



RUSA Assembly Agenda September 17th, 2020

7:30 @ [Zoom](#) (password: rusa)

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Agenda and agree to record
3. Officer Updates
 - a.
4. Legislation
 - a. Bill to Approve the Referendum for 2020 RUSA Constitution
 - b. Bill to Approve the Referendum to Put Forth Three Student Voting Positions on the Board of Governors
 - c. Guaranteeing Responsible and Environmentally Efficient Norms Act (G.R.E.E.N. Act)
5. Public Sector
6. Adjournment



RUSA Bill F20- 01

Authors: Jason Yu, *Internal Affairs Secretary* ; Grace Daniel, *Internal Affairs Chair*; Sean Tonra, *Douglass At-Large Representative*; Bilal Yousuf Ahmed, *Parliamentarian*

Sponsor: Internal Affairs Committee

Bill to Approve the Referendum for 2020 RUSA Constitution

Whereas, the current RUSA Constitution has only been amended three times since the creation of RUSA at 2007,

Whereas, the current RUSA Constitution was created to accommodate the merger of Rutgers Colleges after 2006 and fails to recognize the realities of Rutgers at 2020,

Whereas, campuses represent over 61% of the theoretical composition of RUSA while academic schools only represents 27% of composition, ¹

Whereas, the President of RUSA has no veto power to check the Assembly nor does the position have the proper authority to execute the demands of the Assembly and the student body, ²

Whereas, since Rutgers College Governing Association³, the Parliamentarian has had almost total authority over the Judicial System and Governing Document reviews,

Whereas, there is room to improve on the current model for student fees, particularly in its treatment and management by different professional school governments as the current Constitution Article 6.04 dictates 20% of these student fees must go to these governments.

¹ [Current + Proposed Composition of RUSA](#)

² [Fall 2020- Constitutional Ad-Hoc Final Report](#)

³ [RCGA Constitution of 2002](#)

Therefore, be it resolved by two-thirds of the Assembly that a student referendum shall be held during the Fall 2020 elections in accordance with all applicable procedures under the Constitution and the Standing Rules, where —

1. The Assembly hereby approves of the following question being posed to the undergraduate student body during the Fall 2020 elections: “Shall RUSA’s Constitution be completely amended to the proposed Constitution instead of the current constitution? ”
2. Each eligible voter shall be able to answer “YES” or “NO” to the above stated question, or they may not vote for the question.
3. The following explanatory text shall be placed on each ballot stating: “Since 2010, the Rutgers University Student Assembly has maintained the same constitution with limited substantive amendments. The new Constitution allows for RUSA to take stronger action and to continue to effectively fight for the needs of students. Among the proposed changes are an enhanced executive branch, a more robust legislative branch, and a newly created judicial branch. The purpose behind the new executive branch is to take more comprehensive and effectual action when needed during emergencies or in the short-term. The purpose behind the new legislative branch is to be more representative of our undergraduate student body. The purpose behind the new judicial branch is to provide an unbiased infrastructure for questions regarding interpretation and internal conflict to be resolved fairly. The purpose behind the new student fee is to improve the distribution of funds throughout clubs and organizations.”
4. The ballot shall contain a link to the proposed Constitution along with the Transition Document, which can be found in Appendix A of this resolution, to the current Constitution.
5. If a majority of students voting cast their ballots in the affirmative and at least one tenth of the undergraduate students vote on the referendum question, the proposed version of the RUSA Constitution shall be adopted by the Assembly and the Transition Document attached as Appendix A will be in effect until the start of 15th Assembly, or RUSA 2021-2022.
6. The Elections Committee shall be charged with furnishing a copy of the referendum question on the ballot to the Internal Affairs Committee for approval. The Internal Affairs Committee shall certify the results of the referendum, as required by Article 9 of the RUSA Constitution.

Appendix A:

Link Table:

[Proposed Constitution](#)

[Transition Document](#)

[Constitutional Reform Ad Hoc Folder](#)



RUSA Bill F20 - 02

Authors: Gavin Mayes, *SAS Senate Leader*; Zain Ahmed, *Special Advisor to the President*; Bilal Yousuf Ahmed, *Parliamentarian*; Julien Rosenbloom, *COVID-19 Department Director*; Miguel Ribau, *Legislative Affairs Chair*

Sponsor: Legislative Affairs Committee

Bill to Approve the Referendum to Put Forth Three Student Voting Positions on the Board of Governors

Whereas, the Rutgers University Board of Governors is the ultimate governing body for the university and has 15 voting members, with 8 appointed by the NJ Governor and 7 from the Rutgers Board of Trustees, as well as the University President as an ex-officio member, as well as three non-voting members from the University Senate, one of which is a student senator⁴,

