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Spring 2009

### SB52-08/09: MontPIRG Fee

Matthew Fennell

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**The Associated Students of The University of Montana**  
**Resolution Regarding MontPIRG Fee**  
**April 8, 2009**  
**Senate Bill Number 52-08/09**  
**Authored by: Senator Matthew Fennell**  
**Sponsored by: Senators Emily May, John Wilke, Kip Barhaugh and Mary Kettering**

WHEREAS, Montana Public Interest Research Group (MontPIRG) has a 30-year history of advocating on behalf of students, consumers, and the environment;

WHEREAS, MontPIRG hires professional staff to recruit, train, and advocate on behalf of University of Montana students to find solutions to the problems they face;

WHEREAS, MontPIRG fits the educational mission of The University of Montana by connecting discussions to the real world through hands-on experience;

WHEREAS, a MontPIRG fee enhances the marketplace of ideas that exists on campus by focusing on current events, and issues leading to a more vibrant community;

WHEREAS, MontPIRG provides a vehicle for social change by providing students with the tools and resources they need to run effective issue based campaigns;

WHEREAS, MontPIRG fits the service mission of the University by giving back to the community;

WHEREAS, there is significant student support for the creation of a MontPIRG fee as evidenced by the 1,400 + student signatures collected during petitioning;

WHEREAS, each student reserves the right to *waive* ~~have~~ their fee ~~refunded~~;

WHEREAS, a refundable fee collected will be allocated to hire full- and part-time staff, fund an operating budget, finance student events and advocacy in matters of the public interest, and pay membership dues to United States Public Interest Research Group (U.S.PIRG);

WHEREAS, a refundable fee provides necessary stability for funding any organization;

WHEREAS, the fee will be reauthorized by the Associated Students of The University of Montana (ASUM) Senate, the student body, and the Board of Regents (BOR) every two (2) years;

WHEREAS, the budget allocation process from the fee will be conducted by the MontPIRG Board of Directors, composed entirely of University of Montana students, in accordance with open meeting laws, and MontPIRG's bylaws:

WHEREAS, the MontPIRG Board of Directors retains ultimate authority on issue stances, the organization's budget, and staff hiring;

WHEREAS, MontPIRG is in association with the 100 student PIRGs of U.S.PIRG;

WHEREAS, through association with the 99 other student PIRGs, MontPIRG will utilize the benefits of the student PIRG's central staff for accounting and administration;

WHEREAS, if passed, MontPIRG will enter into a contract with ASUM. ASUM will collect the MontPIRG fee and is entitled to collect a percent from it to account for costs of administrative assessment;  
WHEREAS, MontPIRG will act in accordance with its own bylaws, University policy, and the hierarchy of law (city, county, state, federal). Violation of these standards will result in termination of the fee;

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the ASUM Senate supports the question of a \$5.00 refundable fee for MontPIRG to be placed on the ballot this spring for the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 academic years.

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that ASUM supports a \$5.00 refundable fee for MontPIRG for the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 academic years.

LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the ASUM Senate will submit this proposal as a student referendum in the April 2009 elections.

~~LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that ASUM will submit this proposal to the Montana Associated Students (MAS) for a vote prior to the next BOR meeting.~~

Passed by Committee: \_\_\_\_\_, 2009

Passed by Senate: \_\_\_\_\_, 2009

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Andrew Dusek,  
Relations and Affairs Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Siri Smillie,  
Chair of the Senate