

Complaint #26-04

Petitioner(s): Aniyah Hubbard

Respondent(s): Joshua Sembrano and Lundan Sherrod

The following allegations were filed Feb 14, 2026, 8:41 PM:

- **Article 4, Section 2, Clause 4:** No candidate may campaign door-to-door in residence halls or take any other action that violates the University of Houston Student Housing & Residential Life Policy.
- **Article 4, Section 1, Clause 7:** Candidates will be held responsible for any activities by their supporters that are in violation of the provisions of the SGA election code if there is explicit evidence that supports that a candidate authorized or requested such activities or if evidence supports that a candidate had actual or constructive knowledge of illicit activities and/or authorized or acquiesced in such activities. Explicit evidence is defined as physical proof of the activity. Examples include text messages, emails, videos, etc.

Decision [02/18/26]: Petitioner's complaint **HAS MERIT** and this **IS** a violation of the Election Code.

Conclusion: By institutionalizing this activity as an official assignment, the campaign formally authorized and structured door-to-door solicitation within residence halls, which is a direct violation of university and election policy. Under the Election Code, any individual assigned a task is considered a campaign staff member, and candidates are held strictly responsible for staff actions when there is explicit evidence of authorization, such as the instructions distributed through the campaign's published form. This organized residence hall solicitation is prohibited to protect the privacy and safety of student residents.

Sanction: Class B Violation – Suspension of Campaigning. Due to the organized and structural nature of this violation, the respondents are sentenced to a **24-hour suspension** of all digital and physical campaigning.

5:26 Messages 5G%

How many hours can you give per week? *

>1-3 Hours

3-5 Hours

5+ Hours

Just tell me when and I'll show up!

How do you want to help? *

Social Media (TikTok, Reels, Graphic Design)

Tabling, Flyering, or "dorm-storming"

Organizing data, scheduling, policy research

Showing up, bringing hype and energy!

Other: _____

What is one thing on campus you would change tomorrow if you had the power? *

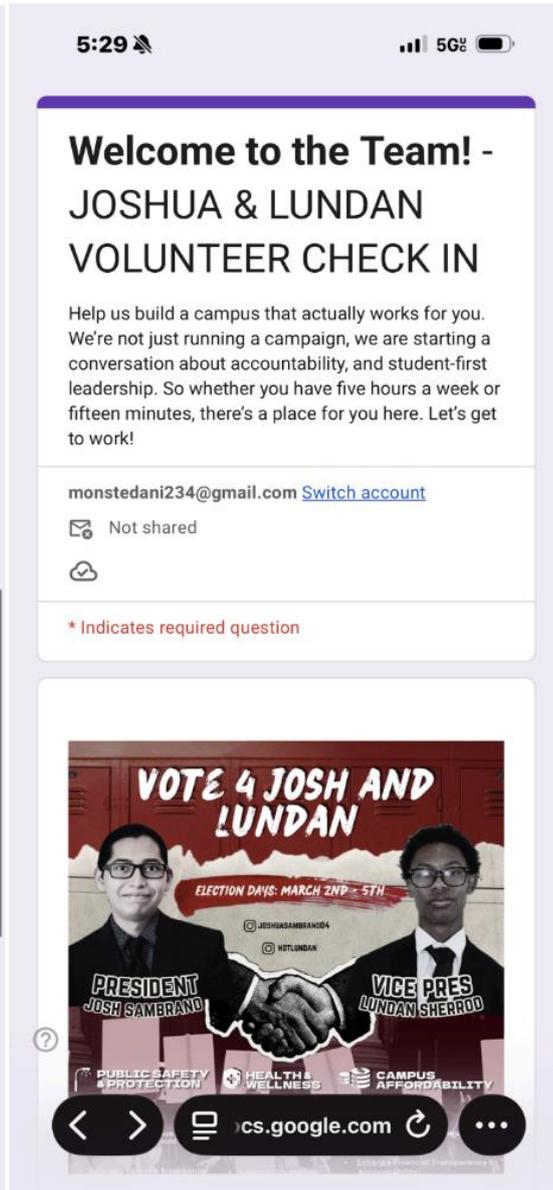
Your answer _____

Do you have a car/transportation? *

Yes

No

Other: docs.google.com



Appeal:

STATEMENT OF DEFENSE

Submitted by: Joshua Sambrano & Lundan Sherrod Pursuant to Article 7, Section 1, Clause 8 of the SGA Bylaws (January 2026)

I. INTRODUCTION

This Statement of Defense is submitted in response to the Election Commission's allegations dated February 17, 2026. The Commission's findings rely on evidence that is incomplete, misinterpreted, and legally insufficient under the controlling authority

of the SGA Constitution (January 2026) and SGA Bylaws (January 2026). The Constitution requires that all SGA disciplinary and electoral processes be conducted with fairness, transparency, and due process. As the Constitution explicitly provides, “No student shall be deprived of rights, privileges, or opportunities within the Student Government Association without due process of law.” (SGA Constitution, Article II, Bill of Rights). The Commission’s actions fall short of this constitutional mandate.

