

United States Senate

GBSMUN VIII



Chair: Jaden Welch-Jani

Vice Chair: Harlan Warnsman

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Letter from the Chair:

Hello Delegates,

My name is Jaden Welch-Jani, and I am a junior and the Director of Writing and Research for GBSMUN. I have loved Model UN since I joined the club my freshman year. MUN offers an unparalleled opportunity to explore international relations in a hands-on, solutions-oriented manner, while also working on valuable speaking, writing, negotiation, cooperation, and leadership skills. This will be my first time chairing a committee, and I am looking forward to watching all of you debate and come up with creative solutions to problems which have plagued the U.S. government for many years. **I will be running this Senate committee with the rules of a normal MUN GA with frequent crisis updates, but each of you will be representing a specific senator. Given that, there will be no filibuster (sorry Mitch McConnell).** I am looking for delegates to faithfully represent the policies of their respective senators while still being open to compromise. We are tackling two very divisive issues, so I am looking for senators to handle them maturely, appropriately, and with respect. It is my hope that we can be more effective than the actual U.S. Senate, and thus it will be prudent for senators to work with their colleagues across the aisle. Try not to form blocs with only people from your party, as this will lead to us not passing anything. **Finally, please turn in a hard copy of your position paper on the day of the conference.** Let's have a great committee!

~Jaden Welch-Jani

Letter from the Vice-Chair:

Hello Delegates!

My name is Harlan Warnsman and I'm a junior at Glenbrook South. This is my third year doing MUN at Glenbrook South and I have loved it every step of the way. Along with MUN, I play tennis, debate, and participate in mock trial and Academic Bowl at Glenbrook South. Part of what makes MUN unique is the opportunity for cooperation and discussion, something other activities can't provide. Successful delegates must remain true to their position while also adapting to the positions of other delegates. Successful delegates allow less vocal delegates into their blocs, help newer delegates, and helps the committee run smoothly. Given that I participate in so many activities related to public speaking, I value a delegate who can convey their opinion in a concise, confident, and effective manner. Everyone in committee deserves to have their voice heard and I have no tolerance for those who seek to belittle or silence others. As vice-chair, I hope to call on delegates in a manner that reflects my statements above. I will prioritize hearing multiple voices and perspectives before calling on delegates a second time. I appreciate delegates who are enthusiastic, kind, and have fun in committee. On a final note, please bear with Jaden and me as we navigate running our first committee. However, I am extremely confident that we will do everything to ensure that you have a great GBSMUN VIII!

~Harlan Warnsman



Topic A: U.S.-Sino Relations

History of the Problem:

Ever since the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the U.S. and China have had a tense relationship. The U.S. backed the Nationalist Chinese who fled to the Republic of China when Mao Zedong established the communist People's Republic of China, and the conflict over recognition of Taiwan has remained central to the tension even as other issues have emerged. The emergence of China as a leading economic and military power has complicated relations even further, with the formation of an essentially bipolar global power structure: U.S. vs. China. Furthermore, China and the U.S. are the leaders in global greenhouse gas emissions, and the nations will need to work together to combat climate change. The relationship between the United States and China will continue to define international politics for years to come, and it will be imperative for the U.S. Senate to take action to limit conflict while still standing up for American values and human rights.

Political and Economic:

Politically and ideologically, China and the United States differ greatly, and this has been a major driver of the current conflict. The Chinese Communist Party has made a nationalist, anti-American agenda a large part of their platform and an important way to ensure support from their constituents and allies. Meanwhile, the United States has similarly villainized China and their communist ideology. This, coupled with the fact that the two nations are competing

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for economic and military superiority, causes significant tension and undergirds the risk that the conflict could boil over at any moment. The two nations have shown an ability to overcome ideological differences in the past. For example, harshly anti-Communist and anti-China president Richard Nixon shocked the world when he re-established diplomatic relations with China in 1972. Leaders on both sides recognized the importance of peace and mutual recognition, enforcing the values of state sovereignty and coexistence militarily and economically.

