

RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE

OF

THE ASSOCIATED STUDENTS OF MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

Adopted 9 March 2017

Whereas, Currently Montana State University (MSU) and the Montana University System (MUS) are facing increasing budget cuts of \$23.3 million at the Montana Legislature. These cuts are due to a loss in tax revenue to the state over the last two years; and,

Whereas, The cuts will devastate students and is not sustainable, including a 21% tuition increase for in-state students and potential out-of-state. In fiscal years 2015-2017, there has been a deficit in the Montana Tax Revenue budget of \$230 million. Due to this, MUS will have to compensate the deficit with a 21% increase of tuition for in-state students for all eight Montana Universities; and,

Whereas, Certain measure through the Montana Legislature can help current, future and past students of MSU and MUS by decreasing proposed budget cuts and offering solutions to counteract the deficit; and,

Whereas, There is legislation to increase tax revenue allocation towards the MUS and MSU and to implement revenue towards the general fund. There is also legislation to promote tax incentives for Legislation proposed including:

HB 420-Revise allocation of oil and gas revenue for oil and natural gas impact projects

SB 85-Submitting a 6-mill levy for support of the Montana University System to voters

HB 239-Provide income tax benefits to employers and students for higher education costs

HB 249-Tax deduction for employers for employee student loan reimbursements ; and,

Whereas, HB 420 has the ability to preserve tax revenue from oil and gas for the MUS state tax levy as defined by Montana Code Annotated 15-10-108; and,

Whereas, SB 85 has been created to allow electorates to vote on a 6-mill levy in the November 2018 ballot to stay enacted until December 31, 2028; and,

Whereas, The students of MSU would be willing to see a larger mill levy in the wake of budget cuts; and,

Whereas, HB 239 has the ability for employers to support their employees with student loans by paying 25 percent of their student loan payments. The tax credit involved allows employers in Montana to offer

up a plan to help pay student loans effectively and help the business be more marketable towards people in the labor force with student loans; and,

Whereas, HB 249 has the ability for corporations to deduct gross corporate income due to an employee under a student loan reimbursement system and is an incentive for when students enter the workforce; now, therefore, let it be,

Resolved, That the Associated Students of Montana State University supports, under the MUS discretion, any legislation which supports an increase in Sin Taxes along with other tax revenues for the general fund, or any state special revenue fund that funds Montana State University; and,

Resolved, That the Associated Students of Montana State University supports legislation that helps past, present and future students with job placement through Montana businesses by giving tax credit to the firms that offer plans to help pay student loans; and,

Resolved, That the Associated Students of Montana State University are opposed to the implementation of the budget cuts to the MUS system.



Bradley Jones – Senate Speaker