

MOTION REGARDING REFERENDUM QUESTION ON THE RENEWAL OF THE ACCESS MCGILL ANCILLARY FEE 2025-10-09

Submitted for: 2025-10-09

Submitted to:	SSMU Legislative Council	Document no.:	LEG-PUB-MOT-2025-10-09-00X (to be assigned by Steering)
Moved by:	Dymetri Taylor <i>President</i>	Current Status:	☐ FOR APPROVAL ☒ APPROVED ☐ POSTPONED ☐ COMMITTED ☐ NOT APPROVED
Seconded by:	Keith Baybayon <i>Senate Representative</i>		

Issue The Access McGill Ancillary Fee, a non-opt-outable fee at \$2.00 per student per term (excluding summer), is set to expire after Winter 2026.

Background and Rationale

Established through a referendum in 1988, this fee was most recently renewed in Winter 2021. The Access McGill Ancillary Fee directly supports equitable and accessible participation in university life for over 4,500 students registered with Student Accessibility and Achievement (SAA) who face disability-related barriers. This fee is essential funding for: Increase to dedicated advising including contributions towards an Access Services Advisor role to decrease wait times for a growing population; Individualized student supports such as attendants, sign language interpretation, and conversion of course materials to accessible formats; Equitable exam accommodations including contributions that support the delivery of more than 25,000 accommodated exams each year; and Accessibility initiatives that promote inclusive learning at McGill. The allocation of these funds is

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overseen by the Director, Student Accessibility and Achievement, ensuring every dollar directly benefits students who rely on SAA to support their McGill journey.

Alignment with Mission

This motion aligns with SSMU's mission to provide outstanding services for the SSMU Membership by strengthening the social conditions of its Members.

This motion also aligns with SSMU's mission of representation by acting in the best interests of its Members as a whole.

This motion further aligns with SSMU's mission of leadership by committing itself to groups, programs, and activities that are devoted to the well-being of disadvantaged groups.

Furthermore, this motion aligns with SSMU's Equity Policy.

Consultations Completed

Consultations were completed with the office of the Senior Director of Student Services and the Director of Student Accessibility and Achievement.

Risk Factors and Resource Implications

Should the renewal of this fee not pass, the services and resources used to make McGill more accessible will not have the necessary funding to continue.

Impact of Decision and Next Steps

Should the renewal of this fee pass, Members will continue to be charged \$2.00/term, which will go towards making McGill more accessible to students with disability-related barriers.

Motion or Resolution for Approval

Be it resolved that the Legislative Council approve the following question for the Fall 2025 referendum period:

Do you agree to the renewal of the non-opt-outable Access McGill Fee of \$2.00 per student per semester (excluding summer), payable by all

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undergraduate students who are members of the SSMU, starting in Fall 2026 and ending Winter 2031 (inclusive) at which time it will be brought back to the membership for renewal, with the understanding that a majority “no” vote will result in the discontinuation of funding used to provide services and resources to improve accessibility for students with disability-related barriers?

Be it further resolved that the SSMU Legislative Council adopts the actionable aspects of this question and that any grammatical or legal changes necessary do not need the re-approval of the Legislative Council.

**Results of the
Vote**

- ☐ In favour (20)
 - ☐ Opposed (0)
 - ☐ Abstain (0)
-

Appendix A : Relevant Appendix

Contextual Information

SAA Funding Landscape

SAA's funding comes from a mix of sources, including direct Ministry grants (which fluctuate with enrollment and needs), direct student fees, donor funds and allocations from the Student Services fee. Within this mix, the Access McGill Ancillary Fee is a stable, predictable source — ensuring that critical student needs can be met even when other funding is delayed or uncertain.

Demand for SAA services is growing rapidly. Over the past four terms, registration has increased by roughly 500 students per term, and 25% of registered students have multiple diagnoses, requiring increasingly complex and at times, costly, supports. Maintaining the Access McGill Ancillary Fee is essential to sustaining SAA's commitment to providing equitable access, ensuring that every student can participate fully in McGill's academic and campus life.

Use and Impact

The Access McGill Ancillary Fee plays an important role in ensuring that students with disabilities at McGill maintain timely access to the accommodations and supports they need to thrive during their studies. This fee is used to directly bolster services that reduce barriers and expand opportunities for inclusive and equitable participation in academic life. Distribution of these fees span many mission-critical activities that include:

- **Expanded advising capacity** — through contributions toward an Access Services Advisor role, reducing wait times and providing timely, individualized guidance to a growing student population.
- **Individualized student needs** — including attendants, sign language interpretation, specialized equipment, and accessible course materials.
- **Equitable exam accommodations** — helping to support the delivery more than 25,000 accommodated exams each year, ensuring assessments reflect student knowledge rather than disability-related barriers.

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- **Accessibility initiatives** — broader projects that promote inclusive learning environments for the benefit of the entire McGill community.

SAA is deeply grateful for the decades of support that McGill students have shown to their peers with disabilities through this fee, which serves to strengthen McGill's ability to respond to the growing and increasingly complex needs of students facing related barriers. This sustained commitment to equity, inclusion, and accessibility is not only admirable — it is essential to ensuring that every student can fully participate in university life.

APPROVED