



MOTION REGARDING A PROVINCIAL STUDENT ASSEMBLY 2020-01-16

Submitted for: 2020-01-16

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Moved by:	Adam Gwiazda-Amsel <i>Vice-President (External Affairs)</i>	Current Status:	<input type="checkbox"/> FOR APPROVAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> APPROVED <input type="checkbox"/> POSTPONED <input type="checkbox"/> COMMITTED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT APPROVED
Seconded by:	Annalise Patzer <i>Nursing Representative</i>		

Issue

Since May 2019, no inter-university student association has existed to support mobilizations aimed at the reform or reversal of government policies. In particular, support for groups mobilising around climate justice and migrant justice has fallen on campus-wide associations, which has proven rather expensive. Furthermore, with the repleteness of job duties assigned to the various Vice-Presidents (External) of Quebec's student associations, mass mobilization across the student body has proven slow-moving at best, and places a good deal of labour on unpaid activists.

Background and Rationale

On 13 November 2019, AFESPED-UQAM passed a motion calling for a Rassemblement Nationale Étudiante (RNE). The RNE would serve as an assembly for student associations to discuss their positionality in the climate and migrant struggles taking hold of Quebec, and to flesh out how to best support these efforts. The motion as adopted by this UQAM association requires that four (4) other student associations pass similar mandates before discussions can begin about forming a structured inter-university student association to support these struggles.

The benefit to such an affiliation cannot be overstated. As a founding member, the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) would benefit from a strong influence in the orientations of the RNE's governing documents, which would compel the RNE to have a mandate to support historically underrepresented schools (largely, English and regional schools) in the efforts that are most important to them. This would allow us



to support our international student population, combat biased funding models, and improve regulations around international healthcare.

Alignment with Mission

Affiliation to the RNE would speak to our commitments to Service and Leadership, as we would be better able to advocate for our Membership at the provincial level.

Consultations Completed

Given the exploratory nature of these consultations, a financial assessment has not yet been conducted. This would largely depend on the breadth and scope of the RNE's mission, which has yet to be determined. In terms of the RNE's mission, climate and migrant justice are the political issues on which our student body has voiced its strongest interest this academic year (group consultations include Solidarity Alliance McGill, meetings with Concordia Student Union executives, the MSA). Early-term consultations with previous Vice-Presidents (External) highlight the need for provincial affiliation, and this is one of the four major platform points on which I won the SSMU election.

Risk Factors and Resource Implications

Affiliation with an RNE compromises, to some degree, our relationship with the currently-existing lobby group UEQ. That said, our efforts within UEQ to influence their action items and mobilization approach have been almost entirely unsuccessful. Furthermore, this affiliation does not preclude us from collaborating with UEQ on future research projects, which has to date been the most valuable aspect of working with UEQ.

Affiliation with an RNE would require a lengthy affiliation information campaign to be led by next year's Vice-President (External Affairs), in accordance with our Internal Regulations (Representation & Advocacy). The affiliation would likely be coupled with a fee levy in the range of \$2.50-\$4.00.

Sustainability Considerations

The proposed RNE's mission is very much in line with our own Equity, Sustainability, and Climate Justice policies. In terms of longevity of the project, an affiliation would bind us to partnership such that a future Vice-President (External Affairs) would be mandated to see this through. There is a risk of the student association having capacity issues, but this



can be largely mitigated by taking into account lessons learned from ASSE and AVEQ.

Impact of Decision and Next Steps

If this motion is approved, the Vice-President (External Affairs) will be mandated to liaise with Campaigns Coordinators and external student associations to determine the concrete nature of and our priorities for the RNE. The first assembly is set to be held during this present Winter semester.

Motion or Resolution for Approval

Be it resolved that the SSMU call for a meeting to discuss a Rassemblement Nationale Étudiante (RNÉ) during Winter or Fall of 2020 with the following principles:

1. That this Coalition serve as a space for dialogue and reflection between different student associations that are not an Affiliated Student Society with a goal of laying foundations for a common student front aiming at a strike campaign for environmental and migrant justice;
2. That external and provincial organizations, i.e. political parties, affinity groups, community organizations, mobilization committees or other organizations other than an Independent Student Society that are active in the current mobilizations on climate will be invited as Observer Members;

Be it resolved that SSMU release this call for an RNÉ to the entirety of Independent Student Societies in Quebec and encourage them to adopt a similar mandate;

Be it resolved that SSMU, following the adoption of a similar mandate by at least four (4) other student associations, vie for the formation of an organization committee of the RNÉ, jointly with the above, as well as any other student association that subsequently adopts a similar mandate.

Results of the Vote

In favour	12
Opposed	3
Abstain	7