WHEREAS, the Cultural and Community Centers (CCCs) are an important part of the Virginia Tech community and moreover are absolutely essential to fulfilling the principles of community Virginia Tech aspires to; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Tech has and continues to fall short when it comes to diversity and equity initiatives (Appendix 1) and while progress has been made, there are still significant issues with undervaluing marginalized members of the community; and

WHEREAS, for example, the black student population at Virginia Tech hovers around 4% for undergraduates and graduate students in comparison to roughly 20% of Virginia’s population being black, which represents a fivefold disparity in demographic representation; and

WHEREAS, while demographic representation is important, it is only part of the goal of meaningfully supporting underrepresented student populations and serves as a barometer of institutional problems rather than the end-goal of student flourishing and material support; and

WHEREAS, The CCCs are a prime example of this, with a high turnover rate for administrators of these organizations due in no small part to a lack of compensation, support, and resources necessary to accomplish their mission; and
WHEREAS, students who actively participate in the CCCs are some of the most engaged Hokies on this campus (see their program calendar here: https://ccc.vt.edu/calendar.html) but have consistently been disregarded by administrators when raising issues of equity; and

WHEREAS, in the last five years, almost every CCC has raised issues to the administrator’s attention and expressed dissatisfaction with the result. Most publically, students from the LGBTQ+ resource center, the Asian cultural engagement center, and the Black cultural center have all raised issues concerning the lack of support the CCCs have received and these issues were not addressed; and

WHEREAS, the protests in the summer of 2020 garnered university wide support with little meaningful action or reallocation of resources based on what activists on campus have called for; and

WHEREAS, evidence supports that the presence of CCCs in higher education promote community bonding, leadership, achievement, and identity development while providing resources and support for challenging damaging hegemonic institutional systems that embody, enforce, and obfuscate lingering traces of colonialism, nationalism, and supremacy. CCCs are invaluable sources of community diversity, strength, resilience, and resistance. They are crucial to achieving VT’s core goals of mutual respect and equitability (Appendix 2); and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the senates who support this resolution call on the administration to make the Cultural and Community Centers a greater financial priority and provide more support and staffing to allow them to accomplish their mission. This should include an immediate stimulus (FY2022-2023) that would provide raises (increase to next pay band) for all staff supporting the CCCs and strong consideration for hiring more staff to facilitate the mission of the CCCs depending on student input; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we recommend an ongoing working group be established that specifically works to identify resource and staffing needs for the CCCs and prioritize their implementation. This working group would include a significant stakeholder portion made up of dedicated students from across the CCCs whose perspectives will be put front and center in CCC resource allocation decisions.
Appendix 1: Demographics of the University, State of Virginia, and Entire U.S. Population

https://vt.edu/about/facts-about-virginia-tech/factbook/student-overview.html
In comparison, the U.S. demographic rates look like:

**US vs. Race**

- White: 58.8%
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander: 0.2%
- Hispanics of any race: 18.1%
- Black or African American: 13.1%
- Asian: 5.8%
- American Indian or Alaska Native: 1.3%
- Two or more races: 2.7%

And Virginia demographic rates look like:

**Virginia vs. Race**

- White: 60.2%
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander: 0.1%
- Hispanics of any race: 9.6%
- Black or African American: 19.6%
- Asian: 6.8%
- Two or more races: 3.1%
These statistics show a striking disparity in the racial demographics of Virginia Tech and the make-up of our state/country that warrant addressing. While representation is not the same as meaningfully supporting students of color, it does speak to some systemic failings. The cultural and community centers are a key place where we can begin to address this but our recommendation is that we also directly increase funding for black, latin american, Asian, and indigenous students.

Appendix 2: Resources for Advancing VT’s Diversity Missions

