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SB66-19/20: Resolution Endorsing the University of Montana's Commitment to Conserve 35% More Energy by 2025

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1 **The Associated Students of the University of Montana**
2 **Resolution Endorsing the University of Montana's Commitment to Conserve 35% More**
3 **Energy by 2025**
4 **March 21, 2020**
5 **SB66-19/20**

6 **Authored by: Melody Hollar, Climate Response Club President;**
7 **Sponsored by: Noah Durnell, ASUM Senator; Adrianna Medina, ASUM Senator;**
8

9 Whereas, The Associated Students of the University of Montana (ASUM) represents all ASUM
10 fee-paying students of the University of Montana (UM);
11

12 Whereas, ASUM currently advocates for sustainability efforts through ASUM Sustainability and
13 Zero-Waste Committees, and through shared governance with ASUM representation on
14 Sustainable Campus and KRELF Committees;
15

16 Whereas, Climate change threatens the way of life found in Montana, the United States, and the
17 world at large through increasingly frequent and severe wildfires, other natural disasters, food
18 production disruptions, and exacerbated water issues¹²;
19

20 Whereas, Mitigating climate change is of particular importance to youth because they will be
21 most affected by the extreme climate impacts projected for the mid- to late-21st century³;
22

23 Whereas, Climate change is driven by greenhouse gas emissions⁴;

24 Whereas, Electricity generation in Montana contributes to approximately 27% of the state's
25 gross anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions, even when excluding electricity exports⁵;
26
27

28 Whereas, Montana emitted 117.7 million metric tons of CO₂ through energy-related activities in
29 2016⁶;

30 Whereas, UM spent \$4.004 million on Missoula campus building energy in Fiscal Year 2019 that
31 contributed to approximately 23,520 metric tonnes of CO₂ emissions⁷;

32 Whereas, UM's energy use accounts for about 2/3 of its total carbon emissions⁸;

33 Whereas, UM's energy is supplied almost entirely by NorthWestern Energy⁹;

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37

¹ Climate Smart Missoula: Local Signs of Change

² 2017 Montana Climate Assessment

³ Fall 2019 Bond Spending Priorities Student Survey

⁴ IPCC 2014 Report

⁵ 2007 Montana DEQ GHG Inventory

⁶ 2016 Federal Energy Information Administration Emissions Report

⁷ The University of Montana - Missoula Overall Energy Ranking of Building FY19 7/2018-6/2019

⁸ 2001-2007 UM GHG Assessment

⁹ 2010 Climate Action Plan UM

38 Whereas, NorthWestern Energy's monopoly over UM's energy gives the University very little
39 opportunity to reflect the University's values in energy procurement;

40
41 Whereas, Regional energy capacity during peak load periods are forecasted to experience
42 shortages as early as 2021, which has prompted NorthWestern Energy to express concern about
43 its ability to continue to supply affordable energy¹⁰;

44
45 Whereas, NorthWestern Energy plans to address the aforementioned energy shortage by
46 increasing the amount of energy it generates from coal and natural gas combustion and buying
47 expensive electricity on the general market¹¹;

48
49 Whereas, The likely regional energy shortage will expose consumers to rising and possibly
50 volatile energy prices¹²;

51
52 Whereas, The University of Montana spent \$5.5 million on utilities in 2016¹³;

53
54 Whereas, In its 2020 Strategic Plan, the University identified four core values that drive every
55 aspect of its mission and vision, including Leadership, Engagement, Diversity, and
56 Sustainability¹⁴;

57
58 Whereas, When describing its commitment to sustainability in its 2020 Strategic Plan, the
59 University stated that "The University of Montana models a pathway to economic, financial,
60 environmental, and cultural sustainability in every aspect of mission fulfillment"¹⁵;

61
62 Whereas, A survey sent to students in the fall of 2019 regarding spending priorities for the \$63
63 million in bond funds found sustainability to be the second highest-ranked priority of 2019¹⁶;

64
65 Whereas, Confronting climate change and the greenhouse gases that contribute to it is a major
66 component of sustainability;

