wanted to take a lot of classes at Foothill because our two sister schools are designed to complement each other," Senator Dara Streit said.

Student Trustee Elias Kamal said the next steps for the proposal are to receive further endorsements from the Board of Trustees and have students petition the VTA at their open community meetings. Kamal offered to drive students to the meetings if they needed it.

Kamal also presented two resolutions from the previous Board of Trustees meetings about undocumented students and other marginalized groups.

The first, Resolution 2016-43, aligned with UCs and CSUs by expressing support for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), even if the Trump administration were to end the program.

The second resolution, 2016-44, affirmed the privacy of student records, and explicitly stated that the college would not cooperate with any federal authorities asking for information about students belonging to marginalized groups.

> SEE: SENATE, P.3

> FROM: SENATE, P.1

“If any of us want to do one last thing that’s good for this community, it’s to get people to run for the Senate,” said Kamal. “We need to focus on [recruiting] these people who need the most help.”

Senator Carlos Malfitano raised concerns about the senate’s private Facebook group chats and emails.

“It’s regarding professionalism and the chat that we all share, and also the emails,” Malfitano said. “I don’t think it was OK to go back and forth between all the other people ... I just don’t think it was OK for all of that drama to be going on and for Matthew (Zarate) to be removed from the group chat when he’s not the one who started the argument. Not saying he’s right or wrong, but I just don’t think that was okay.”

Zarate said, “Technically we’re not [allowed to have a group chat] because it goes against the Brown act, because there’s the possibility of us making illegal decisions without having public [scrutiny], so that’s been going on for the past year.”

California’s Brown Act restricts publicly elected officials from holding meetings or discussions in private to ensure they receive full public scrutiny.

Zarate also stated he would be willing to provide full copies of his correspondence with Rigsby to anyone who asked in the interests of transparency.

Rigsby stated that she did not provide her consent for her private conversations to be published.

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