



Students' Society of McGill University
Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Office of the Speakers
Bureau de Présidents du Conseil

Motion Regarding a Greener McGill

Whereas, the Society reaffirms in accordance with the strong principles of justice and equity laid out in clauses VI to VIII of the Society's Constitution, the commitment of the Students' Society of McGill University to the implementation of socially responsible investment strategies by the SSMU and by McGill University, and in particular its belief that both bodies should divest their holdings in companies involved in the Canadian Tar Sands, in fossil fuel production, or that do business or lobby to do business on native land without the full consent of the communities there, and those financial institutions that make loans to or invest in those identified companies;

Whereas, Political Campaigns Coordinator Christopher Bangs deposited with the Secretariat the petitions, signatures, and social injury briefs created by Divest McGill on February 1, 2013;

Whereas, over 750 members of the McGill community have signed the two petitions;

Whereas, the SSMU's mandates for a McGill Free from Fossil Fuels, adopted January 24, 2013, for Support for Indigenous Peoples and Allies, adopted January 24, 2013, and for Ethical Investments at McGill, adopted November 1, 2012;ⁱ

Resolved, that the SSMU commit to taking the following course of action outlined below, and that the SSMU Legislative Council charge all individuals or groups named herein to fulfill these mandates to the best of their ability.

Moved by:

Josh Redel, President
Claire Stewart-Kanigan, Arts Representative

Article 1

The President of the SSMU shall submit on behalf of Council two letters to the Secretariat addressed to the Board of Governors and to the Committee to Advise on Matters of Social Responsibility. The first shall firmly lay out the Society's position on divestment from companies in the Tar Sands, fossil fuels, and the financial institutions supporting those companies. The second shall firmly lay out the Society's position on divestment from companies that do business on the traditional territories of Canada's First Nation and Inuit peoples without democratic community consent and the financial institutions supporting those companies.

Article 2

The Vice-President (University Affairs) shall, in concert with the Student Senators and Divest McGill, garner support for this effort with other University constituencies and work to pass a motion at McGill Senate in support of divestment.

Article 2(a)



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If the VP (UA) or Divest McGill believes it useful, the President of the SSMU shall on behalf of Legislative Council submit, to any other union or association on campus considering a similar motion, a letter expressing the Society's support for divestment, for student-labour-faculty mutual aid, and for the motion being considered.

Article 3

The VP (External) or her office and the President or his office shall hold town halls on these issues, to be publicized to the members, with the goals of open dialogue and mutual education.

Article 4

Council shall request that the President fully support any recommendation from the CAMSR to the Board of Governors that, in his estimation, is both a method to affect substantive change and is in accordance with the spirit of the motion.

Article 4(a)

Any recommendation for engaging in shareholder action with companies engaged in the Tar Sands, fossil fuels production, or on native land without consent shall be considered ineffective and against the spirit of the motion unless:

- a. It can be reasonably understood that the actions considered would be successfully passed by the shareholder meeting, and
- b. The actions considered would result in such outcomes as dramatic reductions in fossil fuel emissions, as commitments to end all further exploration for hydrocarbons, as companies adhering to the full, democratic decisions of the indigenous communities, or other equally impactful outcomes.

Article 4(b)

Council shall request that the President read a statement on its behalf in support of divestment to the Board of Governors at its next meeting.

Article 5

The Vice-President (External) or her office shall, in concert with Divest McGill and the Society's graphic designers, create a set of advertisements to be posted around campus, which may include the use of the television in the SSMU lobby and hanging banners on or around the SSMU Building in accordance with all relevant regulations.

Article 6

The Executive Committee shall educate members about its positions, about climate change, and about modern-day colonialism, and shall, at its discretion but at least once every semester, send a special message on the Society's listserv to update members on the campaign and/or related topics. The Society's social media sites may be used to promote this campaign as well, as may regular listservs and the Environment Committee's listserv.

Article 7

The FERC shall fulfill these mandates to the best of its abilities, and shall divest the Society's holdings and otherwise cease to do business with companies in the Tar Sands immediately; and in



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fossil fuels, companies that do business or lobby to do business without consent on native land, and the financial institutions that support those companies within three years.

Article 7(a)

Due to the inherent difficulties in identifying companies that do business or lobby to do business on native land without consent, the FERC shall seek recommendations from members of the community and shall investigate any claim brought forward; if the FERC feels it cannot reasonably pre-screen or otherwise identify those companies, it shall only take action when receiving expressions of concern from members of the community.

Article 7(b)

Recognizing that it will be difficult if not impossible to avoid doing business with certain companies, including Hydro-Quebec and financial institutions with investments in those aforementioned companies, the FERC, in its business with any company that would be disqualified under these regulations but is deemed unavoidable, shall instead 1) request that it end its objectionable practices, 2) inform the company of this policy, and 3) reevaluate this designation and the Society's continued involvement with the business if other options become available or if those practices end.

Article 7(c)

If McGill University engages in activities in the SSMU Building that violate the Society's stated values, the FERC shall be empowered to lobby McGill, or to request the assistance of an Executive to lobby McGill, to end that practice.

Article 7(d)

If the FERC decides that a specific company or organization is or would be disqualified under these regulations, then Council requests that no employee or student club do official business with those companies without the express permission of Council; any member of the community may make representations to the FERC about violations of these policies.

Article 8

The Political Campaigns Coordinators, with the assistance of the FERC and the Sustainability Coordinator, shall create a case competition for any member of the Society, with a budget sufficient to execute this plan as determined by the VP (Finance and Operations), to develop the best alternative investment plans for McGill University in accordance with our stated values. The PCCs shall endeavour to collaborate with the Management Undergraduate Society, the McGill Environment Students' Society, and the Economics Students' Association to engage students with related course-work.

Article 8(a)

Those alternative investment plans proposed could include a Green Revolving Fund, a Venture Capital or Student Entrepreneurialism Fund, affordable housing initiatives, impact investments investment portfolio adjustments, environmental investment funds, or any other advancement in line with the Society's values.



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Article 9

The VP (External) or her office shall create a page for the SSMU website, to be highlighted on the front page, that shall include divestment, along with other SSMU policies and political positions, including the Society's Equity policies.

ⁱ Available at <http://divestmcgill.wordpress.com/endorsements/>