



MOTION REGARDING SUPPORT FOR A BOARD-SENATE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON DIVESTMENT 2018-12-01

Submitted for: December 1, 2018 (electronic)

WHEREAS, the McGill University Senate passed a motion on [September 12, 2018](#):

“to inform the Board of Governors, through the Principal, that it favours, in principle, a move to divest the endowment from all companies whose primary business is the extraction, distribution, and/or sale of fossil fuels; and from all mutual funds that invest in such companies”;

WHEREAS, this motion was amended during the September Senate meeting from the following initial version:

“The Senate, through the Principal, advises the Board of Governors to divest the endowment from all companies whose primary business is the extraction, distribution, and/or sale of fossil fuels; and from all mutual funds that invest in such companies”;

WHEREAS, Article 6.3.9 of the University Statutes states:

“In case of [Senate’s] disagreement with the Board of Governors [...] the question at issue shall be submitted to a Conference Committee. This committee shall consist of not more than eleven members, consisting of the Principal and equal representation from the Board of Governors on the one hand and the Senate on the other, with power to submit its findings and recommendations to the Board of Governors whose decision shall be final”;

WHEREAS, after a [report](#) from the Committee to Advise on Matters of Social Responsibility (CAMSR) advising against divestment of the university’s endowment from all companies whose primary business is the extraction, distribution, and/or sale of fossil fuels; and from all mutual funds that invest in such companies (hereinafter, “divest”), the Board of Governors (hereinafter “Board”) voted not to divest in Winter 2016;

WHEREAS, it has been deemed that Senate’s motion is not in “disagreement” with the Board’s Winter 2016 vote and consequently, the Board chose neither to vote on the matter of divestment nor call a conference committee during its meeting on October 4, 2018;

WHEREAS, the matter of divestment has be re-referred to CAMSR;



WHEREAS, a motion to create a conference committee on divestment was brought to the Senate Steering Committee on [November 6](#), but was deemed out of order and was not accepted for submission to Senate;

WHEREAS, instead, Senate voted to temporarily add two Senators to CAMSR to better represent the interests of Senate;

WHEREAS, a conference committee would have a clear mandate: to advise the Board on whether and how to divest, as opposed to CAMSR, who plans to study "the current context and recent developments regarding climate change and socially responsible investments", effectively diluting the issue;

WHEREAS, a conference committee would likely have completed deliberations by the Winter term, as opposed to CAMSR, which plans to release a report to the Board during the next academic year;

WHEREAS, a conference committee would be chaired by Principal Suzanne Fortier, as opposed to CAMSR, which is chaired by Ms. Cynthia Price-Verreault, a former executive of Petro-Canada, now a subsidiary of Suncor, McGill's largest fossil fuel investment;

BE IT RESOLVED, THAT the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) stands in support of a Joint Board-Senate Conference Committee on divestment from fossil fuels, and announce this stance through a press release;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT the SSMU mandate the President, Vice-President (University Affairs), and the Student Senate Caucus to call for the immediate creation of a conference committee on the matter of divestment (if necessary through the suspension of Article 6.3.9 of the University Statutes), and to have the committee complete their deliberations by April 30, 2019.

Moved By:
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