



USSA LegCon Funding Request

Proposed Motion: Approve \$800 from Operational Enhancement FXXENH to help fund one student to attend the United States Student Association 2015 Legislative Grassroots Conference.

Sponsor: *ASVP for Governmental Affairs, Sarah Kohout*

Date: 1/26/15

Background & Context

This is Western's first year as direct members of the United States Student Association. We have seen an increasing amount of involvement with USSA for the last couple years. We were able to send 8 students to the National Student Congress in Irvine this summer. Historically the Legislative Action Fund has been able to fully fund the conferences but since there is some big uncertainty with the fee the LACF was only able to fund 5 students at NTE \$800. Belina Seare, a USSA Congress attendee, looked for other sources of funding to fund more students to attend LegCon. She reached to AS Staff Development and ESC Steering Fund which funded three AS employees and three ESC students attend. These were passed by the committees in December. All three budgets passed an amount that reflected having four students per hotel room.

Summary of Proposal

This year the USSA LegCon is March 27th-30th in Washington, DC at the Gallaudet University Kellogg Conference hotel. I am requesting \$800 from the FXXENH to fund a 12th student to attend. Currently there are 11 students attending and the 12th would fill the hotel rooms and make the most financial sense to have another person. Sending 12 people to LegCon would make our first year as direct members worth the \$6,000 we pay in membership dues worth it! The 12 students can bring back the things they learn in DC back to Western and their clubs, offices, or to Western as a whole.

How this applicant would be chosen would be up to us. My suggestion would be to email those 13 students who were not selected and let them resubmit their applications with a week to do so. That can be something that this body decides at our next board meeting. But I'm open to others suggestions for what would be the most equitable way to make the decision.

Fiscal Impacts

Flight: Approximately \$375

Lodging: \$45 per night \$180

Early Registration: \$175

Travel to SeaTac/Per Diem: \$70

The only money that has been taken out of Operating Enhancement this year has been for the Oregon Students of Color Conference and that was 919.11. By the end of the year we'll have a more realistic view of what can be spent out of the LACF and have a more stable revenue for USSA Conferences.

Rationale

Student representation is a core value and responsibility of the AS. Sending more students to USSA LegCon has many benefits to students including increasing and enhancing student representation at the federal level as well as providing various trainings to students who can bring those skills back to campus.

For more information please look at this link: <http://www.usstudents.org/annual-conferences/legcon/>

Since this conference means visiting with legislators it will be huge to bring such a large amount of students to DC. It will build over electoral power and show that students are interested in politics and have power even at the federal level, despite how far it might be away from Bellingham.