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The Associated Students of The University of Montana
Resolution regarding Sustainability Fee
March 25, 2009
Senate Bill Number SB50-08/09
Authored by: Sonny Kless
Sponsored by: Senators Matt Fennell, John Wilke and Aly Spear

WHEREAS, the University of Montana (UM) has dedicated itself to sustainability and to reducing its carbon emissions as a signatory of the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment;

WHEREAS, the students of UM have expressed overwhelming support for passage of a sustainability fee to reduce campus carbon emissions and waste;

WHEREAS, the auxiliary buildings of the campus are unable to receive any more bond financing and are in need of energy efficiency renovations;

WHEREAS, Facility Services has recently completed an energy audit of the campus outlining \$25 million dollars in “shovel-ready” energy and waste reduction improvements;

WHEREAS, there exists the opportunity for student involvement in making campus more energy efficient and reducing resource as well as creating renewable energy;

WHEREAS, numerous students have developed ideas for making campus more energy efficient and cleaner but lack the funds for implementation;

WHEREAS, hands-on service learning resulting from integrated projects between University and students present great educational opportunities particularly in the realm of green job skills, an area growing in demand;

WHEREAS, revolving loan funds have been proven successful at many universities, both at increasing finances and reducing environmental impact;

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED, that the Senate of The Associated Students of The University of Montana (ASUM) supports the creation of an optional four (\$4) dollar per student per semester fee to create a Revolving Energy Loan Fund (RELF) that will finance cost-effective energy efficiency projects and utility reduction measures with quantifiable monetary savings, as well as renewable energy production projects;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that the fee will go into effect Spring Semester of 2010 to give the University and affected entities time to coordinate and prepare, and that no loans shall be issued before this time;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that 87.5% or \$3.50 of the \$4 per student per semester be placed in an Unrestricted Designated Fund under the Associate Vice President of Administration and Finance, to be used specifically for the most cost-effective student sponsored energy efficiency, waste and utility reduction, or renewable energy projects on campus;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that 12.5% or \$0.50 of the \$4 per student per semester fee be placed in the aforementioned Unrestricted Designated Fund under the Associate Vice President of Administration and Finance will be reserved for salary of the ASUM Sustainability Coordinator under the Office of Sustainability who is charged as primary liaison between students and the University for development and vetting of projects funded by this fee.

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that the fee will be 'opt-out' providing students the choice to not pay if they so choose;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that in six (6) years the fee will come before the consideration of the governing ASUM Senate to either be terminated or put to a student referendum for continuance;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that should the RELF be terminated all remaining funds in the account will revert to the Building fee account to defray student costs;

LET IF BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Sustainable Campus Committee be charged with creation of a RELF Working Group by the middle of Fall Semester 2009 and that the Working Group be comprised of nine (9) members including: four (4) students-at-large, two (2) of which must be ASUM Senators, one (1) member of Facility Services, one (1) faculty member from the Environmental Studies Department, and the ASUM Business Manager. One (1) non-student member of SCC shall serve as Chair of the Working Group. The ASUM Sustainability Coordinator under the Office of Sustainability shall sit on the board as an ex-officio member;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that only projects identified and approved by the RELF Working Group are eligible to receive funding from the RELF;

LET IT BE FURHTER RESOLVED, that the office of the Associate Vice President of Administration and Finance will oversee and be responsible for accounting of the RELF account and will submit a financial report to the RELF Working Group at least twice a year;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that all proposals for projects must come from students via the ASUM Sustainability Center and the Office of Sustainability, before being submitted to the RELF Working Group;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that all construction, improvements, upgrades, renovations, retrofits, consulting, or manual labor performed on campus complies with University and Facility Services policy;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that the RELF Working Group create and distribute a semiannual Request For Proposals outlining project criteria and eligibility;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that the RELF Working Group receive, revise as necessary, and ratify Appendix 1 by the end of Fall Semester 2009;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that a ratified Appendix 1 be sent to ASUM by the end of Spring Semester 2010, and that copies shall be sent to the SCC and Facility Services for reference to all governance, rules, approval criteria, and fund operations and management;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that the ASUM Senate will submit this proposal to a student referendum on the general election ballot in April 2009.

Passed by Committee: _____, 2009

Passed by Senate: _____, 2009

Andrew Dusek,
Relations and Affairs Chair

Siri Smillie,
Chair of the Senate