

June 22, 2020

Mississippi State Capitol
400 High St
Jackson, MS 39201

Dear Mississippi Lawmakers,

As former student body presidents at Mississippi's publicly funded universities, we took oaths to advocate on behalf of our fellow students. As such, it is our duty to extend our voices regarding the State of Mississippi's flag.

Mississippi's public universities are integral parts of our state's economy and culture. These institutions act as the state's engines of innovation and research, and they prepare the next generation of leaders. These institutions are the physical embodiment of Mississippi's future.

Students from across the state, country and globe come to these institutions to gain a premier education. While their love for Mississippi is great, many of our students graduate with little opportunity to invest their knowledge directly back into our state. Our state's unwillingness to embrace a future that *all* Mississippians can be proud of hinders our economic and professional opportunities within the state. Fortunately, there are tangible actions that can work to remedy this.

Remove and replace the current flag that contains the symbol of the Confederacy.

Rather than bear the scars of past sins, our state flag should reflect that Mississippi's best days are ahead. And that those better days can only become a reality through understanding our shared values and working together to better our schools, our communities, and, ultimately— our state. Most importantly, a state rich in diversity, having one of the largest populations of African-Americans in the country, deserves a flag that celebrates such diversity.

While we are the future of this great state, you are the present. As lawmakers, you have the unique responsibility to decide how Mississippi meets this moment. This time, let's get it right.

In solidarity,

Elizabeth Swindle
Student Government Association President, '19- '20
Delta State University

Jake Manning
Student Association President, '19-'20
Mississippi State University

John Jacob Miller
Student Government Association President, '19-'20
Mississippi University for Women

James Herrington Jr.
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Michael Matrick
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Mayah Emerson
Student Association President, '18-'19
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Brandon McCall
Student Government Association President, '18-'20
Mississippi Valley State University

Robert Tatum Jr.
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Charlie King
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McKenna Stone Cloud
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Delta State University

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Associated Student Body President, '17-'18
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Cameron Cloud
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Allie Rose Parker
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Kortney Haymore
Student Government Association President, '16-'17
Mississippi Valley State University

Austin Powell
Associated Student Body President, '16-'17
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Mikel Sykes
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Delta State University

Rod Bridges
Associated Student Body President, '15- '16
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Brett Harris
Student Association President, '14- '15
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Jeffrey George
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Michael Hogan
Student Association President, '13-'14
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Kimberly Dandridge
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