

RESOLUTION NO. 171099

**A resolution of the City Commission
of the City of Gainesville, Florida declaring support for
Early Voting Locations on College Campuses and providing an immediate effective date**

WHEREAS, after CS/HB 7013 was codified into law in the form of Section 101.657, Florida Statutes, the City of Gainesville requested an opinion from the State Division of Elections as to whether the Reitz Union on the campus of the University of Florida could be used as an early voting location;

WHEREAS, the State Division of Elections Office issued Formal Opinion No. DE 14-01 concluding that the verbiage of the law could not be “construed so broadly as to include the Reitz Union or any other college- or university-related facilities that were rejected by the Legislature as additional early voting sites”;

WHEREAS, the current early voting locations in the City of Gainesville are not readily accessible to the student population;

WHEREAS, the closest early voting location from the University of Florida on-campus polling site at the J. Wayne Reitz Student Union is the Supervisor of Elections Office and that requires one to walk approximately 43 minutes;

WHEREAS, there are no direct public transportation routes from the University of Florida to its closest early voting location at the Supervisor of Elections Office;

WHEREAS, the J. Wayne Reitz Union and the Florida Natural History Museum at the University of Florida already serve as polling locations for election day;

WHEREAS, according to the National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement, 62.4% of all University of Florida students voted at city-wide polling locations in the 2016 General Election, exceeding the national student voter turnout average by 13%, with the help of easy access to voter registration, election information materials, and transportation to polling places; and

WHEREAS, 52.99% of the entire population of Gainesville are students from Santa Fe College and the University of Florida, and these students account for approximately 67.67% of Gainesville residents of voting age.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF GAINESVILLE, FL:

Section 1. The City of Gainesville recognizes that the 69,727 affected voters at Santa Fe College and the University of Florida, as well as the 1.1 million affected voters in the Florida public higher education system, deserve equitable access to early voting locations.

Section 2. The City of Gainesville encourages students to seek alternative methods to voting, including carpooling to the polls, using city-wide public transportation to get closer to available polling sites, and Vote-by-Mail options.

Section 3. The City of Gainesville urges the Florida Legislature to amend Section 101.657, Florida Statutes, to allow facilities on college and university campuses to be used as early voting sites.

Section 4. The City of Gainesville recognizes the importance of passing legislation to amend Section 101.657, Florida Statutes, to explicitly allow early voting sites at public colleges and universities across Florida.

Section 5. A copy of this resolution shall be sent to Governor Rick Scott, Secretary of State Ken Detzner, Alachua County Commission Chair Lee Pinkoson, Representative Chuck Clemons, Representative Clovis Watson, Senator Keith Perry, Alachua County Supervisor of Elections Kim Barton, League of Women Voters of Florida President Pamela S. Goodman, and League of Women Voters of Alachua County President Carole Fernandez.

Section 6. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 17 day of May, 2018.

LAUREN B. POE, MAYOR

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:

OMICHELE D. GAINNEY
CLERK OF COMMISSION

NICOLLE M. SHALLEY, CITY ATTORNEY