This newfound cooperation between the U.S. and China led to much more economic interdependence between the two nations. China and the U.S., the world leaders in trade and Gross Domestic Product, rely on each other's goods and services. For example, the United States runs a \$141.92 billion goods trade deficit with China, meaning that China has ample capability to fight back if the U.S. attempts to impose higher tariffs, or if they try to use sanctions as a foreign policy tool. China and the U.S. are by far each other's biggest trading and investment partners. Technological interdependence between the two nations is of particular concern to many policymakers, because this could enable spying or sabotage. Any potential actions taken by the U.S. must take into account the amount of economic power that China holds. Recently, this was demonstrated by the "trade war" that President Trump initiated against China to try to decrease the trade deficit and stop the rampant outsourcing of

manufacturing jobs to China. However, the action served only to hinder economic growth and crucial investment spending. Furthermore, the United States lost 300,000 jobs. Such an aggressive economic policy against China proved to be unsuccessful, but allowing China's continued dominance is similarly unsustainable. It will be crucial for policymakers to strike a balance between assertiveness and compromise.

Military:

The United States and China have long struggled to gain global military dominance and exert their power over the rest of the world. These struggles have come in the form of “micro-battles” over territories in conflict with the “one China” ideology like Taiwan. For example, the United States has long recognized the “one China” policy under the Third Communique, however, the U.S. continues to sell arms to the territory despite not officially recognizing Taiwan as a sovereign nation. This contradiction has led to fury and frustration within the Xi regime. Furthermore, the United States speculates that the Chinese have gained the military capability to launch an invasion on the island nation. In that event, the United States has maintained that it would defend Taiwan against an invasion, a bold stance in contrast to the “one China” prerogative. As a result, the United States must tread lightly in regards to Taiwan. Chinese officials have urged the United States to end the sale of arms to Taiwan and fall back in line with the policies outlined under the Third Communique. However, the United States must

also consider its support of global democracy and maintain its firm stance against Chinese power in the South China Sea. The United States must also consider its allies in the region, namely Japan and South Korea. After all, moving away from Taiwan could be seen as abandoning other South Asian allies, leaving South Korea and Japan to face China's wrath alone.

Human Rights:

Many countries look towards the United States to hold China accountable for their numerous human rights violations. Specifically, the United States has been concerned with Chinese treatment of Uyghur Muslims in the Xinjiang province. The United States has declared that the Chinese are committing a genocide against the Uyghur people, citing forced labor, torture, and sexual assault within Chinese "re-education" camps as evidence. Additionally, China has been accused of using brutal national security law to crack down on protesters in Tibet and Hong Kong. The new national security law is designed to promote obedience and prevent future protests through harsh punishments. For example, damaging government buildings could be seen as an "act of subversion" -- a crime punishable by life imprisonment. As a result, the United States and many other countries are considering a diplomatic boycott of the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing, a dramatic move that could either fracture U.S.-Sino relations or spark change in Chinese human rights policy. If senators choose to prioritize human rights,

they must weigh the benefits of ending human rights violations against the cost of Chinese aggression and potential war.

Environment:

The strength of U.S.-Sino relations has significant implications for the climate change crisis. As the two leading contributors to climate change in the world, their cooperation with the goals laid out in the Paris Climate Accords and other climate agreements is a top priority. However, both countries have been reluctant to implement sweeping measures to curb greenhouse gas emissions because they are worried about the potential economic consequences this could bring about. The nations will be unwilling to risk sacrificing profits unless the other country agrees to as well. For example, the U.S. never ratified the Kyoto Protocol because it was optional for developing countries like China and India. Similarly, President Trump pulled the United States out of the Paris Climate Accords when he believed that the bill was too favorable to China. These examples demonstrate the challenge that U.S. policymakers face when trying to implement environmental policies. Conversely, the U.S.-China Joint Glasgow Declaration has shown the potential for cooperation between the two countries. At the COP26 in Glasgow, the two countries came together to reinforce their commitment to the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement and substantially reduce carbon dioxide and methane emissions and

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limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. If senators choose to focus on the environmental aspect of U.S.-Sino relations, they should try to build off of the successes of this Joint Declaration.

