Executive Action Sheet for Senate Legislation

☐ Senate Bill 328-

Senate Resolution 328- 002

I, Anthony Joseph, President of the Student Assembly of William & Mary do hereby:

Approve

Veto

The Student Assembly Senate Legislation:

The Willis Harris Resolution to Condemn Brutality, Discrimination, and Racism

DATE: July 13, 2020

Anthony Joseph
President of the 328th Student Assembly, William & Mary
A Resolution

The Willis-Harris Resolution to Condemn Brutality, Discrimination and Racism

To condemn police brutality, discrimination, and racism in the United States of America and to improve the student experience at William & Mary

Sponsored by: Senator Peter R. Hayden (Business ’21), Senator Patrick Salsburg (’21), Senator Vicky Morales (’22), Senator Owen Williams (’23), Senator Nicholas Matuszewski (Law), Senator Will Wasson (Law), President Conor Sokolowsky (’23), Senator Meghana Boojala (’22), Senator Rory Fedorochko (’22)

Co-sponsored by: Zhanna Imel (Business ’21)

Supported by: Tiffany Jones (Officer of Graduate Diversity, Business ’21), 2020-2021 MBAA Executive Board, Gabby Vance (Law ’21), Haarika Reddy (Law ’22), Malory Hudson (Law ’22), Nicholas Agyevi-Armah (Law ’21), 2020-2021 Graduate Council, Celeste Chalkley (Secretary of Diversity Initiatives ’21), President Anthony Joseph (’21), Vice President Kyle Vasquez (’21), Chief of Staff Loni Wright (’21)

WHEREAS, the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on May 25, 2020, displayed yet again the vilest form of racism in the United States of America and demonstrated the abuse of authority by select police officers who are sworn to protect and defend their communities;

WHEREAS, there have been other forms of racism against Black people within the United States, including the murders of David McAtee, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade, Breonna Taylor, Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, and countless others;

WHEREAS, police brutality does not represent the values, ethics or honor code at William & Mary and all police officers who commit these acts bring significant damage to their communities, their profession, their familial name, the United States of America and must be held accountable;

WHEREAS, even when not murdering innocent people of color, some police officers have been using violence to intimidate and scare anyone who dares to challenge their authority or show the rest of the world atrocities, such as arresting CNN reporters Omar Jimenez, Bill Kirkos, and Leonel Mendez; shooting rubber bullets at Reuters reporters Julio-Cesar Chavez and Rodney Seward, freelance photographer Linda Tirado, and MSNBC reporter Ali Velshi; assaulting journalist Barbara Davidson, Wall Street Journal reporter Tyler Blint-Welsh, and Vice News journalist Michael Anthony Adams; and shooting tear gas and pepper spray at countless other reporters (including many reporters of color), and have in several instances violated international law, particularly the Geneva Conventions, by preventing medical professionals from providing aid to those in serious medical need;

WHEREAS, racism has been a fundamental part of US history from stealing land and massacring American Indian to forcing Black people into slavery to fighting a war over slavery (which many
people still won’t acknowledge they lost) to abolishing slavery except in prison to Jim Crow and Segregation to Massive Resistance (led by Virginia) to incarcerating innocent Black bodies for prison labor to Redlining to looking down on social programs that help Black people to murdering innocent Black bodies;

WHEREAS, because of the murder of innocent Black Americans and the intense racism that exists in our society, many Americans across the country have taken action by participating in vigorous protesting of those institutions that allow and even condone racism;

WHEREAS, we as a student body and Student Assembly stand as a diligent defender of the rights of all Americans, particularly those who have experienced the disgusting actions of police brutality. Additionally, we stand in solidarity with the victims and their families and we hope that these actions that undermine the fabric of American society cease and desist within the immediate future;

WHEREAS, the 328th Student Assembly recognizes the actions of police officers who do their job and protect all people in the United States of America when on and off duty;

WHEREAS, the 328th Student Assembly recognizes the actions of police officers who are peacefully protesting with demonstrators in order to stand in solidarity with their communities and also want these inappropriate actions of police brutality to come to an immediate end;

WHEREAS, we must continue to inspire our student body to be defenders of civil rights and liberties within America and the world and seek to eradicate all forms of discrimination, inequality, racism and police brutality in their lives as students, parents, professionals, and civil servants;

WHEREAS, we must continue to encourage our administrators, faculty, and staff to educate themselves on the systemic injustices against the African-American community and support them in their efforts to uplift their voices on campus and focus on the dignity of life of all members of the William and Mary campus and the international community;

WHEREAS, William & Mary has a complicated history in regards to its relationship with the African American and American Indian communities stemming from its founding in 1693 and other systemic forms of discrimination; however, the Lemon Project and the Student Assembly Reparations Committee have started to improve this relationship through meaningful dialogue and discussion, exploring new ways to correct its past behavior of our founding principals at the university.

Now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Student Assembly of William & Mary:

1. Vehemently condemns, police brutality, racism, white supremacy, and discrimination in all of its forms within the William & Mary community, the United States of America, and the world;
2. Reaffirms the sentiments expressed in SB 315-052 The Apology for William and Mary’s role in Slavery Act and SB 326-036 The Higher Standard Resolution that acknowledge William & Mary’s role in slavery, Jim Crow, and racism historically in the United States;
3. Reaffirms the sentiments expressed in the aforementioned Acts that call on William & Mary to actively acknowledge its role and reconcile with its past and present role in systemic injustice, racism, and discrimination;
4. Acknowledges the Student Assembly’s own history as a governing organization and its role in perpetuating racism, prejudice, and other forms of discrimination within the William & Mary community and our organization;
5. Encourages departments, the administration, student organizations, and the Student Assembly to invest in hosting civil rights speakers and activists, events, and lecture series at William & Mary that educate the student body on racism within their respective fields, our community, and the nation;
6. Applauds the efforts of student organizations, student leaders, and community leaders to speak out against systemic racism, peacefully protest against their government, and continue to address racism tangibly within their own organizations and within the community;
7. Encourages predominantly white student organizations to examine how they can address diversity and inclusion within their own organizations and combat microaggressions within their subcommunities;
8. Encourages all students regardless of race, creed or orientation to reflect on how they can become more open to diversity to ensure that issues of campus racism and discrimination aren’t as prevalent during their time at the College of William and Mary;
9. That this resolution serves as a formal apology to all students, faculty and staff, and administrators, regardless of their graduation or employment years, for all forms of racism, discrimination, sexism or any other negative experience that degraded their humanity during their time at the College of William and Mary;