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SB64-16/17: Resolution Opposing the Creation of a Porcine Research Facility

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The Associated Students of the University of Montana

Resolution Opposing the Creation of a Porcine Research Facility

February 15th, 2017

SB64-16/17

Authored by: Chase Greenfield, ASUM Business Manager;
Sponsored by:

Whereas, the Associated Students of the University of Montana (ASUM) is the official representative body of the students of the University of Montana (UM);

Whereas, the University of Montana is currently considering the creation of a porcine research facility, which would be a part of UM’s Neural Injury Center;

Whereas, this facility would use live animals (specifically mice and pigs) to conduct research concerning spinal injuries;

Whereas, this facility would cost approximately $4,000,000 to create, and would be funded through external grants and contracts;

Whereas, in over a decade of research in this area, not a single therapy for human beings has been produced as a result of animal experimentation;

Whereas, pigs and rodents are quadrupedal, do not have fine motor skills, and cannot respond to questions of sensory function. As such, these animals vary distinctly from humans in the necessary areas for research on spinal injury;

Whereas, all experimentation on pigs and mice in the area of spinal injury have lead only to the development of therapies for pigs and mice– without a single treatment that is applicable to human beings;

Whereas, alternative, ethical methods for conducting spinal cord research– including cell culture, digital imagery, and injured patient research– exist and would be more effective in analyzing spinal cord injuries in humans;

Whereas, numerous UM faculty members have spoken in opposition to the development of a UM porcine research facility, and have encouraged the exploration of alternatives to live-animal testing;

Therefore, Let It Be Resolved, that the Associated Students of the University of Montana (ASUM) opposes the creation of a porcine (or other live-animal) research facility at the University of Montana (UM)– both on and off campus;

Therefore, Let It Further Be Resolved, that ASUM encourages the UM Administration and the College of Health Professions and Biomedical Sciences to explore alternatives to live-animal research in the area of spinal and neural injuries;
Therefore, Let it Further Be Resolved, that ASUM encourages the UM Faculty and Staff Senates to also oppose the creation of a porcine research facility;

Therefore Let it Further Be Resolved, that a copy of this resolution be sent to:

Scott Whittenburg, Vice President for Research and Creative Scholarship; Soazig Le Bihan, Professor of Philosophy; Deborah Slicer, Professor of Philosophy; Beverly Edmond, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs; Sheila Stearns, President of the University of Montana; Reed Humphrey, Dean of the College of Health Professions and Biomedical Sciences; John DeBoer, Chair of the Faculty Senate; and Jen Zellmer-Cuaresma, Staff Senate President.

Passed by Committee: ____________________________, 2017

Passed by ASUM Senate: ____________________________, 2017

Connor Fitzpatrick
Chair of Relations & Affairs

Elizabeth Engebretson
Chair of the Senate