Title: A Resolution in Support of Science-Informed Leadership

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Resolution Number: 02.16-17

WHEREAS the Regent Policy No. 5 states that “The primary mission of the University of Washington is the preservation, advancement, and dissemination of knowledge”; and

WHEREAS science- and evidence-based decision-making in government is essential in meeting the myriad challenges faced by our nation and our world, including but certainly not limited to human-driven climate change and the proliferation and use of nuclear weapons; and

WHEREAS regulations by federal, state, and city governments and agencies are the primary tools our society relies on to discourage the tragedy of the commons, where individual and corporate actions damage public goods and services such as clean air and clean water; and

WHEREAS historically the executive branch agencies such as the National Science Foundation, Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Energy have primarily been run by highly qualified individuals, with a strong understanding of science-informed leadership; and

WHEREAS the new federal administration has not demonstrated a clear understanding of the need for science-informed leadership based on its executive branch appointees. This is evidenced by selections such as Scott Pruitt for Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administrator. He has sued the EPA multiple times to remove regulations such as the Clean Power Plan even though such plans have a robust technical and scientific basis. This is just one example of several nominees that have demonstrated an aversion to science-informed leadership; and

WHEREAS the group Science-Informed Leadership will send a letter in January that is undersigned by graduate schools around the country expressing “concern about the role of science in the incoming presidential administration” and requesting “that the incoming presidential administration and Congress take the following into account when appointing leaders in federal agencies and departments:

1 http://www.washington.edu/admin/rules/policies/BRG/RP5.html
2 https://www.nsf.gov/od/nsf-director-list/nsf-directors.jsp
3 https://www.epa.gov/history/chronology-epa-administrators
4 https://energy.gov/management/history/secretaries-energy
5 https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/politics/trump-administration-appointee-tracker/
7 https://www.epa.gov/cleanpowerplan/clean-power-plan-existing-power-plants
1. Appointees should demonstrate a track record of science-informed decision-making that is consistent with the best available scientific evidence.

2. Appointees should not have conflicts-of-interest (financial or political) with industries or organizations that actively seek to suppress or obfuscate science or scientific opinion.

3. Appointees should express a commitment to engaging the scientific community in relevant policy decisions.”

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENT SENATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON:

THAT the Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS) requests that GPSS President Elloise Kim email uni@scileadership.com by Friday, January 13th 2017 to have the University of Washington GPSS added to the list of graduate student governments that have signed the Science-Informed Leadership scientific consensus statement; and

THAT GPSS requests that the GPSS Science & Policy Steering committee send the Science-Informed Leadership Consensus letter undersigned by GPSS to all United States (US) senators at their District of Columbia offices and all of Washington State’s US senators’ local offices by Wednesday, January 18th 2017; and

THAT a copy of this resolution be forwarded to GPSS President Elloise Kim, University of Washington President Ana Mari Cauce, University of Washington Graduate School Dean David Eaton, Associated Students of the University of Washington President Daniele Meñez, and Daily Editor-in-Chief Mohammed Kloub

Presented to GPSS for approval on Wednesday January 11, 2017
Approved on January 11, 2017

8 http://www.scileadership.com/consensus.html