

Complaint #26-23

Petitioner(s): Madelyn Stuart

Respondent(s): Ian Kariuki

The following allegations were filed March 4, 2026, 1:45 AM:

- **Article 4, Section 4, Clause 1:** "All candidates are held accountable to the provisions of this code, the Student Government Association Constitution and Bylaws, and all other University policies."
- **University Policy 01.05.05 (Freedom of Expression):** "The use of amplified sound is only permitted in the reservable areas... but is not permitted in Butler Plaza (Area D on the campus map)."

Decision [03/05/26]: Petitioner's complaint **HAS MERIT** and this **IS** a violation of the Election Code.

Conclusion: Photographic evidence confirms that campaign volunteers for Ian Kariuki used a megaphone (amplified sound) in Butler Plaza on March 3, 2026, at approximately 4:16 PM. Per University Policy 01.05.05, amplified sound is strictly prohibited in Butler Plaza. As the individuals were actively distributing campaign flyers and operating in coordination with the candidate, this constitutes a failure to comply with University regulations as required by the Election Code.

Sanction: Class C Violation. As this is a repeated offense for the Tav and Ian campaign, they are issued a **12-hour suspension** from all campaigning activities.

Appeals:

Good afternoon,

I am writing to formally appeal the violation issued to our campaign regarding the alleged use of a megaphone in Butler Plaza.

While the submitted photographs show a megaphone present, the context of the activity is critical. At the time the photos were taken, our team was not using the megaphone for campaign purposes. Instead, we were assisting students with voter registration and directing them to resources that help students participate in civic engagement.

Importantly, this activity occurred on March 3rd, which was Primary Election Day, and the purpose of the outreach was to help students register to vote and understand how to participate in the electoral process.

Additionally, no candidate from our campaign was directly using the megaphone. The individual speaking in the video is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated (AKA) who was present as part of voter engagement efforts. Members of AKA have a longstanding commitment to civic participation and voter education, and she was helping guide students through voter registration and participation resources. Our campaign members were simply assisting the organization with the outreach and helping direct students to available voter engagement resources.

The megaphone was used solely to communicate general voter registration information and to help students navigate the process of registering to vote. At no point during the activity did anyone request votes, promote our campaign platform, or encourage students to vote in the SGA election. The SGA Election Code clearly defines campaigning in Article 4, Section 1 as follows:

“Campaigning is defined as an intentional attempt to obtain votes through personal communication or contact. Examples include, but are not limited to, speaking directly with students, sending direct messages, or calling students to ask them to vote for you. Non-active

campaigning or indirect solicitation of votes is defined as an intentional attempt to obtain votes through materials that can be seen or heard by potential voters.” At no point during this activity was there any attempt to obtain votes, either directly or indirectly.

No campaign messaging, campaign slogans, or requests for votes were made. The communication that occurred was solely related to voter registration and civic engagement, which is entirely separate from the SGA election process.

Additionally, we have video evidence clearly showing the context of the activity. The footage demonstrates that the megaphone was being used to assist with voter registration outreach rather than to promote the campaign or ask individuals to vote for us in the SGA election. It is also notable that the complainants chose to submit photographs rather than video evidence.

Had video been provided, it would have clearly captured the audio of the activity and confirmed that the messaging was related exclusively to voter registration and civic participation rather than campaigning. For verification of the civic engagement activity, the organization we were assisting was the Corner Store Project, which focuses on voter engagement and civic participation.

Contact Information:

Darien Flowers

Corner Stone Project

(214) 536-9240

It is particularly concerning that a civic engagement effort focused on voter registration, an activity that reflects the fundamental civic duty of encouraging democratic participation, is being framed as a campaign violation. On a day as significant as Primary Election Day, helping students register and participate in the democratic process should be viewed as responsible civic engagement rather than improper campaign conduct. Characterizing such efforts as election violations risks discouraging students from participating in civic initiatives that universities traditionally support and promote.

Our campaign has made a consistent effort throughout this election cycle to follow both the letter and spirit of the Election Code. We take compliance seriously and have intentionally avoided engaging in conduct that could be interpreted as improper campaigning.

Because the megaphone was not used for campaign purposes, no candidate was directly using the device, the activity did not meet the Election Code's definition of campaigning, and the outreach occurred as part of a voter engagement effort on Primary Election Day, we respectfully request that this violation be reconsidered and dismissed.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We are happy to provide the video evidence and any additional clarification needed,

<https://youtu.be/GvLM0fPIROk?si=r9NLdec6uYvVeSGz>

Respectfully,

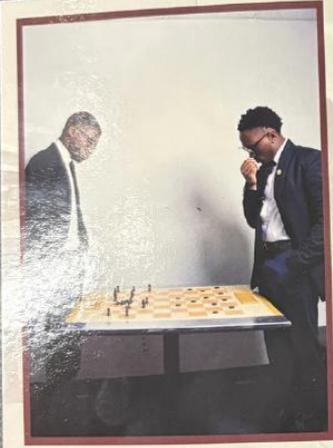
Tav Cockrell

Judiciary decision:

Violation 26-23: **Reversed** due to the committee's inability to confirm that the individual using the megaphone was a candidate associated with the alleged campaign. Additionally, because the evidence consists solely of a photo without audio, it is not sufficient to substantiate the allegation without the audio.

Zainab Khimji

Election Commissioner



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INFORMATION



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TAV & IAN
FOR PRESIDENT & VICE PRESIDENT



POLICY AT A GLANCE

ACCESSIBILITY

Tuition Transparency, Sexual Assault Prevention, Student Service Support

SUSTAINABILITY

Campus Safety & Security, Parking Stability, Campus Experience

ACADEMICS

AI Incorporation into Higher Education, Academic Advisor Support, College Transition & Post Grad Success

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University of Houston
Yesterday 4:16 PM

