

Dear UCSB Student Body,

It has come to the Elections Board's attention through an unsolicited letter from the chair of the Inter-Fraternity Council (IFC) stating "IFC decided to award philanthropy grants to chapters that achieved high voter turnout in AS elections."

The Elections Board, as stated in Article VI of Legal Code in Section 16. A.S. Elections Committee "coordinates the mechanics of the A.S. Elections. The main functions of the Committee are to run the Spring General Election and any Special Election(s)." As this was brought to the Board in relation to the Associated Students Spring Election, it was carried into discussion. After hours of deliberation, the Elections Board believes IFC bribed its members with the promise of philanthropic grants to houses with high voter turnout in this Associated Students Spring Election.

Due to the decision we made, we feel that we had no choice but to alert the student body about the monetary incentives given to members of this community that placed more value on certain students' votes. The Elections Board feels that IFC's monetary incentive skewed the results of the Spring Elections, which includes all candidates, fee initiatives, fee reaffirmations, constitutional amendments, and CEC initiatives. UCSB consists of over 900 organizations and not every organization has access to such funding to offer incentives to their members. IFC's actions posed a threat to the conduct of fair elections and if no action is taken in regards to this situation, it would be perpetuating the belief that votes can be bought and sold.

Elections Board's decided to bring this to the student body because the Elections Code does not state what to do in this situation. Members of the IFC decided that certain votes meant more than others and while we feel a moral and ethical obligation to take action, we feel that this issue should be considered by the entire student body, rather than a small group of students. Elections Board did not want to unilaterally make a decision in this case because this situation was not put into motion by anyone affiliated with the elections.

It is essential for the student body to understand that we do not write this with any intent of ill will towards any candidate or voter. The Constitution of the Associated Students of the University of California, Santa Barbara states in Article 2 The Student Bill of Rights Section C.1 "All students have the right to a vote in all ASUCSB elections." Elections Board only seeks to honor all those who voted in this election without any incentive. It is important to understand that no one should be bribed with extra money in order to carry out your civic duty and any bribes only violates the sanctity of the elections process.

There is a certain mental and emotional toll that the elections process takes on candidates as well as an academic strain for people who are students first and we recognize that there is a great commitment required of student leaders throughout this process. However, in order for the elections to be held fairly, we believe only a re-vote would treat every vote equally. And so, Elections Board's official recommendation for this situation is to hold a re-vote in which the entire Spring Election Ballot would be voted on again by the student body. Elections Board is only made up of six members and we do not feel we accurately represent this diverse UCSB community and so we urge the student population to voice their concerns and opinions to A.S.

Senate regarding this issue as they are your elected representatives. A.S. Senate meets Wednesday at 6:30 in the Flying A Room in the University Center.