



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

ssmu.ca | (514) 398-6800 | 3600 rue McTavish, Suite 1200, Montréal, QC, H3A 0G3

MOTION TO ADD A QUESTION TO THE FALL SEMESTER REFERENDA REGARDING MUSTBUS FEE INCREASE 2023-10-12

Submitted for: 2023-10-12

Submitted to: SSMU Legislative Council **Document no.:** LEG-PUB-MOT-2023-10-12-001

Moved by: Quinn Porter
Arts Representative to SSMU **Current Status:** FOR APPROVAL
 APPROVED
 POSTPONED
 COMMITTED
 NOT APPROVED

Seconded by: Nadia Dakdouki
Vice President Student Life

Issue

Facing a variety of affordability issues and expensive travel options, McGill students need affordable options to travel during reading break. Current MUSTBUS tickets sell out rapidly, even within minutes of release, meaning students are unable to access the affordable transport option that MUSTBUS offers.

Background and Rationale

MUSTBUS provides affordable (international) transportation options to students during reading break, facilitating travel and visits to see family for hundreds of students every semester.

Currently, MUSTBUS services are unable to cope with the demand, with tickets selling out in minutes. The MUSTBUS team has identified services to Boston, Toronto, Ottawa, and New York City as in particularly high demand.

Due to the inability to keep up with demand, most McGill students are unable to take advantage of this affordable transportation option.

This fee increase would enable MUSTBUS to vastly increase their operations, facilitating affordable travel for more McGill students. It would also enable MUSTBUS to combat inflationary gas and bus rental prices and absorb the cost for students.



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In a recent poll of 234 respondents (in appendix B below) conducted by MUSTBUS, a plurality (48%) indicated that they would prefer a \$5.00 opt-out fee. This was more than double the next closest response, which was \$4.00.

MUSTBUS currently offers one bus per reading break to hotspot destinations such as New York City, Boston, Toronto, and Ottawa. With the planned fee increase, MUSTBUS estimates that they would be able to increase these routes to three trips to New York, and two to the aforementioned cities per reading break. This would more than double the number of students that can access an affordable transit option to get home at reading break.

Alignment with Mission

This motion aligns with the SSMU missions to provide outstanding services and promote social, cultural, and personal opportunities for SSMU members.

Consultations Completed

Consultations have been completed with the MUSTBUS team, Elections SSMU, Vice President Koulibaly (on behalf of the vacant VP Finance role), Vice President Dakdouki, and the Governance Manager.

Risk Factors and Resource Implications

Should this motion not pass, MUSTBUS would not be able to provide an adequate amount of affordable travel services to McGill students. Students would either suffer financially, or be restricted in their movements, limiting their ability to travel, see family, etc.

Sustainability Considerations

This motion considers the economic stability of McGill students having access to affordable travel, as well as environmental sustainability, as public transit by bus is much more energy efficient than flying, which is a common alternative mode of transit when MUSTBUS services are not accessible.

Impact of Decision and Next Steps

Should the fee increase pass, members will be charged an *opt-out* fee of \$5.00 per term, per student, for all undergraduate students, excluding summer. This will allow MUSTBUS to continue and expand their operations and ensure affordable travel options for SSMU members.



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Motion or Resolution for Approval

Be it resolved that the Legislative Council approve the following question for the Fall 2023 referendum period:

WHEREAS, MUSTBUS is McGill's affordable student transportation ISG;

WHEREAS, the demand for the service provided by MUSTBUS is great, with reading break tickets selling out in minutes;

WHEREAS, due to this excess demand, many McGill Students cannot access this affordable transportation option;

WHEREAS, the proposed fee increase would enable MUSTBUS to significantly expand their services, especially to popular destinations such as Boston and New York;

WHEREAS, the proposed fee increase would result in more McGill students being able to access affordable travel;

Do you agree to an increase of \$3.00 (from \$2.00 to \$5.00 per student, per semester, excluding summers) for the opt-outable fee for MUSTBUS, to allow and facilitate affordable travel for students during Reading Break, with the understanding that with a majority vote 'No', the MUSTBUS fee will remain \$2.00 per student per semester ?

BE IT RESOLVED, that the SSMU Legislative Council adopts the actionable aspects of this question, and recommends the ratification of this referendum question to the Elections SSMU and Board of Directors, and that any grammatical or legal changes necessary do not need the re-approval of the Legislative Council.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that MUSTBUS provide a financial budget on the referendum question to inform voters on the usage in Appendix A below.

Results of the Vote

In favour ()
Opposed ()
Abstain ()

Appendix A

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1G8xe2OUieTNAsOBckMC6xXHluYL2gBD9/edit#gid=1970778310>



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Appendix B

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1KZuc3xjvTYFxE2NJbXuZyi59jvppjeQRV8G4BTtDISI/edit?ts=651d972b#responses>

POSTPONED