

June 25, 2014

To: Students' Council

Re: Report to Council (for June 30 meeting)

Introduction

Hey Council,

Hopefully your last two weeks have been fun and prosperous. The last two weeks for me have been fun and generally prosperous for me, so please read below for your fulfillment. As a general overview it was all-around busy week on all fronts with things happening on all levels of government. For my own sanity and your reading pleasure, I have divided my report into the three levels of government as well as a section on internal things that I may be involved in. I really like this and I will be following this template hopefully for the remainder of my term so you all know what to look for and what to expect. That said, if you would like me to add a section feel free to let me know, and from time to time I may add an extra section depending on what has been happening.

Municipal

Recently I have been spending a lot more time on municipal work than I would have thought. Last Wednesday I went to two different consultation groups, one dealing with transit safety and the other regarding housing developments in McKernan and Belgravia.

The transit safety meeting was dealing with the resolution by City Council to work with the ESA and WAVE to make transit safer. We talked a bit about the emergency buttons on the LRT, and they will be redesigned and installed in the summer. We also reviewed the survey they sent out to Edmontonians and the results from their section on safety. The development was a bit different and was originally sent to me by VP Kwan. At this meeting they were meeting with stakeholders on how to best implement an Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP) in the communities of McKernan and Belgravia, especially around the LRT stop. The city is looking to redevelop the area and to add more residences to the area. I thought it was really great the city invited us because many of our students live and especially rent from these two communities. Many of the people at the meeting were residents and were unhappy with some of the development and it was interesting to be a different voice in the room. Though I was relatively uneducated on the specific ARP, I stated that we are in support of more housing in general in the area, as well as diverse and affordable housing in the area.

The meeting really opened my eyes to how we can work with the city more, especially in terms of infill and housing. Though there will be residents that may not be in support of the position, I believe that it may be in the interests of the SU to advocate for more development and higher density housing in the communities around the University; namely Garneau, McKernan, Belgravia, and Windsor Park. We live on a commuter campus and have limited amounts of students in residence but if we can advocate for affordable renting opportunities close to campus, this could really help the pressure on residences and really contribute to the level that students can interact with campus.

Provincial

So Bill 3 amirite? I will go over a quick summary:

- A funded tuition freeze for two years (funded means that the government will cover the shortfall of a tuition increase by inflation)
- A freeze on all Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees
- Reversing the 1.4% cut to post-secondary institutions and increasing base funding by 2%
- Funded rollback of market modifiers (cancelling MMs but funding the shortfall – just for 1 year from all we know)

This was an awesome bill to see and I really believe that it was because of the advocacy work on my predecessors that this bill was brought to the floor of the Legislature. First, the aspects of the bill match almost exactly our lobby position, which isn't a coincidence. As well, this was the third piece of legislation a historic government is passing in the very first week of their time in session. If you think about the hundreds of causes that are vying for attention and support/funding, it is incredibly impressive that post-secondary and students especially were one of the first on the list.

Anyways, this is a great win and something that we all should celebrate and silently thank those that put the time and effort into making this bill become a reality.

Federal

Most of my time has been spent on the logo that we are developing for the Get Out the Vote campaign. This has taken a lot of my time, but is mainly focused on getting feedback from members of the committee I chair, the National Advocacy Team. I am really looking forward to having a finished logo and get the ball rolling on the campaign. As well, we are in the process of hiring a Campaign Coordinator. We had a lot of applicants which is really great and we should have someone picked by early July.

Internal Students' Union/Miscellaneous

I met with someone that has done research on student access and experience in university in a very broad survey and met with them to potentially use their data to publish a report. This is very beginning stuff and I will update you when I have more info.

Adieu, to you, and you, and you, and you,

Dylan