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**Letter to the Editor from ASI's EVP Whisten**

(FRESNO, Calif.)- As the ASI Executive Vice President, it is important for me to clear up misinformation that was printed in the Collegian and circulated on campus about the ASI meeting that occurred on March 5. During the meeting, I ordered the meeting room cleared after interruptions and other conduct from the audience made it impossible and unsafe for business to continue.

The Collegian's article (on 3/12) suggested that the ASI somehow violated California open meeting law during that meeting. Such an assertion is completely false. When I temporarily adjourned the meeting because of the disturbances, campus law enforcement instructed all senators and executives to enter the ASI Senate Office (USU 316) for safety precautions. However, the Collegian's article omits this. Moreover, the article stated that, "During this intermission, senators deliberated in a separate room closed to the public." This assertion is wrong. I can assure Fresno State students that the meeting did not continue in the office and the Student Senate members did not discuss agenda items, as such conduct without notice would have been a violation of the Gloria Romero Open Meetings Act of 2000 (the law that applies to student organizations like ASI).

During this recess the audience (which included University faculty, community members, and students) refused to comply with my directives, the chair of the Senate, and remained in the room. In fact, I personally observed some audience members chanting and shouting obscenities towards students and staff of ASI. It was after I consulted with University police that ASI Senators were led back into the meeting room and the Senate reconvened. All members of the public were allowed to observe the meeting, though order had to be called five times and one member of the public approached the student table threatening violence.

I would like to reiterate, ASI did not violate State open meeting law. I personally discussed this matter with ASI's outside legal counsel who is an expert on open meeting law. Because we followed law enforcement directives, were compelled to leave the room, and we did not discuss ASI business while in the Senate Office, the Student Senate did not violate the law.

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ASI is committed to transparency and due process. We are glad when students and the rest of the public attend and participate in ASI meetings. Many times we disagree about issues both within the Student Senate and within our respective constituencies, but we do so with healthy discourse. However, these objectives are threatened when decorum breaks down, we are unable to conduct business, and senators are in fear for their safety. The other executives, Senators and I are committed to finding an equitable resolution to the concerns of our ASI membership but we must arrive at a resolution in a constructive way.

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As the recognized student body government organization at California State University, Fresno, Associated Students, Inc (ASI) provides a means for effective student participation in the governance of the University, fosters awareness of student opinions on campus issues, assists in the protection of student rights, and provides programs and services to meet the needs of the students and campus community.