



Executive Action Sheet for Senate Legislation

Senate Bill 329-

Resolution 329-

I, Meghana Boojala, President of the Student Assembly of William & Mary do hereby:

Approve

Veto

The Student Assembly Senate Legislation:



Meghana Boojala

President, 329th Student Assembly (21-22)

DATE:

329th Student Assembly,  
Senate Bill 329-026

A Bill

*To fund Steer Clear for the remainder of the budgetary year and revive an essential safe-ride service for students*

### **The Steer Clear Revival Act**

An Act of the 329th Student Assembly of William & Mary,

Sponsored by Chair of the Senate Owen Williams ('23) & Senator Mia Tilman ('24)

Co-Sponsored by Senate Finance Committee

Supported by Steer Clear, Student Assembly President Meghana Boojala ('22), SA Department of Finance

WHEREAS, "Steer Clear is a safe-ride program that provides a reliable, secure and free means of travel for students on weekend nights when school is in session;"<sup>1</sup>

WHEREAS, "The organization aims to reduce risky behavior, namely driving under the influence and traveling unescorted during late hours;"<sup>2</sup>

WHEREAS, Steer Clear has not been operational since March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic;

WHEREAS, student life has returned to a mostly in-person setting during the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 academic years;

WHEREAS, Student Assembly leadership released a [survey](#) to the student body that yielded over 400 responses from both undergraduate and graduate students;

WHEREAS, ride-sharing apps such as Uber and Lyft frequently experience shortages of drivers due to the smaller Williamsburg population;

WHEREAS, when drivers are in short supply, costs for rides can skyrocket out of many students' affordable price range;

WHEREAS, Steer Clear drivers are all William & Mary students, and there are always two Steer Clear workers in a van at a time, bringing a level of safety and security that ride-shares do not;

WHEREAS, many students indicated in the survey that even if they used or intend to use Steer Clear on a very intermittent basis, that having the service available to them would bring peace of mind;<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://wmpeople.wm.edu/site/page/steerclear/home>

<sup>2</sup> "

<sup>3</sup> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IRz1ddGMYZoYiPtH2rnzsd2zGpfu7eqb/view>

WHEREAS, nearly 88% of survey respondents indicated that they would prefer to utilize Steer Clear as opposed to using a ride-sharing service if they wanted a ride home at night;<sup>4</sup>

WHEREAS, students overwhelmingly agreed that Steer Clear's \$15,000 annual operating costs are a justified expense, even when notified that this meant funding might be decreased for other recognized student organizations;<sup>5</sup>

WHEREAS, Steer Clear experienced a near complete overhaul of leadership due to the long period of inactivity due to COVID-19 and their current executive board received little to no transitional support;

WHEREAS, the minimum wage in Virginia has increased since the last time Steer Clear operated, and is slated to continue rising annually through 2026;

WHEREAS, SLD has notified SA and Steer Clear leadership that the Steer Clear vans are in need of replacement within the next 2-6 years;

WHEREAS, due to the changes in the Student Assembly budgetary process moving to a quarterly system, it is likely that in future years Steer Clear will be funded by Student Assembly via an annual contract;

Now, therefore, be it,

RESOLVED, that the Student Assembly of William & Mary,

1. Allocates up to \$6,000 from the Student Assembly Reserves for the operational expenses of Steer Clear to resume in the Spring 2022 semester through the remainder of the 2021-2022 academic year;
  - a. Including payroll of hiring paid student Steer Clear drivers at Virginia's current minimum wage and operational supplies that support the program (wireless service for phones, cleaning supplies for vans, etc.)
2. Authorizes Steer Clear to operate within a 3-mile radius weekly on Friday and Saturday nights between 10pm and 2am through allocated funding from Student Assembly;
3. Charges the sponsors of this bill, the Department of Finance, and SLD with monitoring Steer Clear's operation for the remainder of the 329th Session to facilitate Steer Clear's return to normal operations;
  - a. Arranges weekly regular meetings between these parties, which may be shifted to a bi-weekly or other regular basis deemed sufficient by SLD.
4. Charges Steer Clear with maintaining data on all rides provided to students (including tracking number of riders, wait times, general pick up and drop off locations, and other relevant data about the user/driver experience) and sharing all financial records with Student Assembly;
  - a. This shall include all payroll information as well as all operational expenses;

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<sup>4</sup> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IRz1ddGMYZoYiPtH2rnzsd2zGpfu7eqb/view>

<sup>5</sup> "

- b. Charges the Senate Finance Committee to review this data at least once per semester and to recommend any changes in funding that may be needed as a result of their findings;
5. Establishes that funding in the future will be conducted through a yearly annual contract to reevaluate the demonstrated financial needs and account for changes in minimum wage;
6. Establishes that Steer Clear's funding from the Student Assembly is contingent upon Steer Clear meeting all university responsibilities, obligations, and protocols for safe and compliant operation inclusive of: SLD direction and guidance; Payroll Operations; and any direction set by the University Risk Manager for Steer Clear operations.