Your Task:

There are clearly a litany of issues which the U.S. Senate must address to ensure global peace and security vis-à-vis China. You as senators have leeway to discuss whichever aspect of the issue you view as most pressing, but emphasis should be placed on forward-thinking, long-term solutions. Positions on the U.S.-Sino relationship do not break sharply along partisan lines, so it will be important to compromise and work with senators on all sides of the issue, regardless of your senator's party.

Here are some questions to help you think about possible resolution topics:

How will we get China to agree to any solution we pass?

Is it more important to avoid war or emphasize support for our allies in Taiwan?

To what extent can we use our power to regulate human rights abuses in China?

What foreign policy successes can we learn from, and what pitfalls should we try to avoid?

What diplomatic tools do we have that we can leverage in negotiations with China?

On what issues are we willing to compromise with China in order to ease tensions?

How can we prevent U.S. power from being weakened or threatened?

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Topic B: The Border Crisis

History of the Problem:

Immigration at the southern border of the United States has long been a contentious political issue. Since the 1970s, a number of factors have induced migrants to leave their home countries and make the journey to the U.S. The Latin American countries with the greatest numbers of immigrants coming to the U.S. have experienced significant violence and political instability, as well as economic and social inequality. In many cases, migrants are in serious danger in their home country, and they are drawn by the economic opportunities available in the U.S.

However, U.S. immigration laws only allow around 675,000 visas every year, meaning many immigrants enter illegally instead of waiting to complete the asylum process. The implications of this are widely debated, but the job of the U.S. Senate will be to decide the best course of action for dealing with the current influx of immigrants at the border.

Root Causes:

Much of the immigration to the U.S. along the southern border is a direct result of violence in the home countries of migrants. In the Northern Triangle of Central America, which consists of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras, migrants are driven by a combination of environmental, socioeconomic, and political concerns. At the base level, many of these countries rely on agriculture as their primary source of economic output. Yet these nations also experience high levels of natural disasters. Flooding, earthquakes, and landslides plague coastal

regions, where a high percentage of population is located. Furthermore, climate change has increased the incidence of drought in the region, which is disastrous to the lives and livelihoods of many. This is exacerbated by the fact that the infrastructure to deal with these natural disasters is severely lacking. Natural disasters ruin homes and entire areas, accelerating the migration process.

However, natural disasters are not the only layer of the issue. Extreme wealth inequality means that much of the region's money is controlled by only a few people, and there is very little opportunity for economic advancement. Much of the population of Central America is young and will be reaching working age soon, meaning that without significant job creation there will be even higher unemployment. This will induce more people to come to the U.S. border in search of job opportunities. Another major concern is the levels of violence in the region. Gang violence is a significant concern, as multinational cartels use Central America to transport drugs from Latin America to the profitable U.S. market. Gang violence has displaced hundreds of thousands. Additionally, Latin America has the highest rate of gender-based violence in the world, which pushes many female migrants and children to leave. The governments in these nations have struggled to implement effective change and deal with the violence, inequality, and disaster which has plagued the region. Several Latin American countries are under the control of dictatorial regimes that pay little attention to the people, making them more likely to

leave to live under the more stable government in the United States. Additionally, once individual migrants arrive in the U.S., their families are more inclined to follow them, leading to the practice of chain migration. Chain migration is responsible for 61% of all immigration into the United States since 1981.

Unauthorized Immigrants in the U.S.:

Another aspect of the border crisis is the number of undocumented immigrants present in the United States. Unauthorized immigrants account for 23% of the immigrants in the United States, and 3.2% of the U.S. population as a whole. 48% of all undocumented immigrants are of Mexican nationality, while the next largest cohort (19%) comes from Central American nations and 8% come from South America. The U.S. has taken a variety of tactics to deal with the issue of unauthorized immigration. In 1986, the Immigration Reform and Control Act was passed. This act granted amnesty to illegal immigrants who had either lived in the U.S. continuously since 1982 or who had performed 90 or more days of agricultural work, granting legal status to almost 3 million people. At the same time, however, this bill made hiring undocumented immigrants illegal, and made more strict requirements for employers to perform background checks on the individuals they were hiring. The IRCA is indicative of a larger policy trend which emphasizes both amnesty and strict enforcement of the law. For example, the 1996 Illegal Immigrant Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act increased

police capability to enforce immigration laws. Conversely, during the 1990s a number of amnesty bills were passed, granting legal status to hundreds of thousands of immigrants living in the U.S.

