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SB53-20/21: Resolution Urging UM to Implement a Plastic Bag Ban

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1 **The Associated Students of the University of Montana**
2 **Resolution Urging UM to Implement a Plastic Bag Ban**
3 **January 24, 2021**

4 **SB53-20/21**

5 **Authored by: Patrick James Flanagan, ASUM Vice-President; Adrianna Medina, ASUM**
6 **Senator;**

7 **Sponsored by: Byron Drake, Interim Director of UM Dining;**
8

9 Whereas, Through the Office of Sustainability the University of Montana (UM) has committed
10 to waste reduction in order to address the University's environmental impact;

11
12 Whereas, Associated Students of the University of Montana currently advocates for
13 sustainability efforts and actions on campus through ASUM Sustainability, Zero Waste, KLESS,
14 and through shared governance with ASUM representation on Sustainable Campus Committee;

15
16 Whereas, The Office of Sustainability stated that waste reduction "leads to better environmental
17 practices while simultaneously reducing disposal costs" as well as becoming better community
18 partners¹;

19
20 Whereas, The City of Missoula committed to becoming a zero-waste community by 2050²;

21
22 Whereas, Students at UM have demonstrated a value for sustainability in their response to
23 student surveys as well as in the passage of ASUM resolutions and campus-wide referenda that
24 pertain to sustainability;

25
26 Whereas, The 2020/2021 ASUM Senate has established sustainability as a core value;

27
28 Whereas, Sustainability can be considered one of UM's most influential recruitment tools;

29
30 Whereas, UM Dining has a considerable plastic infrastructure that includes, but is not limited to,
31 plastic bags;

32
33 Whereas, Other locations on the UM campus also distribute plastic bags;

34
35 Whereas, Plastic bags pose a danger to the environment by harming wildlife, clogging sewer
36 systems, and their overall inability to be recycled³;

37
38 Whereas, A plastic bag ban is a highly successful initiative in diverting plastic from the Missoula
39 landfill and subsequently, in generating materials that improve the texture and fertility of soils;

40

¹ <https://www.umt.edu/sustainability/Progress/base-page2.php>

² <https://www.ci.missoula.mt.us/2087/Zero-Waste>

³ <https://greenerideal.com/news/environment/0613-how-do-plastic-bags-affect-our-environment/#:~:text=Plastic%20bags%20tend%20to%20disrupt,and%20often%20choke%20and%20die.>

41 Whereas, Universities such as University of Oregon, California State University, Tufts
42 University⁴, North Carolina State⁵, Colorado State University⁶, and others have implemented
43 successful plastic bag bans;

44
45 Whereas, Eight states and multiple cities in the U.S. have implemented a successful plastic bag
46 ban⁷;

47
48 Whereas, Reusable bags are more cost effective and environmentally friendly than plastic bags⁸;

49
50 Whereas, UM students are usually given a reusable bag at orientation;

51
52 Whereas, Implementing a plastic bag ban at UM would reduce the campus' and Missoula's
53 carbon footprint, and emissions, while fostering zero waste initiatives;

54
55 Whereas, By initiating a plastic bag ban, UM will advance its core value of sustainability
56 outlined in its 2020 Strategic Plan and empower students to pursue sustainability at an individual
57 level;

58
59 Therefore, Let It Be Resolved, That ASUM urge UM Dining to begin to phase out plastic bags
60 by encouraging reusable bag use either by assessing UM Dining customers the cost of the plastic
61 bag or by providing some sort of a discount to UM Dining customers that use a reusable bag;

62
63 Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, That ASUM urge UM Dining to fully implement a plastic
64 bag ban in all UM Dining locations after successfully taking steps to encourage UM Dining
65 customers to use a reusable bag;

66
67 Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, That ASUM urge all other existing plastic bag
68 infrastructure on the UM campus to begin phasing out the use of plastic bags;

69
70 Therefore, Let it be Further Resolved, That his resolution be sent to Byron Drake, Interim
71 Director of UM Dining; Ray Merseal, UC Food Court Manager; Colton Buford, Manager of UM
72 Catering; Jeff Hainline, Food Zoo Manager; Adrienne Smith, Director of the UC; Madeline
73 Jones, ASUM Sustainability Coordinator; Eva Rocke, UM Sustainability Coordinator; Paul
74 Lasiter, Vice President for Operations and Finance.

75
76
77 Passed by Committee: _____, 2021

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79 Passed by ASUM Senate: January 27, 2021

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⁴ http://www.andrewatkins.org/uploads/1/0/6/7/10677843/__the_plastic_bag_initiative_final_report.pdf

⁵ <https://sustainability.ncsu.edu/blog/2016/06/07/students-drive-campus-switch-plastic-bags/>

⁶ <https://collegian.com/2017/02/housing-and-dining-makes-switch-to-brown-bags-to-promote-sustainability>

⁷ <https://www.ncsl.org/research/environment-and-natural-resources/plastic-bag-legislation.aspx>

⁸ [http://applications.nam.lighting.philips.com/smartconnect-blog/how-reusable-grocery-bags-help-retailers-with-cost-reduction/#:~:text=A%20full%20embrace%20of%20reusable,or%20even%20ban\)%20plastic%20bags.](http://applications.nam.lighting.philips.com/smartconnect-blog/how-reusable-grocery-bags-help-retailers-with-cost-reduction/#:~:text=A%20full%20embrace%20of%20reusable,or%20even%20ban)%20plastic%20bags.)

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82

83 Patrick James Flanagan,

84 Chair of the Senate