67
68 Whereas, The University has made prior commitments to reduce its carbon footprint, including:

- 69 1. 2002 Talloires Declaration to commit to sustainable development¹⁷
70 2. 2007 American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment
71 (ACUPCC)¹⁸
72 3. 2008 GHG Assessment¹⁹
73 4. 2010 Climate Action Plan²⁰;

¹⁰ 2019 NWE Procurement Plan

¹¹ 2019 NWE Procurement Plan

¹² 2019 Montana Free Press Article

¹³ UM FY16 Utility Costs

¹⁴ 2020 UM Strategic Plan

¹⁵ 2020 UM Strategic Plan

¹⁶ Fall 2019 Bond Spending Priorities Student Survey

¹⁷ 2002 Talloires Declaration to Commit to Sustainable Development

¹⁸ 2010 Climate Action Plan UM

¹⁹ 2001-2007 UM GHG Assessment

²⁰ 2010 Climate Action Plan UM

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75 Whereas, By reducing its energy consumption, the University of Montana will reduce its
76 contribution to continued greenhouse gas emissions while also reducing its exposure to volatile
77 energy prices²¹;

78
79 Whereas, The University of Montana is undergoing a strategic energy Master Planning Process
80 for energy usage in the coming years;

81
82 Whereas, The University of Montana is considering hiring the engineering firm, McKinstry, for
83 an energy savings performance contract that will assess energy use and evaluate a range of
84 suggested energy-saving measures at UM;

85
86 Whereas, Upon completion of their analysis of energy-saving measures across campus,
87 McKinstry will provide a cost-savings guarantee for energy-saving measures that they will back
88 up with their own funding if savings are less than projected;

89
90 Whereas, The University of Montana acquired \$63 million in bond sales in the fall of 2019 to use
91 for physical improvements that must be spent within the next three years²²;

92
93 Whereas, The University of Montana is currently deciding how to apportion the \$63 million in
94 bond funds to infrastructure improvements to campus this semester;

95
96 Whereas, The students of the UM Climate Response Club are committed to pursuing energy
97 conservation through infrastructure improvements;

98
99 Whereas, A petition gathering support for a 35% reduction in energy use by 2025 has received
100 more than 300 petition signatures in two weeks;

101
102 Therefore, Let It Be Resolved, That ASUM urges the administration of the University of
103 Montana to act on its Strategic Plan and use some of the \$63 million in bond money to
104 implement the measures McKinstry suggests as energy-saving improvements to its physical
105 structures to achieve a 35% reduction in energy use compared to fiscal year 2019 by 2025;

106
107 Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, That ASUM calls on the Staff and Faculty Senate to pass
108 similar resolutions urging the administration to adopt this energy conservation goal;

109
110 Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, That ASUM urges the administration of the University of
111 Montana to include at least one student liaison in the deliberations regarding apportionment of
112 funds to infrastructure improvements;

113
114 Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, That this resolution be sent to Seth Bodnar, President of
115 the University of Montana; Kelly Webster, Chief of Staff; Paul Lasiter, Vice President of
116 Finance and Operations; Eva Rocke, UM Sustainability Coordinator; John Harbor, Provost and
117 Executive Vice President; Mark Pershouse, Chair of Faculty Senate; Chris Palmer, Chair-elect of

²¹ UM FY16 Utility Costs

²² \$63 Million Bond Sale

118 Faculty Senate; Rozlyn Haley, Chair of Staff Senate; Charity Atteberry, Chair-Elect of Staff
119 Senate; Brian Kerns, Facilities Engineer; Maddy Jones, ASUM Sustainability Coordinator.

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121

122 Passed by Committee: _____, 2020

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124 Passed by ASUM Senate: April 1, 2020

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129 _____
130 Noah Durnell,
131 Chair of the Relations and Affairs Committee

Ethan Hanley,
Chair of the Senate

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134 _____
135 Emma Keifer,
136 Chair of the ASUM Sustainability Committee

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138 Resolution unanimously approved