Whereas, the aforementioned student senator does not have any voting privileges,

Whereas, any changes to the structure of the Board of Governors require a change to state law,

Whereas, State Senator Patrick Diegnan (D-18) has introduced S. 2408 to the 219th New Jersey Legislature, which “[a]dds two student representatives to board of governors of Rutgers University” should it pass⁵,

Whereas, the Assembly has formally endorsed S. 2408, as introduced by Senator Diegnan, through the Solidarity and Call to Action Act (Legislative Affairs Provision)⁶,

Whereas, students have engaged in this initiative numerous times dating back decades⁷,

⁴ [Rutgers Governance Structure](#): Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. “Governance and Leadership.” rutgers.edu. The State University of New Jersey. Accessed September 12, 2020.; [Membership of the Board of Governors](#): Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. “Governing Boards of the University.” rutgers.edu. The State University of New Jersey. Accessed 12 September 12, 2020.

⁵ [219th Legislature](#): S. 2408 - Adds two student representatives to the board of governors of Rutgers University. By Senator Patrick J. Diegnan, Jr. (D-18, Middlesex). Introduced May 2020 in the Senate Higher Education Committee.

⁶ [RUSA Bill S20-13](#): Solidarity and Call to Action Act (Legislative Affairs Provision). By Miguel Ribau et al. Passed by the Rutgers University Student Assembly Spring 2020, summer session.

⁷ [University Structure and Governance Committee](#): Report on Faculty and Student Board of Governors Membership. By the Rutgers University Senate. Passed by University Senate Structure and Governance Committee March 30, 2005.

Whereas, the 10th RUSA Assembly had previously worked with Senator Diegnan in pushing this effort,⁸

Whereas, RUSA successfully coordinated and testified at a hearing at the Assembly Higher Education Committee in the 117th New Jersey Legislative Session⁹,

Whereas, this bill shall act as a petition for student referendum in accordance with what is prescribed in the Standing Rules and the Constitution of the Assembly¹⁰,

Be it hereby resolved, the Legislative Affairs committee is tasked with working with Senator Diegnan, among other legislators, to advocate for voting student representation on the Board of Governors,

Further, be it resolved by two-thirds of the Assembly that a student referendum shall be held during the Fall 2020 elections in accordance with all applicable procedures under the Constitution and the Standing Rules, where —

1. The Assembly hereby approves of the following shall be posed to the undergraduate student body during the Fall 2020 elections, to consist of two parts:
 - a. “Should the Rutgers University Board of Governors have voting student representation from the New Brunswick, Newark and Camden Campuses?” -- and, should a student answer “YES”, the following shall be asked:
 - b. “Should this representative be the undergraduate Student Body President of each of the respective campuses?”
2. Each eligible voter shall be able to answer “YES” or “NO” to the above stated questions, or they may not vote for the question.
3. The following explanatory text will be included as part of the referendum question in order to provide relevant information and context to voting students: *“The Rutgers University student body currently has no voting representative(s) on the Board of Governors. Currently, legislation within the New Jersey State Legislature — in particular, S. 2408 — would change this to allow two students to have voting power on the Board of Governors. While the State legislation currently suggests two voting students, RUSA is looking to propose one voting seat from each campus for a total of three seats. As such, two questions are posed to the Rutgers student body on this ballot.*

⁸ Galperin, Simon. "[Push By Rutgers Student Government Builds Bipartisan Momentum For A Bill in Trenton.](#)" muckgers.com. MUCKGERS by The Medium, September 1, 2016.

⁹ New Jersey General Assembly Higher Education Committee Hearing on AR 256 - Monday, June 12, 2017 - 10:00:00 AM; [Relevant Portion: 00:00 min - 35:00 min](#)

¹⁰ The Constitution, in Article IX Section 1, requires that this bill pass by a two-thirds majority. This requirement shall be met by the passage of this bill. The Standing Rules, in Article VIII Section 3, requires that this bill be “processed” by the Internal Affairs Committee. This requirement was met on 12 September 2020 through the transmission of this bill to the Internal Affairs Committee and its subsequent debate.

The first is whether or not the student body believes that the New Brunswick, Newark, and Camden campuses of Rutgers should have voting representation on the Board of Governors. The second is whether or not this student representative should be the undergraduate student body President of each of these campuses.”

