Senate Bill

To: The Student Senate of the University of North Dakota

Authors: Lexi Hanson – Student Body Vice President, Abi Nadeau – Student Body Treasurer

Sponsors: Phil Jenson – School of Business Senator

CC: Nick Creamer - Student Body President, Lexi Hanson - Student Body Vice President, Cassie Gerhardt - Student Government Advisor, Andrew Freligh – Student Government Office Manager, Student Body Treasurer – Abi Nadeau

Date: 04/13/14

Re: Memorial Union Student Space and Study Lounge

Whereas, the University of North Dakota Student Government was established in part “to promote the general welfare” of the University, and

Whereas, it is imperative to enhance each student's educational experience by improving their ability to effectively and efficiently achieve their vast academic goals, and

Whereas, a vast number of students have expressed interest in more optimal study space around campus in recent years, and

Whereas, a work group comprised of students and Student Affairs staff was established in the fall of 2013 in order to assess the needs/interests of students for alternative programming on campus, and

Whereas, this Alternative Programming Work Group conducted a student survey earlier this year, which yielded results showing that “students are more interested in higher quality study spaces on campus than socializing” spaces, and

Whereas, some of the most common suggestions that accompanied this survey were to increase the number of outlets, provide more comfortable seating, group work space, some private study areas, and more study space in general, and

Whereas, the Alternative Programming Work Group Report also states that “study space is a pressing issue for our students. The addition of comfortable and inviting spaces that can be used by individuals and small groups is imperative,” and

Whereas, another important aspect of this report states that “Spaces that can be useful for both studying and socializing should be evaluated. The ease of transitioning between functions is important in how well or often the space will be utilized,” and

Whereas, the Memorial Union offers a centralized location for a variety of campus life activities, and

Whereas, a majority of the 1,232 students polled in the “Tuesday Twos” from April 8, 2014 were in support of additional study spaces in the Memorial Union, and
Whereas, remodeling a portion of the basement of the Memorial Union would allow for most of these needs to be met in part by demolishing the parking office and opening up the basement lounge area to increase the available space, and

Whereas, this area could be transformed into a comfortable, inviting lounge space that is multifunctional not only in regards to interests in study spaces by allowing them to flourish in their scholastic pursuits, but would also facilitate student collaboration and community building in both social and academic aspects, and

Whereas, a renovation to the Memorial Union to include new study spaces will provide lasting positive impact to current and future students of the University.

Whereas, there will already be some renovation projects underway in the Memorial Union starting this summer, and

Whereas, it would be more cost efficient and timely to incorporate this study lounge space project into the already existing demolition and renovation work, and

Whereas, the UND Student Senate of 2013-2014 has attempted to be fiscally responsible and cognizant of student fee dollars that have accumulated into funds in prior years, and

Whereas, it is important that we do our best to ensure that these student fee dollars are put to use in the most beneficial way possible for our current student body, and

Whereas, there is a large amount of money sitting in the Investments portion of the Student Government General Account, and

Whereas, there is an even larger amount of money that has been accrued by the McCannel Hall Bond Fee, and

Whereas, the renovations that are planned to take place this summer in McCannel Hall only require a portion of the money currently available in the McCannel Hall Fee Account, which leaves a large sum available for use only in that building, unless otherwise approved by the UND Student Senate, and

Whereas, one of the conditions that this body requested earlier this year in regards to use of the McCannel Hall Bond Fee for projects outside of McCannel Hall was that the University not increase tuition at a rate larger than 3.72% of the previous year’s tuition for the academic year of 2015, and

Whereas, that offer is no longer applicable, but the University did honor our request of the 3.72% increase maximum in tuition, and

Whereas, the most recent estimates for construction work in the basement of the Memorial Union, more specifically the parking office, lounge area, idea lab, and games/rec area, are at approximately $150,000, and

Whereas, the most recent cost estimate for furnishings in the basement of the Memorial Union, more specifically the study lounge area, idea lab, and games/rec area, are at approximately $135,000, and

Whereas, there is not enough money present in the Memorial Union Reserves to cover the cost of such a massive project,

Therefore, be it moved that up to $98,000 be allocated from the Investments portion of the Student Government General Account to assist in purchasing furniture for the student lounge/study space, the idea lab, and the games/rec area in the basement of the Memorial Union, and
Therefore, be it further moved that up to $232,000 from the McCannel Hall Bond Fee Account be officially authorized by the UND Student Senate to be used specifically for the demolition, renovation, and refurbishing of the student lounge/study space, the idea lab, and the games/rec area in the basement of the Memorial Union, and

Therefore, be it further moved that an additional $200,000 from the McCannel Hall Bond Fee Account, for a total allowable $432,000 be allocated to the Union/McCannel Hall Building Committee to assist with renovations in the Memorial Union basement to ensure that these study space renovations can proceed as planned, and

Therefore, be it further moved that students remain a part of the Building Committee and that they are fully involved in the design and furnishing process of the previously specified area of the Memorial Union so as to ensure that it meets the needs of the students that we represent, and

Therefore, be it furthest moved that lines of communication remain open between these committees and Student Government, so that the student body as a whole can be included in this process as this is a project dedicated to the needs of UND students.

Student Body President, Nick Creamer