



## **REPASSAGE OF AMENDED JOINT RESOLUTIONS**

March 9, 2025

### **Introduction**

This advisory opinion is issued by the Student Judicial Court (SJC) of the Undergraduate Student Government (USG) at the University of Iowa in response to a procedural question regarding the legislative process for joint resolutions. This advisory opinion seeks to ensure consistency and procedural integrity within the legislative process of USG and the Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG).

### **Background**

The SJC received a request on Sunday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> at 11:14 AM regarding the legislative process when one governing body amends a joint resolution after the other body has already passed it. Joint resolutions are a collaborative effort between the USG and GPSG, addressing issues that affect both student bodies. This inquiry seeks clarification on the procedural implications of such amendments and the necessary steps for resolving any discrepancies between the two governing bodies.

### **Issue Presented**

The issue presented is the process that occurs when USG passes a joint resolution before GPSG, and the latter subsequently wishes to amend the legislation. Specifically, it raises the question of whether USG would need to repass the resolution with the amendments made by GPSG, and what the proper procedure is for addressing such changes between the two governing bodies.

### **Analysis and Findings**

#### **A. Relevant Governing Documents and Precedent**

The Constitution and Bylaws of USG and GPSG establish the legislative framework for joint resolutions. However, they do not explicitly address the process for handling amendments introduced after one body has approved a resolution.

## **B. Comparative Legislative Precedent**

Legislative bodies at various levels of government follow established procedures for resolving discrepancies between versions of joint legislation. In the United States Congress, when the House and Senate pass differing versions of a bill, the originating chamber must either accept the amendments, further amend the bill, or send it to a conference committee. This ensures both bodies concur on a final version before it is enacted.

The same principle has been observed in state legislatures and parliamentary systems, where amendments made by one chamber after passage by the other require reconsideration and approval to maintain legislative integrity.

## **C. Application to USG and GPSG**

Applying these principles to USG and GPSG, the absence of a formal reconciliation mechanism necessitates that any amendments made post-passage by one body must be reapproved by the other. Allowing amendments without repassage risks creating inconsistent versions of the resolution, undermining procedural legitimacy and governance stability.

### **Conclusion**

USG must repass the amended legislation to ensure that both governing bodies agree on the final version of the joint resolution. Without repassage, discrepancies between the versions could lead to procedural inconsistencies.

### **Recommendation**

We recommend that USG and GPSG establish a clear and consistent procedure for handling amendments to joint resolutions, including provisions for repassing resolutions when one body makes changes after the other has passed the original version. Both governing bodies should formalize this process in their respective bylaws to ensure smooth coordination and avoid future procedural complications.

### **Limitations**

This advisory opinion is based on the current governing documents and procedures of USG and GPSG. Any changes to these documents or procedures may impact the applicability of this opinion. Additionally, this opinion does not address any potential conflicts of interest or other external factors that may arise during the legislative process.

### **Compliance Statement**

This advisory opinion was issued in accordance with the governing documents and procedures of the University of Iowa's Undergraduate Student Government (USG) and the Student Judicial Court (SJC). All relevant provisions of the USG Constitution and Bylaws, as well as the established procedures of the SJC, were followed in the issuance of this opinion.

Please note that this advisory opinion is non-binding but serves as guidance for decision-making purposes within the Undergraduate Student Government at the University of Iowa. For further assistance or clarification, please contact Chief Justice Briones.

Thank you,

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Chief Justice

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