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SB75-19/20: Resolution Supporting the Creation of Transitional Housing Units for Survivors of Domestic or Sexual Violence at the University of Montana

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1 **The Associated Students of the University of Montana**
2 **Resolution Supporting the Creation of Transitional Housing Units for Survivors of**
3 **Domestic or Sexual Violence at the University of Montana**

4 **April 12, 2020**

5 **SB75-19/20**

6 **Authored by: Cierra Anderson, ASUM Senator;**

7
8 Whereas, The Associated Students of the University of Montana (ASUM) is the official student
9 government for the University of Montana;

10
11 Whereas, ASUM established the J. Doe Ad Hoc Committee during Spring 2019 and again for the
12 2019-2020 Senate term in order to create student drive reform around the issues of sexual assault
13 and domestic violence;

14
15 Whereas, Nearly 20 people per minute are abused by an intimate partner in the United States¹;

16
17 Whereas, 1 in 5 women and 1 in 71 men in the United States has been raped in their lifetimes²;

18
19 Whereas, Women aged 18 to 25 are the most commonly abused by an intimate partner¹ and
20 college-aged persons are at the highest risk for experiencing sexual assault³;

21
22 Whereas, Transgender, gender-queer, and gender non-conforming college students also face
23 higher rates of sexual assault³;

24
25 Whereas, Domestic violence is attributed with being the leading cause of homelessness for
26 women and children, with 22% - 57% of all homeless women reporting that domestic violence
27 was the immediate cause of their homelessness⁴;

28
29 Whereas, Safety and affordable housing are the top two concerns for over 80% of survivors
30 entering a shelter⁴;

31
32 Whereas, Transitional housing is “temporary housing used to facilitate the movement of
33 individuals and families experiencing homelessness to permanent housing within 24 months or
34 such longer periods...as deemed necessary”⁵;

35
36 Whereas, Increased availability of resources, including housing services, could lead to a higher
37 number of survivors reporting their abuse or assault while attending university;

38
39 Whereas, Increased availability of resources could lead to a higher number of survivors seeking
40 additional resources such as legal representation or counseling services;

41
42 Whereas, Missoula only has one shelter in place for domestic violence and the two closest
43 shelters outside of Missoula are located in Ravalli and Flathead counties;

44
45 Whereas, The YWCA’s SAFE Shelter has seven bedrooms available specifically designed for
46 survivors of domestic violence;

47
48 Whereas, Ada's Place is a transitional housing service offered by the YWCA that is "designed to
49 help homeless survivors of domestic violence and their children..."⁶ and has 6 two-bedroom
50 duplexes, 5 one-bedroom apartments and 3 two-bedroom apartments;

51
52 Whereas, None of the housing units offered by the YWCA allow pets and there is a \$400
53 security deposit, plus a monthly rent equivalent to 30% of the survivor's adjusted gross
54 income⁷;

55
56 Whereas, In 2018 there were over 200 cases of domestic violence in Missoula County that
57 resulted in cases being filed in court⁸;

58
59 Whereas, If all of those survivors needed emergency housing, Missoula would be unable to
60 provide a much-needed resource;

61
62 Whereas, The University of Montana has operated on an informal housing program for
63 survivors;

64
65 Whereas, There are numerous issues associated with an informal system, such as safety,
66 availability of resources, training, and the economic impact on a survivor;

67
68 Whereas, A formalized system would alleviate these issues by allowing more collaboration
69 between the different resources and entities on campus, by creating a survivor centered approach
70 which would include extensive trainings on domestic and sexual violence for everyone involved,
71 and by reducing the economic impact felt by survivors;

72
73 Therefore, Let It Be Resolved, That ASUM support the creation of transitional housing units at
74 the University of Montana;

75
76 Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, That this resolution be sent to Seth Bodnar, President of
77 the University of Montana; Kelly Webster, Chief of Staff; Alicia Arant, Director of Title IX;
78 Sandy Curtis, Executive Director of Residence Life and the Office of Community Standards; Dr.
79 Christine Fiore, Interim Director of SARC;

80
81
82 Passed by Committee: _____, 2020

83
84 Passed by ASUM Senate: April 29 _____, 2020

85
86
87
88 _____ Ethan Hanley,
89 Chair of the Relations and Affairs Committee Chair of the Senate