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SB69-20/21: Resolution Regarding Ballot Language for the Introduction of a Fee Supporting Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and Racial/Ethnic Student Groups

Isaac La'a

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1 **The Associated Students of the University of Montana**
2 **Resolution Regarding Ballot Language for the Introduction of a Fee Supporting Black,**
3 **Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and Racial/Ethnic Student Groups**

4 **March 5, 2021**

5 **SB69-20/21**

6 **Authored by: Isaac La'a, ASUM Senator;**

7 **Sponsored by: Danielle Pease, Student-at-Large;**

8
9 Whereas, At the February 24th, 2021 Associated Students of the University of Montana (ASUM)
10 meeting, a registered University of Montana (UM) student provided online public comment
11 addressing concerns about the struggles that Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)
12 students encounter¹;

13
14 Whereas, In this same meeting, it was recommended that ASUM support efforts to “*ensure that*
15 *every cultural group has significantly more funds than others*”²;

16
17 Whereas, BIPOC and Racial/Ethnic Student Groups continue to be resilient in the face of
18 discrimination, systemic racism, and substantial underfunding;

19
20 Whereas, These Student Groups are required to work twice as hard to fundraise for their cultural
21 events;

22
23 Whereas, BIPOC and Racial/Ethnic Student Groups have been tasked with creating a learning
24 environment endorsing worth and dignity of students, celebrating, producing, and advancing
25 diversity measures, and providing a voice for populations that have historically been
26 marginalized by the actions and inaction of non-BIPOC counterparts³;

27
28 Whereas, ASUM represents and provides crucial services to students at the UM;
29

¹ *Regular Associated Students of the University of Montana Meeting February 24, 2021, Before the Associated Students of the University of Montana, 2020/2021, Reg. Sess. (ASUM, 2021) (Public comment given by Adrianna Medina, outlining her personal experience as an ASUM senator experiencing racial slurs, and further indicating that other BIPOC students have experienced the same); Regular Associated Students of the University of Montana Meeting March 11, 2021, Before the Associated Students of the University of Montana, 2020/2021, Reg. Sess. (ASUM, 2021) (Public comment given by Benjamin Borhegyi, outlining his frustrating with ASUM’s inaction on BIPOC struggles)(Online public comment from Melody Hollar and Sylvia Wood, representatives of UM Climate Response Club, condoning the racism in ASUM); See also Associated Students of the University of Montana S. Bill 67, 2020-2021 S. (2021).*

² *Id.*

³ These student groups have stepped up to fill gaps when ASUM has remained silent. See *Regular Associated Students of the University of Montana Meeting February 24, 2021, Before the Associated Students of the University of Montana, 2020/2021, Reg. Sess. (ASUM, 2021) (Public comment given by Adrianna Medina, outlining her personal experience as an ASUM senator experiencing racial slurs, and further indicating that other BIPOC students have experienced the same). See generally 2020/2021 Bylaws of Black Student Union, 2020/2021 Bylaws of Central and Southwest Asian Club, 2020/2021 Bylaws of Black Student Union, 2020/2021 Bylaws of French Club, 2020/2021 Bylaws of International Muslim Student Association, 2020/2021 Bylaws of Kyiyo Native American Student Association, 2020/2021 Bylaws of Latinx Student Union, 2020/2021 Bylaws of Pacific Islanders Club, 2020/2021 Bylaws of Russian Club.*

30 Whereas, ASUM's core values were amended to include equity and inclusivity in addition to
31 diversity⁴;

32
33 Whereas, Students have called upon ASUM innumerable times to cultivate a positive group
34 atmosphere for BIPOC;

35
36 Whereas, ASUM has failed to make substantive progress;

37
38 Therefore, Let It Be Resolved, That in accordance with ASUM Constitution Art. 10 §§ 2,3, the
39 following proposal be presented to the UM student body for a vote during the 2021 ASUM
40 General Election:

41
42 *“Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and Racial/Ethnic Student Groups are*
43 *seeking an opt-out \$5.00 fee per semester starting in Fall 2021. The proposed fee will allow*
44 *these Racial/Ethnic Student Groups needed funding to maintain their events on campus and to*
45 *continue sharing their wealth of knowledge to University of Montana students.*

46
47 *Yes, I support the proposed fee for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and*
48 *Racial/Ethnic Student Groups.*

49
50 *No, I do not support the proposed fee for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color*
51 *(BIPOC) and Racial/Ethnic Student Groups.”;*

52
53 Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, That this resolution be sent to: Cierra Anderson, Chair of
54 Elections Committee

55
56
57 Passed by Committee: _____, 2021

58
59 Passed by ASUM Senate: March 17 _____, 2021

60
61
62
63 _____
64 Noah Durnell,
Chair of the Relations and Affairs Committee

62
63 _____
64 Patrick James Flanagan
Chair of the Senate

⁴ Associated Students of the University of Montana S. Bill 8, ll. 17-19, 26-27, 2020-2021 S. (2020).