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Resolution in Support of Statewide Student Governance

Whereas: The United Council of UW Students was established at UW-Stevens Point in 1960 as an agreement between nine UW Student Governments;

Whereas: The United Council of UW Students was an effective statewide student governance body that each campus would vote to participate in via a student body referendum every other year;

Whereas: The United Council of UW Students was instrumental in the creation and language of UWS 36.09(5), the preservation of segregated fees after *Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System v. Southworth*, the creation of two student regent seats, and the passage of the 2013 tuition freeze;

Whereas: The United Council of UW Students was funded by what was known as the “Mandatory Refundable Fee,” A segregated fee assessed to every student on campuses that were a part of United Council, and a fee that was refundable upon request;

Whereas: In its later years, the United Council of UW Students was opposed by many across the UW System and in the state government. As a result, it was defunded in the 2013-2015 Wisconsin State Budget, known as *2013 Wisconsin Act 20*.¹ The Mandatory Refundable Fee was made illegal;

Whereas: Without a reliable funding source, The United Council of UW Students became ineffective and eventually ceased operation in 2016;

Whereas: In the years before its dissolution, United Council began to form the body known as UW System Student Representatives.

1: 2013 Wisconsin Act 20 can be found here: <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2013/related/acts/20.pdf>. 36.27 (6) (b) was created to read: “The board may provide students with the opportunity to pay an additional fee to support an inter-institutional student government organization. The board may not require students to pay the fee.”

Whereas: After the dissolution of the United Council of UW Students, the individual student governments of the UW System came together and sought to form a new organization to advocate on behalf of students, continuing the work of forming UW System Student Representatives where United Council had stopped;

Whereas: UW System Student Representatives operated until May of 2019, when no formal election of new leadership was held. In its place, the UW System Administration attempted to create the UW System Presidential Council;

Whereas: UW System Student Representatives is no longer in operation, and the UW System Student Presidential Council has no real authority or ability to properly organize;

Whereas: These groups failed due to lack of legitimacy and lack of funding;

Whereas: Any student governance group formed and facilitated by administrators will always be seen as less legitimate by nature;

Whereas: Individual student governments across the UW System are only able to be effective with adequate funding. Without a funding source, students will be unable to commit the time and dedication required to make any student governance group effective. This is doubly true for statewide efforts;

Whereas: The absence of an effective statewide governance body has left students and student interests vulnerable, as exemplified by the inability of individual UW student governments to respond to the lifting of the tuition freeze in the 2021-2023 Wisconsin State Budget, known as *2021 Wisconsin Act 58*;

Whereas: Students are the fiercest advocate for public education, the Wisconsin Idea, and the UW System. The absence of an effective statewide student governance group has also left the UW System at large vulnerable, and by extension, the state of Wisconsin;

Therefore, be it resolved: The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Student Government Association calls for the creation of an effective, well-funded statewide student governance body, and will support efforts for the creation of one;

Therefore, be it further resolved: This new statewide student governance group will act as an organizing body for student governments around the state. This body will pass legislation, organize statewide efforts, and serve as the systemwide student shared governance body;

Therefore, be it further resolved: The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Student Government Association shall hold a student body referendum on the formation of such a group;

Therefore, be it further resolved: The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Student Government Association calls on individual campus administrations, the UW System administration, state legislators, and Governor Evers to support the creation of such a group;

Therefore, be it further resolved: The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Student Government Association calls on individual student governments across the UW System to adopt a similar resolution;

Therefore, be it further resolved: After the adoption of similar resolutions in other student government bodies within the UW System, meetings shall be convened between them to determine the structure of this new body;

Therefore, be it finally resolved: Upon the passage of this resolution, it shall be sent to: all other UW System student governments, Chancellor Michael Alexander, Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Dr. Kathleen Burns, Vice Chancellor for Inclusivity & Student Affairs Dr. Corey King, Chief Business Officer and Senior Vice Chancellor for Institutional Strategy Sheryl Van Gruensven, UW System President Tommy Thompson, The UW System Board of Regents, State Representative John Macco, State Representative Paul Tittl, State Representative Elijah Behnke, State Senator Eric Wimberger, all other members of the Wisconsin Joint Finance Committee, all members of the Wisconsin Assembly Colleges and Universities Committee, all members of the Wisconsin Senate Universities and Technical Colleges Committee, Assembly Speaker Robin Vos, Assembly Minority Leader Gordon Hintz, Senate President Chris Kapenga, Senate Majority Leader Devin LeMahieu, Senate Minority Leader Jennifer Shilling, and Governor Tony Evers.

President

Speaker of the Senate

Vice President

