

SENATE COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL CONCERNS

MINUTES OF MEETING

April 1, 2013

[In these minutes: Triclosan ban discussion; University Lactation Services; Fall forum on student data; Tobacco Free Resolution Updates; Topics for next year.]

[These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions or actions reported in these minutes represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate, the Administration or the Board of Regents.]

PRESENT: David Golden (chair), John Broadhurst, Laura Duckett, Carol Foth, Matthew Fredericks, David Fuhs, Stephen Gross, Daniel Kelliher, Sandra Krebsbach, Michael O'Day, Anthony Quill, Paul Ranelli, Teresa Schicker, Tim Sheldon,

REGRETS: Lolita Davis Carter, Peter Cao, Shannon Evans, Madisen Johnson, Jennifer Snider, Amelious Whyte

ABSENT: Maria Hanratty, Carolyn Mayberry, Catherine Solheim

GUEST: Professor Bill Arnold, Department of Civil Engineering and Resident Fellow-Institute on the Environment

WELCOME

Mr. Golden welcomed members, called the meeting to order, and asked for introductions.

TRICLOSAN BAN DISCUSSION

Professor Arnold explained that studies conducted on lake sediment across Minnesota have shown that triclosan levels have been increasing since the 1960's. Triclosan was created in 1964, introduced into consumer products in the 1970's, and use has continued to grow with the widespread use of antibacterial products. Professor Arnold went on to explain the findings further:

- The levels of seven other compounds that are derived from triclosan are also increasing over time.
- Three of the seven compounds are structurally similar to triclosan and produced during the disinfection of wastewater. Research is not conclusive on the effects of these compounds.
- Dioxins are a class of chemical known to be toxic. The other four of the seven compounds are dioxins and anywhere from 10-60% of the total amount of dioxins found in Minnesota lakes is from triclosan. These four compounds are not as toxic as most dioxins, but they are still of concern.

The Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources funded the study and it has resulted in action being taken by the State of Minnesota.

- The Minnesota Department of Health and the FDA agree that triclosan does not greatly improve the antibacterial capabilities of consumer products and is therefore not useful and harmful to the environment.
- The governor signed an executive order banning the purchase of triclosan as of July 1, 2013. There are exceptions for critical care areas of hospitals and food processing because there are regulations that must be met. Ecolab makes industrial products that are used in medical and food processing settings and they are not sold for consumer use. Industrial products contain much higher levels of triclosan than consumer products, which increase their efficiency. The University is run by the Board of Regents, which exempts the University from this order.
- Anything that is green certified does not contain triclosan.
- Research labs can use ethanol, found in Purel, or alternative non-triclosan containing products for disinfection of laboratory surfaces.
- Johnson & Johnson is phasing out triclosan by 2015. Colgate Palmolive has removed triclosan from most of their products. If you wash your hands using triclosan, it is absorbed and enters the bloodstream.

Professor Arnold stated that he would support the Committee's efforts to encourage the University to follow the guidelines of the State and ban triclosan products in certain settings. Members discussed the issue further with Professor Arnold:

- Triclosan is also found in plastics and listed as Microban.
- There are other products that can be used that do not have potentially toxic byproduct and that do not harm the environment.
- The Committee could make a broad request that antibacterial soaps are not purchased as a whole. Exceptions could be made for food handlers.
- Environmental Health and Safety is part of Facilities Management and are typically the group that would help to implement such a proposal.
- Mr. Sheldon, Mr. Fuhs, and Professor Arnold agreed to draft a resolution for the banning of triclosan.
- A motion was made, seconded, and approved in a vote by voice to support the development of a resolution banning triclosan in line with the State's guidelines.

LACTATION RESOLUTION

Ms. Schicker and Ms. Duckett clarified and added data to the Resolution to Implement a Lactation Support Program at the University of Minnesota. Members raised and discussed issues regarding lactation spaces:

- The department that owns the spaces currently handles cleaning. Ms. Duckett noted that Facilities Management staff provides liquid hand soap, paper towels, empties the trash, and can be contacted if there are issues regarding sanitation.
- Members suggested options for editing the wording of the resolution.
- Concerns were raised over using the word "program" or "implementation" because a request for funding at this stage could deter support for the resolution.

Ms. Schicker noted that a large sum of money is not needed and one staff member would be sufficient.

- Visitors are included in the resolution because if there is central support, it will prevent people from outside of the department being denied access.
- The primary purpose of the room is for lactating mothers using a breast pump. This is not an initiative to encourage mothers to bring their children to class or work.
- Several members noted that a lactation program would be more successful if it is centrally administered. Negotiations would need to be conducted with individual departments because the culture of the University has created a sense of ownership of space.
- Mr. Golden suggested that the Benefits Advisory Committee review the resolution because broad support will strengthen the resolution.
- Ms. Schicker and Ms. Duckett will distribute the edited resolution to the members via email.

Members voted by voice to pass the resolution with the discussed changes.

FALL FORUM ON STUDENT DATA – TWIN CITIES CAMPUS

Mr. Golden stated that a system-wide survey was sent to gather student data, had a 30% response rate, and also involved 30 other colleges across the State. The data will be released in the fall and he proposed that the committee be added as an additional sponsor of a fall forum on student health data. The committee's involvement will communicate to the University governance system that this is an important event. He added that the committee had discussed in the past sponsoring an event surrounding alcohol use, which would also be discussed at the forum along with other topics.

A motion was made for the committee to be an additional sponsor for the event and members voted in agreement by voice. The event is tentatively scheduled for the first week in November, but details will be forthcoming.

TOBACCO FREE RESOLUTION UPDATE

Mr. Golden presented the edited Tobacco Free Resolution with the following item added:

13. Whereas 99% of smokers started smoking before the age of 26. According to the Surgeon General, if a student does not start smoking in college it is highly unlikely they will become a smoker.

TOPICS FOR NEXT YEAR

Members raised the following issues they would like to explore during the 2013-2014 academic year:

- The safety concerns surrounding the implementation of the Light Rail.

- The University's reporting and response to sexual assault. Mr. Golden mentioned that Traci Thomas-Card, Prevention Program Coordinator of the Aurora Center would be a contact for discussing the University's bystander intervention training, consent workshops, and general issues surrounding sexual assault, relationship violence and stalking prevention. She also oversees the Violence Prevention Education Volunteers, students who facilitate peer education.
- The decreasing supply of land around and on campus for student housing and the increasing financial burden this places on students.

Hearing no further business, Mr. Golden adjourned the meeting.

Jeannine Rich
University Senate Office