

SENATE EDUCATION
EXHIBIT NO. 1
DATE 3/20/13
BILL NO. SR 33

To: Members of the Montana Senate

From: Montana AAUW and Missoula AAUW

Date: 3/20/2013

Confirmation of Former Congressman Pat Williams to the Montana Board of Regents

It is the mission of American Association of University Women to advance equity, especially educational equity, for women and girls. For over 100 years Montana AAUW has advocated for public policy that advances access and equity throughout the K-12 system and higher education in Montana and at the federal level. Montana AAUW currently has 10 branches across the state that hold forums, conduct research, raise money for scholarships, and lobby for public policy to advance equity.

MT AAUW asks you to confirm former Congressman Pat Williams to a position on the MT Board of Regents. We know of no other Montanan who brings the breadth of experience and perspective to the Regents and the many issues they address. For more than 30 years AAUW has lobbied, advocated and supported Pat Williams on issues of education. And Pat doesn't just talk about education. He has dedicated his life to education, as a Montana class room teacher, a Montana legislator, a Montana Congressman for 18 years and now as a faculty member at the University of Montana, sharing his knowledge and experience with the next generation of Montanans.

During his 9 terms in Congress, Pat was recognized as a national leader in education, serving on the House Education Committee and as the Chair of the Post-Secondary Education Committee. Among his achievements was passage of the College Middle Income Assistance Act, better known as "The Student Loan Act". For most Montana families, sending our children to college has relied on student loans as part of the funding that puts higher education within the reach of our sons and daughters. We all owe former Congressman Williams a debt of gratitude for his tireless work on the student loan act and so many others that have transformed American higher education.

Pat Williams has the support of the Montana Association of University Women for service on the Board of Regents. Williams brings a lifetime of national and state experience to the Regents. We urge the Senate to confirm Pat Williams.

Diane Sands, President of Missoula AAUW and state Public Policy Chair

This letter represents the thoughts and opinions of Montana Associated Students (MAS). Made up of the student executives from each Montana University System campus, MAS works in an advisory capacity with the Board of Regents. As stewards of the Montana Constitution, legislators know better than most that the Board of Regents serve as the governing body for the Montana University System. Each of their decisions impacts intimately the quality of student experience academically, culturally, and physically in the Montana University System.

As representatives of the nearly 50,000 students currently enrolled in the university system, we are passionate about ensuring that those individuals confirmed to the board are knowledgeable, thoughtful, and above all, willing to consider the quality of the student experience in each decision they make. Each of us has worked closely with the regents throughout our terms of service and feel that we can speak knowledgeably when supporting the candidates presently up for confirmation.

Jeff Krauss: Of utmost importance to Montana students and families alike is college affordability. Jeff Krauss has dedicated his time and comments on the board to the critical task of ensuring that students are not graduating with unreasonable debt. His comments have been thoughtful and are often grounded in his past and present leadership experience, which include Mayor of the City of Bozeman and CFO of the Museum of Rockies. Additionally, he has worked closely with student leaders on many projects, often going out of his way to get to know and be of service to us. He is an incredible asset to the Board of Regents and the Montana University System. **Montana Associated Students encourages legislators to confirm Gov. Schweitzer's appointee Jeff Krauss to the Montana Board of Regents.**

Pat Williams: Pat Williams is a leadership legend in Montana with decades of service as our State's Representative as well as serving in a variety of leadership capacities for organizations across the state and nation. In his current role as Regent his wealth of government experience, much of it focused around education, has proved very valuable, ensuring the Board is aware of the big picture and the potential long-term effects of Board decisions. His comments cover a range of topics, but he often speaks eloquently of the responsibility that the Board has to students. He very visibly strives to make students more than just stakeholders, encouraging them to be active participants in the governance of the university system. Always, Williams strives to be realistic in his perception of the MUS and OCHE and is refreshingly honest and forthcoming with his thoughts and questions. **Montana Associated Students encourages legislators to confirm Gov. Schweitzer's appointee Pat Williams to the Montana Board of Regents.**

Paul Tuss: Paul Tuss's diverse experiences in economic development provide the board with an important direct connection with the economic future of rural Montana. Tuss thinks critically about economic development opportunities, and his work and comments on the board have helped to ensure that our universities and graduates do well for Montana. He has lived in numerous small communities in Montana, presently residing in Havre. This experience affords him a distinct understanding of how important the University System is to small town Montana. **Montana Associated Students**

encourages legislators to confirm Gov. Bullock's appointee Paul Tuss to the Montana Board of Regents.

Major Robinson: Like Tuss, Major Robinson is a specialist in economic development. His experience has spanned the public and private sectors and has had a specific impact on Native American communities in Montana. While the Board of Regents does not oversee the 7 tribal colleges, many students from Tribal Colleges transfer into the Montana University System. It is critical that we have members of the board that have a substantive understanding of tribal communities in the state to ensure that the campuses in the Montana University System provide the services necessary students transferring from Tribal Colleges succeed. **Montana Associated Students encourages legislators to confirm Gov. Bullock's appointee Major Robinson to the Montana Board of Regents.**

Thank you for the consideration of these phenomenal individuals for the Montana Board of Regents.

