Fall 2014

SB059-14/15: Missoula Community Quality of Life Initiative

Chase Ellinger
The Associated Students of The University of Montana
Resolution Regarding Missoula Community Quality of Life Initiative
December 3, 2014
SB059-14/15
Authored by: Chase Ellinger, ASUM Senator
Sponsored by: Claire Chandler, ASUM Housing Board Chair; Kevin Skunkcap, ASUM Senator; Brandon Bart, ASUM Senator; Katherine Brady, Director, ASUM Off-Campus Renter Center

Whereas, the Associated Students of the University of Montana (ASUM) is a body responsible for advocating for the general welfare of students at the University of Montana (UM);

Whereas, the general welfare of students is directly related to their academic, extracurricular and future success both at UM and beyond;

Whereas, the Missoula housing market has seen at least three years of steady growth, thereby increasing home and property values across much of the city;

Whereas, there is a veritable shortage of affordable, safe, proximate and accessible off-campus housing designed for UM student use;

Whereas, over 10,000 UM students live off campus, with many living far from UM or under questionable conditions; i.e. lopsided rental contracts, or in homes that lack routine maintenance;

Whereas, the Residence Life Office (RLO) drastically reduced vacancy rates at Lewis and Clark Village (LCV) by allowing qualifying sophomore students to live in LCV beginning in August 2014, demonstrating the desire of non-freshmen to live in student housing communities off-campus;

Whereas, the ASUM President, the Mayor of Missoula, and the UM President signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on December 12, 2012, entitled the ‘Community Quality of Life Initiative,’ calling for the breaking of ground on “1,000 units of safe, affordable housing for students...[intended to] be open and rented” within two years;

Whereas, the aforementioned MOU called for the creation of a committee that would meet regularly to address the goals of the Initiative, but has only been able to meet once since being signed;

Whereas, the goal of building 1,000 units of safe, affordable housing for students within two years will not be met by December 12, 2014;

Therefore, Let it Be Resolved, that ASUM recommits itself to the goal of breaking ground on 1,000 units of safe, affordable housing for students that is in close proximity to the UM Mountain Campus;
Therefore, Let it Be Further Resolved, that ASUM requests the Community Quality of Life Committee set a realistic new deadline for breaking ground on new student housing developments and inform ASUM of the new deadline when it is created;

Therefore, Let it Be Further Resolved, that ASUM and the ASUM Housing Board will work with leaders in the UM administration and the City of Missoula, as well as interested community members and developers, to meet these ends by re-initiating meetings of the Quality of Life advisory committee and actively working with private developers to move new student housing projects forward;

Therefore, Let it Be Further Resolved, that ASUM requests an update from Mayor Engen and UM President Royce Engstrom about recent developments pertaining to student-oriented off-campus housing building projects by the conclusion of the 2014-2015 academic year;

Therefore, Let it Be Further Resolved, that a copy of this resolution be Dr. Royce Engstrom, UM President; John Engen, Mayor of Missoula; and Sandra Schoonover, Director of the UM Residence Life Office.

Passed by Committee: _____________________________, 2014

Passed by ASUM Senate: __________________________, 2014

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Sarah Smith,  Sean McQuillan,
Relations and Affairs Chair   Chair of the Senate