4. The ballot shall contain a link to the proposed legislation S. 2408 as authored by Senator Diegnan.
5. If a majority of students voting cast their ballots in the affirmative and at least one tenth of the undergraduate students vote on the referendum question, the official position of the Assembly will be to advocate:
 - a. In favor of legislation establishing three voting student representatives to the Board of Governors, each representing one of the three main campuses of Rutgers University — New Brunswick, Camden, and Newark;
 - b. For uniting the New Brunswick, Camden, and Newark campuses of Rutgers University to work in favor of getting voting student representation on the Board of Governors and working with state legislators, along with individuals, groups, and organizations throughout New Jersey, towards that end.
6. The Elections Committee shall be charged with furnishing a copy of the referendum question on the ballot to the Internal Affairs Committee for approval. The Internal Affairs Committee shall certify the results of the referendum, as required by Article IX of the RUSA Constitution.



RUSA Bill F20 - 03

Authors: Nicholas LaBelle, *President*; Javier Perez, *Chief of Staff*; Zunaira Wasim, *University Affairs Chair & Busch At-Large Representative*; Julien Rosenbloom, *COVID-19 Task Force Director*; Evan Bregenzer, *Sustainability Subcommittee Chair & Busch 2022 Representative*; Bilal Yousuf Ahmed, *Parliamentarian & Off-Campus Representative*

Sponsors: University Affairs

Co-Sponsors: Rutgers Students for Environmental Awareness

Guaranteeing Responsible and Environmentally Efficient Norms Act (G.R.E.E.N. Act)

Whereas, climate change is an existential threat, both to our local Rutgers--New Brunswick community and globally in every area;

Whereas, RUSA in its prior capacity conducted several measures to increase environmentally sustainable practices, including: being the first group at Rutgers to publish a comprehensive report of sustainability on-campus in 2016 ¹¹; helping ban Styrofoam cups from campus and investing instead in reusable bottle through the Cupanion program in 2017 ¹²; banning plastic bags for University Dining and investing in reusable bags in 2018 ¹³; bringing more sustainable micro-mobility providers to campus in the form of VeoRide in 2019 ¹⁴; and helping craft and having President LaBelle sign a student led carbon-tax-dividend proposal¹⁵ based off a white paper gathered by 27 Nobel laureates in economics¹⁶;

Whereas, Rutgers University's previous president, Robert Barchi, created the President's Task Force on Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience in September 2019, in response partly from

¹¹ RUSA Chulak et. al. [Sustainability Task Force Report](#)

¹² RUSA Bill S17-02 [Bill to Support Cupanion Reusable Bottle Initiative](#)

¹³ RUSA Bill S19-01 [Bill to Support the Ban the Bag Initiative](#)

¹⁴ RUSA Resolution S20-04 [Resolution to Endorse VeoRide and Approve Contract Negotiations](#)

¹⁵ Students for Carbon Dividends [Statement from 350+ Student Body Presidents](#)

¹⁶ Climate Leadership Council [Economists Statement on Carbon Dividends](#)

the student body's call for action by the university,¹⁷ yet Rutgers University has yet to establish an Office of Sustainability, establishing it as one of only four schools in the Big Ten to not have one;

Whereas, the City of New Brunswick in June 2019 defaulted all households' energy supply onto the renewableNB plan, a service that procures 50% of electrical energy from renewable sources, and made available a plan that procures 100% of electrical energy from renewable sources, both at rates substantially cheaper than the standard PSE&G Basic Generation Service (BGS);

Whereas, aeroponic food systems have been helpful in combating hunger in a sustainable fashion, with aeroponic systems reducing water usage by 98%, fertilizer usage by 60%, and pesticide usage by 100%¹⁸;

Whereas, the United States Department of Agriculture Community Food Project Competitive Grant Program (CFPCGP) offers a matching grant for projects that reduce hunger¹⁹; in Spring 2020 the Assembly attempted to apply for said grant but could not due to lack of a University sponsor;

Whereas, the University of California, being one of the largest educational institutions in the country, has entirely divested “more than \$1 billion worth of fossil fuel investments and invested another \$1 billion into clean energy projects”.²⁰ Divesting from public fossil fuel companies was a goal aimed for 5 years and divesting from private fossil fuel companies was a goal aimed for 10 years;

Whereas, the University of Maryland divested from coal, oil, and natural gas companies in 2016.
²¹ UMD 's endowment funds (\$70 million) is similar to Rutgers University's endowment (\$60 million)²². At the end of this previous fiscal year, as of June 30th, 2019, the portfolio return was about 6.8%, implying that UMD is recovering well²³.

