RESOLUTION SC19-06

TO: Members of the General Assembly

FROM: Eusebio Omar van Reenen, President Student Association SUNY Oswego; Edward Kelly, Vice President Student Association SUNY Oswego

DATE: April 5th, 2019

SUBJECT: The Social Justice Act: Implementation of Body Cameras for Campus University Police

Action Requested

The Student Assembly of the State Universities of New York request that SUNY direct all campus University Police Departments to implement the use of body cameras to deter violent confrontations, ensure adequate and fair reporting, and prevent the disproportionate policing of students of color.

Resolution

Whereas, the State University of New York’s (SUNY) diversity vision statements calls for our campuses to “establish the university as a national leader in preparing its students for success in a culturally and racially diverse society”¹; and,

Whereas, students of color collectively make up 33.76% of SUNY’s enrollment demographics and that of full-time students²; and,

Whereas, students of color have encountered an increase in “unwarranted police scrutiny” and policing, furthermore shown by an increase of police calls on people of color at predominantly white institutions in which the New York Times states that it “reminds us of the ongoing legacy of racism and bias

in which people of color are targeted while simply going about the business of their daily lives"; and,

**Whereas**, these encounters and disproportionate policing of people of color is a powerful reminder that institutions of higher learning need to not only recognize these increasingly diverse communities as a population, but need to work towards integrating resources towards assuring that diverse student groups feel included and welcomed on their campuses; and,

**Whereas**, SUNY Oswego has taken measures to address the inclusivity of students of color, not only on campus but off-campus as well, including the disproportionate policing of events hosted by students of color as it became the seventh SUNY campus to implement the use of body cameras during policing; and,

**Whereas**, measures that transpired include the directive of fitting University Police (UP) with body cameras to “document traffic stops and other encounters as a deterrent to potential conflicts at the point of contact or in court" which will diffuse situations on the civilian side and allow officers to use less force when necessary; and,

**Whereas**, not only will the use of body cameras ensure the regulation of policing of all students, but “recorded encounters will be uploaded daily and stored for up to two months, or longer if something is flagged as a significant incident.. It protects both the community and our department as far as what really happened benefitting any appeals students would like to place in their belief of no wrongdoing; therefore be it,

**Resolved**, SUNY Student Assembly recognize the urgent need for body cameras to be used across our SUNY UP Departments and by officers policing SUNY campuses; and be it further,

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Resolved, the SUNY University Police Departments work with the SUNY System’s Legal Counsel to provide guidelines and direction in their pursuit of adopting policies for the use of body worn cameras; and be it further,

Resolved, that SUNY SA urges the Board of Trustees, University Police Department and the applicable SUNY administrators across our 64 campuses work in collaboration and with that of their respective District Attorney offices to secure funding for the implementation of body cameras; and be it finally

Resolved, that the Student Assembly of the State University of New York will forward copies of this resolution to the SUNY Board of Trustees, SUNY Chancellor Johnson, University Faculty Senate, Faculty Council of Community Colleges, SUNY Campus Presidents, SUNY University Police Departments and Governor Andrew M Cuomo.