EXHIBIT 4
DATE 1-13-05
HB 165

Good morning, Chairman Jent and members of the committee. My name is Gale Price, and I currently serve as President of the Associated Students of the University of Montana in Missoula. I would first like to thank my fellow UM student, Representative Kevin Furey, for bringing forth two of the pieces of legislation in front of you today, bills that will certainly empower students and improve their representation on the Montana University System Board of Regents.

I have three major reasons for supporting House Bill 165:

1) Having an annual application process for the student regent position will raise awareness of the Board of Regents and the work the Board does. Just as awareness of the political process increases during elections, awareness of the Regents increases when the student position opens on the Board.
2) A one-year term will increase the likelihood of students at the two-year colleges of technology and community colleges being appointed to the board. This is incredibly important, especially with the increased emphasis by the state on two-year education. As a student leader who represents students at both two and four year campuses, I can personally speak to the difficulty of understanding the very different perspectives seen by these two distinct groups of students. Anything the state can do to ensure the balance of these two perspectives should be done.
3) This change will enhance the accountability of the student regent to the people he or she is appointed to serve, and will ultimately strengthen student representation on the Board of Regents. A student regent not doing his or her job will not be re-nominated by the students, and one who is will have a stronger mandate because he has gone through the scrutiny of re-nomination before reappointment.

Setting a one-year, fixed term for the student regent will only help ensure fair, strong student representation on the Montana Board of Regents. I strongly recommend giving House Bill 165 a do pass recommendation.

Thank you for your time.