More recently, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) executive order passed by Barack Obama in 2012 expanded the legal status of nearly 700,000 unauthorized immigrants who were brought to the U.S. as children, granting them temporary permission to remain the U.S. without the threat of deportation and giving them more access to key documents like work permits. However, more sweeping legislation which would have provided a pathway to citizenship for millions of illegal immigrants in the U.S. failed to pass the House in 2013.

Currently, the status of DACA is in doubt. A Texas court ruled that the order was unlawful while allowing the program to continue for those currently supported by it. It will be up to this Senate to determine what further action should be taken on DACA and whether it should be upheld, disbanded, or replaced with new legislation. It will be important for senators to take into account past laws relating to the status of undocumented immigrants in the U.S. while determining what actions to take.

Current Border Issues:

Since President Biden took office, there has been a significant influx of immigrants at the border. Economic problems resulting from the COVID pandemic have induced many migrants to flee their home countries, and immigration rates have been spiking since April of 2020. However, some say that Biden's promise of greater rights for undocumented immigrants has also encouraged more immigration. Regardless of the causes, as many as two million encounters with immigrants at the southern border are likely to occur in 2021 alone, creating major concerns about whether the U.S. immigration system will be able to handle so many people. A significant number of these immigrants are unaccompanied minors over whom the U.S. government has been forced to take custody. Furthermore, the U.S. does not have sufficient capacity to reunite families which have been separated. While Biden had pledged much more amnesty than President Trump, the vast numbers have forced him to continue the policy of turning back essentially all undocumented migrants. The U.S. direly needs to address the current border crisis before the situation gets even further out of control.

Your Task:

It is obvious that the crisis at the United States border is complicated, urgent, and seemingly never-ending. As Senators, you all have the responsibility to provide safe methods of immigration for migrants, ensure the security of Americans on the homeland, and promote the all-important American ideal of equal opportunity for all. The issue of immigration has become incredibly partisan and controversial, with many different ideas on how to prevent a crisis at the border. As a result, you and your potential solutions must walk the political tightrope – balancing the interest of yourself, your party, and the constituents you represent.

Here are some questions to help you think about possible resolution topics:

Should the United States expand the number of visas available to migrants?

Is it justified for the U.S. to intervene for the sake of greater stability in Latin American countries?

How should the United States address chain migration?

What immigration policy successes can we replicate, and what failures should we avoid?

What further action should be taken on DACA?

How should the U.S. Senate account for executive involvement in Congressional legislation?

How important is the U.S. “image” in a migrant’s decision to come to the United States?

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Positions:

Chuck Schumer (D, NY), Senate Majority Leader

Dick Durbin (D, IL), Senate Majority Whip

Joe Manchin (D, WV)

Kyrsten Sinema (D, AZ)

Bernie Sanders (D, VT)

Tammy Duckworth (D, IL)

Maggie Hassan (D, NH)

Michael Bennet (D, CO)

Raphael Warnock (D, GA)

Catherine Cortez Masto (D, NV)

Chris Van Hollen (D, MD)

Mark Kelly (D, AZ)

Elizabeth Warren (D, MA)

Cory Booker (D, NY)

Amy Klobuchar (D, MN)

Sherrod Brown (D, OH)

Ed Markey (D, MA)

Tim Kaine (D, VA)

Ben Ray Luján (D, NM)

Mitch McConnell (R, KY), Senate Minority Leader

John Thune (R, SD), Senate Minority Whip

Lisa Murkowski (R, AK)

Rand Paul (R, KY)

Ron Johnson (R, WI)

Marco Rubio (R, FL)

Chuck Grassley (R, IA)

Tim Scott (R, SC)

Mike Lee (R, UT)

Josh Hawley (R, MO)

Rick Scott (R, FL)

Ted Cruz (R, TX)

Mitt Romney, (R, UT)

Susan Collins (R, ME)

Lindsey Graham (R, SC)

Tom Thillis (R, NC)

Rob Portman (R, OH)

Mike Braun (R, IN)

Ben Sasse (R, NE)