I have signed SS2021-R1 – Senate Social Media Account after much consideration. I offer the following advice regarding this matter:

To preface: The Executive Branch has had a social media infrastructure for years. As paid employees of the Student Government Association and the University of North Texas, we are bound to a standard of operation which protects the integrity of our social media accounts and the transfer of login credentials to the next administration. Further, the main Student Government Association social media accounts have amassed an online presence through consistent and diligent work of former administrations. The actionable portion of SS2021-R1 states the following: “the SGA Senate will have its own social media accounts; Twitter, Instagram, and any other popular social media accounts. The responsibility to operate and share all goals and or [sic.] accomplishments of the Senate will be the sole responsibility of the Senate Officers.”

I believe that the language of this resolution, without an accompanying amendment to the bylaws or Senate Code of Conduct, allows for the following potential issues:

1. There is no process outlined for the transfer of login credentials from one officer to the following year’s officer, which creates a security risk for the Senate.
2. Possibly the lack of an ability to develop marketing materials. As the Senate is creating its own social media accounts (to be managed by Senate Officers), my communications staff should not be involved in the administration, nor assist in the development of materials, of the Senate social media accounts.
3. The Senate will be responsible for the material it posts. If in any given year the use of these accounts is abused in any way, the Senate will need to have a process to remove the instigators and recover the integrity of its accounts. Further, these accounts should not be used to represent the Senate’s constituencies without accompanying legislation, which is not specified in this legislation. In addition, the Senate must ensure, for its own interest
and the interest of the SGA as a whole, that its social media accounts do not become "dead" accounts: accounts which are no longer utilized and which have no new content.

4. The creation of Senate social media accounts has the potential to divert followership of our main SGA accounts. While this may be less of an issue if there is a cooperative relationship between the Executive and Legislative Branches of the SGA, I am considering the possibility of there being years in which this is simply not the case. Centrality of information is important to our administration and I encourage the Senate to, as it progresses with the creation of these accounts, direct its followers to information which may be available on the main SGA accounts and the SGA website.

5. There is not a section which specifies the process for Senators adding posts to the social media accounts, as well as the process for deleting accounts (in the case it becomes a dead account as previously defined) if the Senate decides to. (will information and data be retained? What is the quorum standard for the deletion of accounts?)

There may be additional issues which I have not considered, and which are not in this memo. This memo serves to highlight the base concerns which I have heard, and thought of, as I have reviewed the legislation. I respect the Senate’s authority to establish its own form of communication under Article IV, Section 8, Subsection I of the Student Constitution through the signing of this legislation. I further sign this document because it is the intent of the author of this resolution to introduce legislation which amends the bylaws to this effect in the future (according to statements made in the Senate meeting in which this was voted on). However, as is the purpose of this memo, I strongly encourage the Senate to expeditiously consider the implementation of tangible safeguards to prevent against the concerns which are outlined in this memo, in the interest of the Senate and our collective constituencies.

As always, if you need to reach me, you can email sgapresident@unt.edu, call 940-565-3853 (if I’m in the office), call my cell, or come to my office at the UNT Union Room 344c (again, if I’m in the office).