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SB36-15/16: Fiscal Policy, Zero Based Bailout

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1 **The Associated Students of the University of Montana**
2 **Resolution Regarding Fiscal Policy**
3 **February 17th, 2016**
4 **SB36-15/16**

5 **Authored by: Cody Meixner, ASUM President; Betsy Story, ASUM Vice President; Sarah**
6 **Smith, ASUM Business Manager**

7 **Sponsored by:**

8
9 Whereas, The University of Montana is currently experiencing a drop in enrollment;

10
11 Whereas, The Associated Students of the University of Montana (ASUM) is experiencing
12 significant operational budget shortfalls expected for Fiscal Year 2017;

13
14 Whereas, ASUM is bound by its Fiscal Policy;

15
16 Whereas, during budgeting for Fiscal Year 2016, the ASUM Senate withdrew funding from
17 Zero-Based Carryover funds, from its Employee Contingency Fund, and from its healthcare
18 savings in order to rectify an executive accounting error;

19
20 Whereas, ASUM's agencies have experienced cuts of approximately 20% in the last three fiscal
21 years in order to account for decreasing enrollment;

22
23 Whereas, cuts to these programs have significantly reduced their ability to serve the student
24 population at UM;

25
26 Whereas, these programs have experienced increased awareness and use of services despite
27 dropping enrollment;

28
29 Whereas, the services provided by ASUM agencies such as Child Care, Legal, Transportation,
30 Sustainability, Productions, Off-Campus Renter Center, and more, significantly impact student
31 recruitment, retention, and success;

32
33 Whereas, Section 23.0 of ASUM Fiscal Policy reads:

34
35 ***23.0 ZERO-BASED CARRYOVER***

- 36 • *23.1 At the end of each fiscal year, any unexpended amounts remaining in organizational*
37 *accounts not specified in line 10.5 will revert to the Zero-Based Carryover Account.*
38 • *23.2 During Final Budgeting, the Senate may transfer money from the Zero-Based Carryover*
39 *account to the General Fund with a 4/5 vote.*
40 ○ *23.2.1 The Senate may only transfer funds if the Zero-Based Carryover account exceeds*
41 *\$92,500, and this account cannot be reduced below this base amount.*
42 ○ *23.2.2 The maximum amount that can be transferred from the Zero-Based Carryover*
43 *account to the General Fund during final budgeting is \$5,000.*
44 • *23.3 Any use of Zero-Based Carryover funds must be approved by a 2/3 majority vote of the*
45 *Board on Budget and Finance and a 2/3 majority vote of Senate.*
46 • *23.4 Zero Based Carryover funds shall not be used to increase or used in place of Travel Special*
47 *allocation funds.*

- 23.5 In case the 8% reserve in the Special Allocations - Travel account is not sufficient to cover an unforeseen or emergency travel request after scheduled lobbying, the Board on Budget and Finance may approve, with a 4/5 majority of members, a new allocation withdrawn from Zero Base Carryover. Approval of such action by the Senate requires a 2/3 majority.

Whereas, Fiscal Policy Section 23, as it reads, only restricts the ASUM Senate’s ability to transfer funds from Zero-Based Carryover during its Final Budgeting session;

Whereas, the funds accrued in Zero-Based Carryover currently have no use specified by Fiscal Policy;

Whereas, in FY2012, the ASUM Senate spent \$245,000 from Zero-Based Carryover in order to completely remodel the ASUM office suite;

Whereas, ASUM is not funding its agency, UM Productions (UMP) for FY17;

Whereas, the ASUM Legal Director will drop down to 0.75FTE for FY17;

Whereas, numerous other ASUM agencies are experiencing similar dramatic cuts;

Whereas, ASUM is \$82,269.08 short for FY17, regardless of these cuts;

Whereas, Zero-Based Carryover is currently at: \$106,469.48;

Whereas, Zero-Based Carryover grows at the end of each Fiscal Year as ASUM receives unspent student group funds;

Therefore, Let It Be Resolved, that the ASUM Senate approves the transfer of \$82,269.08 from Zero-Based Carryover (MST009) to the ASUM General Fund (MST001) for the purposes of FY17 budgeting;

Therefore, Let It Further Be Resolved, that the ASUM Senate grants authority to the ASUM Executives to transfer any portion of this approved amount back to Zero-Base Carryover (MST009) prior to the Formal Budgeting session for FY17, if they are able to secure alternative ways to budget for FY17 apart from Activity Fee increases.

Passed by Committee: _____, 2016

Passed by ASUM Senate: _____, 2016

Sarah Smith,
Chair of Budget & Finance

Betsy Story,
Chair of the Senate