

1 **The Associated Students of the University of Montana**
2 **Resolution Advocating for the Increase of the Kaimin Fee**
3 **February 24, 2023**
4 **SB30-22/23**

5 **Authored by: Griffen Smith, Kaimin Editor; Caden Fox, Kaimin Business Manager;**
6 **Sponsored by: Elizabeth Bowles, ASUM President; Adrian Cook, ASUM Senator;**
7

8 Whereas, The Montana Kaimin (“Kaimin”) seeks to inform students of the University of
9 Montana (“UM”) while training the next generation of journalists;

10
11 Whereas, The Kaimin has interest from students and staff of UM to provide campus news;

12
13 Whereas, The Kaimin is the main news agency covering UM and serves a vital role informing
14 students of campus affairs, fact checking, and encouraging discussion;

15
16 Whereas, There is not enough room in the budget to run the paper and pay student employees a
17 livable wage;

18
19 Whereas, There is not enough room in the budget to maintain currently allotted employee hours
20 and keep up with future minimum wage increases;

21
22 Whereas, Current income from the Kaimin fee has decreased over the last several years due to
23 full-time student enrollment decline;

24
25 Whereas, Current hourly rate is limited to minimum wage for Kaimin student employees;

26
27 Whereas, In spring 2021 the Montana minimum wage rose from \$9.25 to \$9.95 an hour¹;

28
29 Whereas, The Kaimin employs 30-40 student journalists per semester;

30
31 Whereas, The Kaimin had 761 total payable hours in fall 2019 and 512 hours in Spring 2023;

32
33 Whereas, The Kaimin had to reduce from 580 hours in fall 2022 to 512 hours in Spring 2023 to
34 make up for increased wages;

35
36 Whereas, The Kaimin has not increased its fee since 2016²;

37
38 Whereas, Since 2016 inflation has risen over 26%³;

¹ Associated Press. *Montana's Minimum Wage Rising 75 Cents to \$9.95 in January*. U.S. News and World Report, 13 Dec. 2022, <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/montana/articles/2022-12-13/montanas-minimum-wage-rising-75-cents-to-9-95-in-january>.

² Dowaliby, Meg, and Sarah Smith. “The Associated Students At the University of Montana Resolution Regarding Kaimin Fee Increase.” *ASUM*, Scholarworks, 30 Mar. 2016, https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1534&context=asum_resolutions.

³ https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm

39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84

Whereas, The Kaimin has done exclusive reporting on important UM issues like Professor Rob Smith or The Native American Graves Repatriation and Protection Act;

Whereas, The Kaimin has also covered everyday life at UM since 1898;

Whereas, Many journalists are products of the Kaimin and reside across Montana and the United States;

Whereas, It is becoming impossible to pay student reporters a livable wage without a fee increase;

Whereas, A fee increase of \$3.00 to full-time and part-time students would result approximately \$25,000.00 of additional fee revenue per fiscal year, allowing for increased student payroll and operating expenses;

Whereas, The additional Kaimin fee revenue will be earmarked for student employee wages unless vacancy savings are present, at which point the Kaimin Business Manager in conjunction with the Editor and Chief and the Publication Board will determine the Kaimin's greatest need;

Therefore, Let It Be Resolved, That referenda language is to be placed on the April 2023 ballot, reading as follows:

“ASUM is requesting a \$3.00 fee increase per student to increase wages fairly for The University of Montana's Independent Student News outlet, the Montana Kaimin.”

___ Yes, I support the increase of the Kaimin fee by \$3.00 from \$6.00 to \$9.00 per semester for full-time students and from \$3.00 to \$6.00 for part-time students.

___ No, I do not support the increase in the Kaimin fee by \$3.00 from \$6.00 to \$9.00 per semester for full-time students and from \$3.00 to \$6.00 for part-time students.

Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, That this Resolution be sent to: Jared Gibbs, ASUM Elections Coordinator; Paul Lasiter, Vice President of Operations and Finance; Kelly Webster, Chief of Staff and Associate Vice President for Strategic Planning and Implementation; Seth Bodnar, UM President; Gwen Coon, ASUM Office Manager; Sara Niekamp, ASUM Operations Manager; Norris Blossom, Student Regent; Loren Bough, Regent; Todd Buchanan, Regent; Joyce Dombrowski, Regent; Casey Lozar, Regent; Brianne Rogers, Regents Chair; Jeff Southworth, Regent; Tyler Trevor, Deputy Commissioner for Budget and Planning, Chief of Staff; Clayton Christian, Commissioner of Higher Education; Jasmine Casanovas, Executive Assistant to the Commissioner;

Passed by Committee: February 26th, 2023

Passed by ASUM Senate: March 8th, 2023

85
86
87
88



Emma Wickum,
Chair of Relations and Affairs



Alexandra Berna,
Chair of the Senate