II. GOVERNING LAW AND DUE-PROCESS REQUIREMENTS

The SGA Constitution guarantees that students must receive timely notice of allegations, access to the evidence against them, and **a meaningful opportunity to respond before sanctions are imposed**. The Constitution states: “Students shall have the right to timely notice of any allegation, access to the evidence against them, and a meaningful opportunity to respond before sanctions are imposed.” (Article II, Section 3). It further requires that “All SGA rules shall be applied uniformly and shall not be enforced arbitrarily or selectively.” (Article II, Section 4). The Constitution also limits the authority of SGA officials by declaring that “No branch or officer of the Association may exercise powers not expressly granted by this Constitution or the Bylaws.” (Article I, Section 6). The Bylaws reinforce these protections by assigning the burden of proof to the Commission: “The burden of proof shall rest with the party alleging a violation.” (Bylaws, Article 7, Section 1, Clause 4). **We are innocent until proven guilty following an opportunity to provide a defense.**

The Commission’s notice and sanctions do not satisfy these requirements.

II. VIOLATION 26-04 — UNAUTHORIZED RESIDENCE HALL CAMPAIGNING

The Commission’s allegation rests entirely on a volunteer interest form that includes the option “Tabling, Flyering, or ‘dorm-storming.’” This form is a survey of volunteer interest, not an instruction, directive, or assignment. The Bylaws require that a violation be supported by evidence of conduct, not speculation. As the Bylaws state, “A violation shall require evidence of conduct that occurred, not speculation or inference.” (Article 4, Section 1, Clause 2). The Commission has provided no evidence that any volunteer entered a residence hall, engaged in solicitation, or performed any prohibited activity. Furthermore, the term “dorm-storming” does not appear anywhere in the Election Code. The Constitution prohibits sanctioning students under vague or undefined rules, stating: “No student shall be sanctioned under rules that are vague, undefined, or inconsistently applied.” (Article II, Section 5). Because the Commission relies on an undefined term and no evidence of conduct, this allegation cannot stand.

IV. VIOLATION 26-07 — PROHIBITED SENATE–EXECUTIVE CROSS-ENDORSEMENTS

The Commission’s evidence consists solely of Instagram screenshots showing that our campaign account follows several hundred accounts, including some Senate candidates, and that some Senate candidates follow us back. The Bylaws define coordination as “deliberate collaboration, shared strategy, or joint messaging between campaigns.” (Article 4, Section 3, Clause 8). The Commission’s evidence shows none of these elements. There is no shared messaging, no joint graphics, no coordinated events, and no communication.

The Bylaws further require intentional cooperation for a finding of coordination: “A finding of coordination requires evidence of intentional cooperation.” (Article 4, Section 3, Clause 8). Passive social-media follows do not constitute intentional cooperation. The Commission additionally asserts that a Senate candidate “disclosed they were personally recruited to join your ticket’s ‘party’ or coalition.” This is a serious allegation, yet the Commission has provided no evidence whatsoever to substantiate it. There is no screenshot, no message, no affidavit, no testimony, and no documentation of any kind showing that any Senate candidate was recruited into a “party-style” structure. The Constitution requires that sanctions be based on evidence, not unverified claims. As the Constitution states, “Students shall not be subjected to disciplinary action based on unsubstantiated allegations.” (Article II, Section 3). The Bylaws reinforce this requirement by mandating that the Commission carry the burden of proof. The Commission has not met that burden.

The Constitution also prohibits selective enforcement, stating: “Rules must be applied equally to all candidates.” (Article II, Section 4). If following Senate candidates on Instagram constitutes coordination, then every campaign that follows or is followed by Senate candidates would be in violation. The Commission has not applied this standard uniformly.

Because the Commission’s evidence does not meet the definition of coordination, because the allegation of “party-style recruitment” is entirely unsupported, and because the Commission’s interpretation would result in selective enforcement, this allegation must be dismissed.

V. VIOLATION 26-08 — ACTIVE CAMPAIGNING IN THE RAD CENTER

The Commission acknowledges that the only photograph provided shows candidates outside the RAD Center, not inside. The evidence packet contains no photo of campaigning inside the building, no audio, no witness statements, and no proof of solicitation. The Commission’s conclusion that candidates “appeared to be speaking with students they did not know” is speculative and unsupported.