Sincerely,
ASMSU
ASUM
ASUM HC
ASUM W
ASMT
ASMSU B
ASMSU GC

Mr. Chair and members of the Committee, My name is Hannah Reason and I am honored to speak here today. I am a student at the UM

Pat Williams dedicated many years to improving Montana's education system before I had even enrolled at the University of Montana. Now students at UM and across the state are the beneficiaries of Pat's lifetime of experience, put to work every day as a member of the Board of Regents.

SENATE EDUCATION

EXHIBIT NO. 3

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Pat has spent his career fighting for a better education system and standing up for Montana students.

Pat believes our communities are made stronger and safer by talking about and solving problems — not shying away from them. Pat has made every decision by asking what is best for Montana students, Montana education and Montana taxpayers.

Because of this, I stand with Pat and I ask the Board of Regents to do the same. I initiated a petition to support Pat Williams' confirmation to the Montana Board of Regents. Overnight, my petition supporting Pat amassed more signatures than one opposing him managed to get in more than two weeks.

By any objective measure, Pat is qualified to serve on the Board of Regents. Pat chaired the Committee on Post secondary Education in the U.S. Congress, served as a Trustee or Director on countless national Boards and has irreplaceable experience to offer the Regents and the university system as they chart a course forward for Montana students.

Pat's critics have built their case around 16 words in a news story where Pat was answering questions specifically about a few wrongheaded players whose actions have negatively impacted the football team, the university and Missoula.

Pat wasn't talking about the athletic department, or even the entire football team.

Purposefully misinterpreting his comments is counterproductive to the critical process of healing our community's deep wounds.

My mother raised me to not be afraid to raise my voice against injustices in my community—even if it's unpopular to do so. I have fought against domestic violence and sexual assault since I was a kid. People like Pat inspire me to stay strong.

I believe we can build a Montana that assumes we can and must do better. Pat Williams will continue fighting for students, for better education in Montana, and for the people of Montana as he has his whole career. I, along with my peers, urge you to confirm him to the Board of Regents.

Aylinn Inmon is a Junior at the University of Montana, studying to get her bachelor's degree in social work. She is a native of Missoula.

March 20, 2013

Confirmation Hearing

Capitol Building, Room 330

My name is Frank Allen. I live in Missoula. I'm a former dean of the University of Montana School of Journalism, a former president of a local school board (in another state), a former editor for *The Wall Street Journal* and the founder of a Montana-based educational nonprofit. Ever since I first met Pat Williams in 1996, I have known him to be an honest and dedicated public servant who always has the best interests of Montana at heart.

What makes an excellent Montana regent? What kinds of credentials and characteristics does this committee want a regent to have? Is the appointment of Pat Williams as regent in the best interest for our state and its university system?

I have studied the biographies of all of the other current Montana regents. These are talented and accomplished people. They are solid citizens. They bring to the assignment a broad range of experiences—for example, in teaching, finance, entrepreneurship, economic development, museum administration, municipal affairs and tribal management. I think Pat Williams makes a strong member of the Board of Regents because he brings significant additional experiences and perspectives.

We all know that Pat was Montana's lone congressman for nine terms—serving and representing the people of our state for an unprecedented 18 consecutive years. Pat got to keep the job of congressman for so long because, week after week, year in and year out, he traveled all over Montana to meet with us in our respective communities, to listen, to observe, and to learn about our concerns. I contend that Pat's extensive congressional experience is highly relevant preparation for being a regent!

There's more: Pat has been involved in teaching and education administration for more than three decades. As a young man, he taught in his hometown of Butte. Most recently, he taught courses forestry, geography and political science at the University of Montana. While in Congress, Pat served on the Education & Labor Committee. He sponsored federal legislation that created the Mansfield Center and the Leopold Wilderness Research Institute at UM, and led the federal legislative effort to create the Agricultural Plant Research Center at MSU in Bozeman. For about half a dozen of those years, he was also the chair or the senior ranking member of the House Subcommittee on Post-Secondary Education. He helped establish Montana's seven tribal colleges. He spent six years in leadership roles for the National Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges—giving guidance to boards of regents all across the nation. Such a combination of breadth and specialization translates into valuable perspectives that can help the Board of Regents do its work more effectively.

Finally, the Board of Regents is a governing body—not a group of vacuous cheerleaders. Regents must make tough decisions, shape policies, scrutinize practices, and, above all, must speak their minds in order to correct bad practices and remedy weaknesses. Some Grizzly football fans choose to misinterpret Pat's recent words to the *New York Times*. They want to block his nomination. If we insist on rejecting and obstructing worthy candidates for public office simply because something they once said has offended a small group of people, then we will never have a Legislature...or a Board of Regents.

Frank Allen

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