



Bureau du président du conseil de l'ÀÉUM

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

SSMU Office of the Speaker

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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MOTION REGARDING AMENDMENTS TO THE POLICY ON HARMFUL MILITARY TECHNOLOGY 2024-03-21

Submitted for: 2024-04-18

Submitted to:	SSMU Legislative Council	Document no.:	LEG-PUB-MOT-2024-03-21-006 (Notice) LEG-PUB-MOT-2024-04-18-005 (Motion)
Moved by:	Liam Gaither <i>VP External</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:	Keith Andre Baybayon <i>Arts Representative</i>		

Issue

In the past, the SSMU has implemented a moratorium on McGill ancillary fees as a pressure tactic to divest from fossil fuels. This moratorium expires on May 1st, 2024. In alignment with the SSMU's current policies, this motion proposes a change to the *Policy on Harmful Military Technology*¹ that would implement a new moratorium on McGill Ancillary Fee increases and the creation of new ancillary fees until McGill divests from harmful military technology.

Background and Rationale

In 2019, the SSMU implemented the *Moratorium on McGill Fees Until Fossil Fuel Divestment*² in order to pressure McGill's administration to divest from fossil fuel investments. This prevented the university from initiating any fee increase questions on the SSMU referendum that pertained to the increase

¹

<https://ssmu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Policy-on-Harmful-Military-Technology-2021-03-11-1.pdf?x77765>

²

<https://ssmu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Policy-on-Moratorium-on-McGill-Fees-Until-Fossil-Fuel-Divestment-2019-10-10-to-2024-05-01-1.pdf?x77765>



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of FIOs (“**frais institutionnels obligatoires**” - ancillary fees). The *Act Regarding the Accreditation and Financing of Student Associations*³ obliges university administrations to negotiate FIOs with their respective student associations.

This tactic was one of many that eventually led to McGill committing to a timeline divest from their fossil fuel holdings⁴. We certainly cannot undermine the major role that student activists played through Divest McGill and other climate justice efforts throughout the campaign.

Since the announcement in December 2023, we now wish to focus on McGill's ties to the military-industrial complex. The proposed changes to the aforementioned SSMU policy would maintain the same pressure as before, but would shift the target to demand divestment from the military-industrial complex, as outlined in the *SSMU Policy on Harmful Military Technology*.

Alignment with Mission

These amendments to the Policy on Harmful Military Technology ensure direct action is taken towards the Policy's mandates, as well as ensuring the Divest for Human Rights Policy is further ensured.

This pressure tactic also aligns with those used in the past, as can be seen with the *Moratorium on McGill Ancillary Fees until Divestment from Fossil Fuels*.

Consultations Completed

Consultations were completed with the SSMU VP Finance, VP External Affairs, and VP Operations & Sustainability.

Additionally, consultations were conducted with various campus groups practicing peace- and justice-focused advocacy.

Information was collected from stakeholder groups via an online survey (Google form).

3

<https://cdn-contenu.quebec.ca/cdn-contenu/adm/min/education/publications-adm/enseignement-superieur/organismes-lies/CCAFE/avis-frais-universite-2023-2024.pdf>

4

<https://www.mcgill.ca/newsroom/channels/news/mcgill-university-divests-direct-holdings-carbon-underground-200-fossil-fuel-companies-announces-new-353601>



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Risk Factors and Resource Implications

The amendment to establish a moratorium may negatively impact student groups on campus that rely on the Athletics Facilities for their group events. According to the Athletics Representative to SSMU, the Athletics facilities have already taken a toll under the previous moratorium. It is likely that the state of these facilities will not continue to improve so long as the moratorium is in place or until the University changes its funding structures.

Additionally, Student Services will also be limited to its current fee. It is important to note that the moratorium only blocks new fees and increases, so the current ancillary fees are collected regardless. Ancillary fees are indexed to inflation and have increased gradually over the past 5 years despite the moratorium policy⁵.

Sustainability Considerations

The moratorium will block increases to Ancillary fees, forcing the administration to adapt financially while also saving students money. Ancillary fees, in contrast to student-funded initiatives (i.e., through SSMU), are not controlled by students. Additionally, these fees are already very high (Currently, Student Services: \$194.88/semester, Athletics: \$163.03/semester for full-time students), and increases would put an additional significant drain on students. Furthermore, Ancillary Fees are not opt-outable.

Impact of Decision and Next Steps

Should this motion pass, the SSMU will establish a Moratorium on considering Referendum questions for new Ancillary Fees, increases to Ancillary Fees, or any other new fees or increases to existing fees that McGill University wishes the SSMU to send to referendum for approval by the Membership until McGill University divests from its holdings in companies tied to harmful military investments in accordance with the Policy.

Additionally, the Vice-President (University Affairs) will communicate this position immediately to the Principal and Vice-Chancellor, the Chair of the Board of Governors, the members of the Board of Governors, the Chair of CAMSR, and the members of CAMSR.

⁵

<https://cdn-contenu.quebec.ca/cdn-contenu/adm/min/education/publications-adm/enseignement-superieur/organismes-lies/CCAFE/avis-frais-universite-2023-2024.pdf>



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Motion or Resolution for Approval

Be it resolved that, should the Legislative Council approve the amended Policy found in Appendix A, the Policy be approved for a period of 5 years, expiring May 1, 2029.

Results of the Vote

In favour	(8)
Opposed	(3)
Abstain	(1)

APPROVED



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Appendix A : Amended Policy on Harmful Military Technology

[Amended Policy on Harmful Military Technology](#)

APPROVED