The Bylaws require direct evidence: “A violation must be supported by direct evidence, not assumption.” (Article 7, Section 1, Clause 4). The Code also defines active campaigning as “soliciting votes, distributing materials, or promoting a candidacy.” (Article 4, Section 2, Clause 13). None of these elements are present in the Commission’s evidence.

Because the Commission has not provided evidence of active campaigning inside a restricted location, this allegation must be dismissed.

VI. VIOLATION 26-09 — UNAUTHORIZED OUTSIDE ENDORSEMENT & NEGATIVE CAMPAIGNING

The Commission's evidence is an unsolicited Instagram story posted by a third party who is not affiliated with our campaign. The Bylaws prohibit soliciting outside endorsements, stating: "Candidates shall not solicit endorsements from individuals who are not enrolled students." (Article 4, Section 3, Clause 10). The Commission has provided no evidence that we solicited, coordinated with, or communicated with the poster.

The Commission's theory that following an account constitutes "accepting" an endorsement is unsupported by the Bylaws. The governing documents do not state that following an account, being followed, or viewing a story constitutes acceptance of an endorsement.

The Bylaws define mudslinging as "knowingly false statements of fact about another candidate." (Article 4, Section 4, Clause 3). The phrase "sold out to admin" is rhetorical political opinion, not a factual allegation. The remainder of the story includes a screenshot of a Daily Cougar article summarizing our platform, which is factual reporting.

Because the Commission has not shown solicitation, acceptance, or coordination, and because the statement at issue is political opinion, this allegation must be dismissed.

VII. PROCEDURAL DEFECTS IN THE COMMISSION'S SANCTIONING PROCESS

The Commission imposed sanctions before reviewing our defense, in violation of the Constitution's due-process requirement that "No sanction shall be imposed until the accused has had an opportunity to present a defense." (Article II, Section 3). The Commission also aggregated multiple sanctions into an 84-hour suspension without statutory authority. The Bylaws require that "Sanctions must correspond to specific violations and may not be arbitrarily combined." (Article 7, Section 2).

Finally, the Commission failed to provide evidence with the notice, despite the constitutional requirement that "Students have the right to review all evidence prior to adjudication." (Article II, Section 3). These procedural defects independently require vacatur of the sanctions.

VIII. REQUESTED RELIEF

For the reasons stated above, we respectfully request dismissal of Violations 26-04, 26-07, 26-08, and 26-09; vacatur of the 84-hour suspension; immediate reinstatement of full campaign rights; disclosure of all evidence including metadata and witness statements; and a hearing before any further sanctions are imposed.

IX. CONCLUSION

The Commission's own evidence does not establish any violation of the Election Code. The allegations rely on speculation, misinterpretation of normal social-media behavior, and an overbroad reading of rules that must be applied narrowly. The sanctions imposed violate the due-process protections guaranteed by the SGA Constitution and Bylaws. We therefore request full dismissal of all allegations and demand an immediate presence before the commissioner and the judiciary to explain our position.

Respectfully submitted, Joshua Sambrano & Lundan Sherrod

Documentation from the Judiciary Committee:

Violation 26-04: Unauthorized Residence Hall Campaigning

Incident: Your official campaign volunteer recruitment form explicitly listed "dorm-storming" as a designated task for campaign staff.

Code Section Not Followed: Article 4, Section 2, Clause 4 and Article 4, Section 1, Clause 7.

- **Detail:** By institutionalizing "dorm-storming" as an official assignment, the campaign formally authorized and structured door-to-door activity within residence halls. Under the Code, any individual assigned a task is a campaign staff member, and candidates are held responsible for staff actions when there is explicit evidence of authorization, such as your published form
- **Ruling:** Organized residence hall solicitation is strictly prohibited. This is classified as a Class B violation, which will result in a 24-hour campaign suspension.

- The Committee **affirms** the decision on the basis that candidates are responsible for the actions of their campaign staff when there is explicit evidence of authorization, such as instructions distributed through a published campaign form. Under the Election Code, individuals assigned campaign tasks are considered campaign staff members.
- The Election Code, Article 4, Section 2, Clause 4 states:
“No candidate may campaign door-to-door in residence halls or take any other action that violates the University of Houston Student Housing & Residential Life Policy.”
- The candidate’s published form includes the question, **“How do you want to help?”** and lists **Tabling, Flyering, and “dorm-storming”** as selectable options. Since **“dorm-storming”** constitutes prohibited campaigning within residence halls, its inclusion on the form serves as **explicit authorization** for a prohibited activity. As a result, candidate accountability is applicable under the Code.

Zainab Khimji

Election Commissioner

February 18 2026