

1 **The Associated Students of the University of Montana**
2 **Resolution Advocating for the Increase of the ASUM Transportation Fee**
3 **February 19th, 2023**
4 **SB28-22/23**

5 **Authored by: Elizabeth Bowles, ASUM President; Alexandra Berna, ASUM Vice**
6 **President; Joselyn Jolly, ASUM Business Manager;**

7
8 Whereas, The Associated Students of the University of Montana (“ASUM”), represents the
9 student interests at the University of Montana (“UM”);

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11 Whereas, The mission of ASUM Transportation is to promote and provide sustainable
12 transportation options for the campus community;

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14 Whereas, Safe, convenient, affordable access to campus is critical to student retention and
15 success;

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17 Whereas, Access to sustainable transit options is a critical factor in reducing parking congestion
18 and meeting university and city/county goals for carbon reductions;

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20 Whereas, ASUM Transportation provides a number of services, including but not limited to:
21 UDASH bus service, a bike rental program, transit-related education and outreach, as well as
22 support and collaboration with the ASUM Sustainability office;

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24 Whereas, ASUM Transportation has existed since 1999 and provides thousands of passenger
25 trips to and from campus every week throughout Spring and Fall Semesters each academic year
26 through the UDASH bus service;

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28 Whereas, As many as 80 bicycles can be rented by UM students, staff, and faculty each semester
29 through the ASUM Transportation bike program;

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31 Whereas, ASUM Transportation provides skilled and professionally-licensed employment
32 opportunities to UM students, including complete Class B CDL training; as well as shop
33 assistants and bike mechanics;

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35 Whereas, ASUM Transportation experienced staffing shortages and a decrease in ridership
36 during the years of the COVID -19 pandemic at a rate similar to that experienced by other transit
37 operations around the United States;

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39 Whereas, Over the past year, ASUM Transportation has implemented effective recruiting
40 strategies, including a \$3 per hour (23.08%) raise for student bus drivers in Spring 2022 and
41 targeted recruiting outreach campaigns throughout Fall 2022, resulting in a significant increase
42 in student employees, from 14 student drivers at the beginning of Fall 2022 to 26 student drivers
43 for Spring 2023;

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45 Whereas, As of Spring 2023, ASUM Transportation has been able to revive and expand some,
46 but not all, services that had been limited due to the staffing constraints previously mentioned;

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48 Whereas, As of February 17, 2023, cumulative ridership on each of the UDASH routes has
49 increased by the following respective percentages over ridership from the first five weeks of
50 Spring 2022: Red Line, 37%, Purple Line 28%, and Green Line, an astounding 219%;

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52 Whereas, As increasing enrollment at UM creates more demand for transit services, staffing
53 levels will need to increase to 32-35 student drivers to provide sufficient levels of service;

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55 Whereas, ASUM Transportation has not requested a fee increase since FY20;

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57 Whereas, Inflation has risen 6.4% in the last year nationally, increasing the costs of transit
58 operations across all areas, not exclusively to driver wage expenses;

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60 Whereas, The Board of Regents approve fees for Fiscal Year 24 (FY24) and Fiscal Year 25
61 (FY25);

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63 Whereas, A fee increase of \$4.00 to full-time and part-time students for FY24 and FY25 would
64 result in an additional \$84,000 of transportation fee revenue per fiscal year, allowing for
65 increased student payroll and operating expenses;

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67 Whereas, The additional \$84,000 in transportation fee revenue would be distributed, per fiscal
68 policy, between the following activities: 87.5% (\$73,500) to UDASH bus operations, 7.5%
69 (\$6,300) to general administration, and 5% (\$4,200) to bike operations;

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71 Therefore, Let It Be Resolved, That the following ballot language be added to an ASUM student
72 referenda during the Spring election cycle:

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74 “The Associated Students of the University of Montana (ASUM) Transportation is proposing a
75 \$4.00 fee increase (prorated to fifty percent for students enrolled in less than seven credits) to the
76 ASUM Transportation fee. ASUM Transportation provides UDASH bus service, a bike rental
77 program, transit-related education and outreach, as well as support and collaboration with the
78 ASUM Sustainability office. Due to the necessary increase of driver wages, and costs to daily
79 living, as well as spending, ASUM Transportation asks for this fee increase.”

80
81 ____ Yes, I support increasing the ASUM Transportation fee by \$4.00, from \$45 to \$49 per
82 semester for full-time students and from \$34 to \$38 per semester for part-time students.

83
84 ____ No, I do not support increasing the ASUM Activity fee by \$4.00, from \$45 to \$49 per
85 semester for full-time students and from \$34 to \$38 per semester for part-time students.

86
87 Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, That this Resolution be sent to: Jared Gibbs, ASUM
88 Elections Coordinator; Paul Lasiter, Vice President of Operations and Finance; Kelly Webster,
89 Chief of Staff and Associate Vice President for Strategic Planning and Implementation; Seth
90 Bodnar, UM President; Gwen Coon, ASUM Office Manager; Sara Niekamp, ASUM Operations
91 Manager; Norris Blossom, Student Regent; Loren Bough, Regent; Todd Buchanan, Regent;
92 Joyce Dombrowski, Regent; Casey Lozar, Regent; Brianne Rogers, Regent Chair; Jeff

93 Southworth, Regent; Tyler Trevor, Deputy Commissioner for Budget & Planning, Chief of Staff;
94 Clayton Christian, Commissioner of Higher Education; Jasmine Casanovas, Executive Assistant
95 to the Commissioner.
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Passed by Committee: February 26th, 2023

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100 Passed by ASUM Senate: March 8th, 2023

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Emma Wickum,

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Chair of Relations and Affairs



Alexandra Berna,

Chair of the Senate