¹⁷ **Rutgers University- New Brunswick, Office of the President**

[President's Task Force on Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience](#)

¹⁸ **NASA Spinoff Magazine "Progressive Plant Growing is a Booming Business"** 2006

¹⁹ **USDA Community Food Projects Competitive Grant Program (CFPCGP)**

²⁰ **CNN The University of California has fully divested from fossil fuels** May 20, 2020

²¹ **University of Maryland**

https://www.intentionalendowments.org/university_system_of_maryland

²² **The Baltimore Sun**

University of Maryland directs its divest away from Fossil Fuels

<https://www.baltimoresun.com/education/bs-md-usmf-divestment-20160628-story.html>

²³ **USM Foundation: 2019 Annual Report**

Pages 7-10

https://www.usmf.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/usmf_annual_report_fy19_web.pdf

Whereas, universities worldwide have successfully enacted policies in regards to sustainable efforts, effectively establishing their associated offices of sustainability in order to carry out and oversee current and future sustainable efforts;

Be it hereby resolved that, the Assembly advocates for a University Office of Sustainability will be created within an administrative department (i.e facilities) with the autonomy to mitigate Rutgers' environmental impact through inter-departmental coordination of existing and novel sustainability efforts. As the first step toward a complete office, two full time employees will allocate funding and create opportunities for student research and involvement. The director of the office will focus on long term planning and project funding while the climate action liaison will address the immediate implementation of the climate action plan once completed. The Assembly acknowledges the current financial state of our institution, and therefore, it is recommended that alumni funding be sought for the immediate creation of the Office, providing financial stability for the first three years during which time a permanent budgeting solution can be worked out through the administration.

Be it hereby enacted that the RUSA Allocations Board is charged with creating an incentive for clubs that follow the Environmental Integrity Guideline (EIG), whereby:

1. The Environmental Integrity Guideline will entail the following requirements to be fulfilled where eligible:
 - a. Use of sustainably sourced, biodegradable and/or compostable materials,
 - b. Net neutrality of resources or low-environmental impact i.e. water and electricity,
 - c. And the compost of all compostable materials;

Be it hereby enacted that the Environmental Integrity Guideline program is to be established with the following initial provisions:

1. A club/organization at the end of the spring semester can choose to submit their claim for successfully following the EIG for the prior two semesters. This would be done by submitting what initiatives they pursued throughout the year and the evidence that they were done through the required sustainable practices and the vendors' green certification.
2. If a club/organization meets all eligible requirements on the environmental integrity guideline, as approved by the Allocations Board, they will receive a financial reward as determined in future legislation.
3. If the Allocations Board decides there is not sufficient evidence, guideline standards unmet, or any form of fabrication, they can deny the request of the club. This would not result in any monetary penalty towards that club.
4. If a club disagrees with the denial of their request, they can utilize the current Allocations process for appeals.

Be it hereby enacted that, the University Affairs Committee and the Allocations Board are required to furnish a report delineating qualifications regarding the Environmental Integrity Guidelines, in addition to the implementation of the program and all incentives before the Assembly's winter recess;

Be it hereby enacted that the Renewable Energy Credit²⁴ program, as drafted by the COVID-19 Task Force, is created with the following parameters:

1. The Department of COVID-19 Response, as created and managed by the the President, shall manage the fund to provide economic relief and improve off-campus sustainability by subsidizing 2 months of off-campus residences' electricity bills for switching their current electricity service to renewableNB Premium Green, which procures 100% of electrical energy from renewable sources.
2. Students approved for the Renewable Energy Credit Program disbursement shall receive a monthly standard subsidy of \$82.62 for two months (totaling \$165.40), which represents 691 kWh/month, the average energy consumption of a New Brunswick, NJ, household, multiplied by renewableNB Premium Green's rate of \$0.11956/kWh.
3. In order to be eligible, applicants must be Rutgers-New Brunswick undergraduates living in an off-campus residence in New Brunswick and currently be enrolled in either Direct Energy's renewableNB product or PSE&G's BGS product.
4. Applications will be run through the Department.
5. The Department of COVID-19 Response shall furnish a pilot program evaluation report upon the disbursement of the final dollar of the initial \$5,000 allocation;

Be it hereby enacted that the Assembly sets the goal to transition all off-campus housing to 100% renewable energy within the next four years;

Be it hereby further enacted that the aforementioned program is allocated an initial total of \$5,000 from the Assembly budget;

Be it hereby enacted that the University Affairs Committee is charged with the "No More Hungry Knights" Aeroponics Initiative consisting of:

1. Working with various Rutgers faculty to begin the implementation of aeroponics systems at Rutgers for the intersectional purposes of fighting food insecurity in an environmentally sustainable manner.
2. The University Affairs Committee is required to furnish a report on the development of aeroponics at Rutgers by the Assembly's winter recess.

