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SB73-14/15: Transportation Fee Referendum

Mary O’Malley

Jordan Hess

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Whereas, the Associated Students of the University of Montana’s Office of Transportation (ASUM OT) serves to increase student transportation options through the UDASH bus service and bike programming and infrastructure projects;

Whereas, ASUM OT provides transportation awareness to the University of Montana campus and community through rideshare matching services, individualized trip planning assistance, and education campaigns like Walk & Roll Week;

Whereas, 94% of students in a 2012 survey value the transportation options provided by ASUM OT;

Whereas, 32% of students in a 2012 survey reported that they bike to campus every day and over 4,500 bike commuters to campus were counted in a 2012 City of Missoula bike count;

Whereas, Section 4.4.2 of the University of Montana Climate Action Plan tasks ASUM OT with increasing incentives to bike or walk to campus by constructing on-campus covered bike parking and providing more visibility for bike incentive programs throughout the year;

Whereas, ASUM OT has limited resources to maintain and effectively supervise bike rental and bike maintenance student workers and programming;

Whereas, the creation of a permanent full-time office position would create increased capacity to hire student workers and oversee transportation programming, as well as provide increased efficiency and continuity within ASUM OT;

Whereas, ASUM OT student bus drivers’ starting wages are no longer competitive due to increases in minimum wage and inflation;

Whereas, ASUM OT student bus drivers’ current starting wages are substandard when compared to peers in the same profession and no longer reflect the level of training, responsibility, and professionalism attained;

Whereas, federal grants would allow ASUM OT to leverage student funds much more effectively, but ASUM OT cannot accept grants for new buses because it does not have matching funds available;

Whereas, if a bus were to be found unsafe or unusable, replacing said bus would be challenging and a decline in service would be likely;
Therefore, Let It Be Resolved, that this fee increase will be placed as a referendum item on the ballot of the spring 2015 ASUM election;

Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, that ASUM recommends the following ballot language:

The Transportation Fee supports the ASUM Office of Transportation. The ASUM Office of Transportation provides transportation options to the University of Montana community. These include high-frequency fare-free bus service to campus, late-night safe ride bus service, semester-long bicycle rentals, free two-day bike checkouts, and individualized trip planning. The services relieve traffic and parking congestion and reduce campus emissions. The ASUM Office of Transportation is one of the only student-run transportation systems in the country.

A $4.50 per semester increase to the Transportation Fee is needed to sustain the pilot bus services, including the new Purple Line with service to 5th, 6th, and Russell Streets; replace aging bus fleet more quickly ($1.92); expand the Yellow UBike checkout fleet ($0.50); provide more low-cost semester bicycle rentals; offer competitive; living wages to student drivers ($0.66); and build secure and covered bike parking in at least 10 locations around campus ($1.42).

[ ] Yes, I approve an increase to the Transportation Fee of $4.50 per semester.

[ ] No, I do not approve an increase to the Transportation Fee of $4.50 per semester

Passed by Committee: _____________________________, 2015

Passed by ASUM Senate: _________________________, 2015

________________________________  __________________________________
Sarah Smith,                                  Sean McQuillan,
Relations and Affairs Chair                     ASUM Senate Chair