

SENATE RESOLUTION #2324



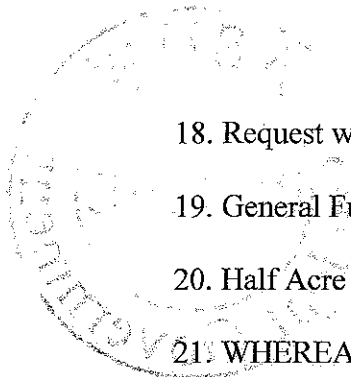
TITLE: State Funding of the University of Wyoming Half Acre Expansion

DATE: September 30, 2011

AUTHORS: President Degenfelder and Executives Dugas and Hunzeker

SPONSORS: Vice President McNamee, Senators Unangst and West

1. WHEREAS, the Half Acre Recreation Center is an important asset to the University of
2. Wyoming (UW) and its student body, faculty and staff; and,
3. WHEREAS, Half Acre serves as a central location for student activities, services and
4. programs; and,
5. WHEREAS, Half Acre is a critical campus resource for recruiting students and providing
6. lifelong health and wellness opportunities to its users; and,
7. WHEREAS, Half Acre has not been substantially renovated or updated since 1999; and,
8. WHEREAS, the most recent estimate for the Half Acre expansion and renovation is
9. approximately twenty-seven (27) million dollars; and,
10. WHEREAS, previous Associated Students of the University of Wyoming (ASUW)
11. legislation (SR #2272), recognizing the importance of such a facility to the university
12. experience, recommended and supported a significant student fee increase
13. beginning in Fiscal year 2014, upon completion of the Half Acre expansion and renovation,
14. to cover fifteen (15) million dollars of the cost of such expansion and renovation; and,
15. WHEREAS, UW has made a significant commitment to searching for funding sources for
16. the major renovation of Half Acre over the past years; and,
17. WHEREAS, in July of 2011 the UW Board of Trustees passed the UW Capital Construction



- 18. Request which includes a request for twelve (12) million dollars in state appropriated
- 19. General Funds and bond approval for the additional fifteen (15) million dollars to support the
- 20. Half Acre expansion and renovation; and,
- 21. WHEREAS, the Wyoming State Building Commission will be evaluating the UW Capital
- 22. Construction Request and making a recommendation to Governor Mead and the
- 23. Wyoming State Legislature's Joint Appropriation Interim Committee.
- 24. THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Student Senate of the Associated Students of the
- 25. University of Wyoming (ASUW) that the memo contained in Addendum A be submitted to
- 26. the appropriate Wyoming State entities for consideration; and,
- 27. THEREFORE, be it further resolved that the ASUW urge the Wyoming State Building
- 28. Commission to submit an affirmative recommendation to the Wyoming State Legislature for
- 29. the allocation of state appropriated General Funds requested in the University of Wyoming
- 30. Capital Construction Request.

Referred to: _____

Date of Passage: 10-11-11 Signed:
 (ASUW Chairperson)

"Being enacted on 10/11/11, I do hereby sign my name hereto and
 approve this Senate action."
 ASUW President

Addendum A

Dear State Building Commission Members:

The Associated Students of the University of Wyoming (ASUW) would like to thank the members of the State Building Commission for their hard work in preparing their recommendations for the Wyoming Legislature. We realize that your time is valuable and greatly appreciate the chance to have this esteemed committee as an audience.

The Associated Students of the University of Wyoming strongly encourages the State Building Commission to approve the University of Wyoming's budget request for Level 3 funding of the Half Acre Recreation Center. Through the implementation of a student fee, the students of the University of Wyoming have shown commitment to this initiative by contributing approximately 55% of the funds needed for expansion, but further assistance will be needed from the leaders of this great state to make the expansion possible.

First, the need for an up-to-date recreation facility is paramount in fostering healthy, well-educated students. A recent study presented at the American College of Sports Medicine's (ACSM) 57th Annual Meeting showed that students who exercise vigorously tend to show an improvement in their GPA. According to the study, this result held true even when accounting for other factors such as ethnicity, gender, and amount of time spent studying. An improved Half Acre Recreation Center would undoubtedly assist the students of the University of Wyoming by helping them achieve a high academic standard, giving them an edge in an increasingly competitive job market. Moreover, it cannot be disputed that the health of over 10,000 students on campus at the University of Wyoming should be a priority of this commission and the Wyoming State Legislature. An investment in our health is an investment in the health of the future leaders of the state of Wyoming.

Second, as our university embraces future growth in all facets of its infrastructure, the Half Acre Recreation Center should not be overlooked as an important part of the University's overall expansion. The University of Wyoming's Mission Statement states, in part, that it "aspires to become one of the nation's finest land grant universities." To be successful in this endeavor would require a cutting-edge recreation facility. The mission statement also expresses that the university will seek to provide "opportunities for personal growth, physical health, athletic competition, and leadership development for all members in the university community." In promulgating the Capital Facilities Plan, the University of Wyoming has adhered to its goals in the mission statement. However, to successfully execute those goals the support of the state of Wyoming will be required.

Third, the appeal for an improved recreation center is needed for the University of Wyoming to remain competitive in the region and to retain current students. With other campuses building new facilities or improving existing facilities, the University of Wyoming needs to improve Half Acre in order to continue to attract prospective students across the country. Of the 10,672 students attending UW on the Laramie campus in fall of 2010, 6,313 are from Wyoming and 1,419 are from Colorado. The state sending the third largest amount of students to the University of Wyoming was Nebraska with 251.

Colorado State University recently renovated their recreation center facility in 2010 and the University of Colorado is planning a \$63.5 million renovation. The University of Northern Colorado in Greeley constructed a brand new recreation center on their campus in 1996. Many other institutions in Colorado have invested in their campus recreation centers as well. For us to continue to recruit students from Colorado, a state that has provided almost 10% of the students enrolled at UW, the Half Acre Recreation Center needs to continue to compete with nearby facilities. More important is the retention of the 6,313 students recruited from Wyoming. The use of recreation facilities and participation in college sports have been repeatedly found as two of the biggest factors in college retention and success. Recreation centers are an integral part of campus life, and although they may not be the sole deciding factor for prospective students, they are among the important factors students consider when choosing an institution for higher learning and remain an important factor in student retention.

Not only will a new-and-improved Half Acre Recreation Center help students in their college endeavors, help the University succeed in its goals, and boost recruitment and retention at the University of Wyoming, but the new Half Acre Recreation Center will provide further advantages. First, Half Acre Recreation Center currently provides little ADA accessibility to individuals with disabilities. The new Half Acre will provide an elevator and improved access for students with disabilities throughout. Increased access is especially important to go along with the addition of the Veteran Services Center. The improved access in Half Acre will undoubtedly improve the UW experience for our veterans with disabilities. The new Half Acre Recreation Center will also provide improved classrooms for students in Kinesiology and Health programs as well as improved facilities for Theater and Dance classes and other University-sponsored academic activities.

The Associated Students of the University of Wyoming applauds the efforts of the Wyoming State Building Commission in their continued commitment to the students at the University of Wyoming. It is our sincere wish that the Commission support the efforts of the university with the Half Acre Recreation Center.

Attached to this letter are the signatures of elected and appointed ASUW officials who support the expansion efforts of Half Acre at the University of Wyoming. ASUW thanks you for your time, and would appreciate your support. If you have any comments or concerns regarding this letter please contact the ASUW Director of Government Affairs, Jon Hunzeker.