²⁴ Rutgers University Student Assembly
[COVID-19 Renewable Energy Credit](#)

3. Charges the University Affairs Committee to furnish a proposal for the Community Food Projects Competitive Grant Program and find an application sponsor by March 2021.

Be it hereby further enacted that the aforementioned program is allocated an initial total of \$5,000 from the Assembly budget;

Be it hereby resolved, the Assembly urges Rutgers University to follow the five-year timeline to divest from public companies and the ten-year timeline to divest from private companies²⁵ in order to take a step toward fully divesting from fossil fuel companies and instead adopting an investment strategy backed by a strengthened environmental social government policy aligned with the UN's sustainable development goals, as laid out by the Rockefeller's Brothers Fund.²⁶ (i.e. clean energy programs);

Therefore, be it resolved by two-thirds of the Assembly that a student referendum shall be held during the Fall 2020 elections in accordance with all applicable procedures under the Constitution and the Standing Rules²⁷, where —

- I. The Assembly hereby approves of the following questions being posed to the undergraduate student body during the Fall 2020 elections:
 - A. "Should the Rutgers University Student Assembly set aside funds for the next four years for the purposes of the Renewable Energy Credit program to continue the transition of student off-campus housing to 100% renewable energy?"
 - B. "Should Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, have its endowment funds divest from fossil fuel companies and invest in clean energy by 2030?"
- II. Each eligible voter shall be able to answer "YES" or "NO" to the above stated questions, or they may not vote for the questions.
- III. The following explanatory texts, for each respective question, shall be placed on each ballot stating:
 - A. "The City of New Brunswick in June 2019 defaulted all households' energy supply onto the renewableNB plan, a service that procures 50% of electrical energy from renewable sources, and made available a plan that procures 100% of electrical energy from renewable sources, both at rates substantially cheaper than the standard PSE&G Basic Generation Service

²⁵ The University of California [Sustainability impacts Investing](#)

²⁶ Rockefeller's Brothers Fund

https://www.rbf.org/sites/default/files/attachments/rbf_2017-2018_impact_metrics_review.pdf

²⁷ The Constitution, in Article IX Section 1, requires that this bill pass by a two-thirds majority. This requirement shall be met by the passage of this bill. The Standing Rules, in Article VIII Section 3, requires that this bill be "processed" by the Internal Affairs Committee. This requirement was met on 12 September 2020 through the transmission of this bill to the Internal Affairs Committee and its subsequent debate.

(BGS). RUSA is investing to subsidise the electricity bill for two months for students living in New Brunswick in order to incentivize the switch to the 100% renewable energy plan. Based on the average kilowatt per hour cost, students off-campus who opt in to 100% renewable will receive \$82.62 a month for two months, totaling \$165.40. Due to the financial impact of COVID-19, this accounts as an economic protection measure as well as transitioning students to renewable energy. By voting yes, the Assembly would be required to continue to fund this program for the next four years. By voting no, the Assembly would have no obligation to provide future funding for the program.”

B. “Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, currently holds over \$60,000,000 of real assets (defined as “extraction and/or exploration of fossil fuels) invested in the Endowment. This amount is held in nineteen separate investment funds, with three of these nineteen being new investments as of 2016. As of July 2020, those managing the Endowment announced that the funds would be expected to run off slowly over time with managers selling. Several other universities have already pledged to fully divest from fossil fuels and reinvest into clean energy. Georgetown has committed to divest by 2030 via selling all public assets in the next five years and all public assets in the next ten. By voting yes on this question, you express support for Rutgers to divest from all financial assets held based in fossil fuels by 2030. By voting no, you express opposition to divesting from fossil fuels by 2030.”

- IV. The ballot shall contain a link to the Rutgers Endowment, as well as the explanatory texts and this legislation.
- V. If a majority of students voting cast their ballots in the affirmative and at least one tenth of the undergraduate students vote on the referendum question(s), then
 - A. The Assembly is required to allocate funds to the Renewable Energy Credit each year until the 18th Assembly comes to session in 2024, and will only not commit funds if and only if 100% of the off-campus community has opted in to the program and/or the renewableNB program ceases to exist.
 - B. The Assembly will formally adopt the advocacy for divestment from all fossil fuels by 2030 and take necessary actions to fulfill that outcome.
- VI. The Elections Committee shall be charged with furnishing a copy of the referendum question on the ballot to the Internal Affairs Committee for approval. The Internal Affairs Committee shall certify the results of the referendum, as required by Article IX of the RUSA Constitution.