



Undergraduate Student Government CEMP Contractual Recommendations

The Comprehensive Energy Management Plan (CEMP) has been an unprecedented catalyst to elevate discussion on sustainability and energy. The Undergraduate Student Government offers the following recommendations concerning potential concessionaires and use of funds generated. USG understands that the CEMP will not be the silver bullet that meets each of our Sustainability Goals or achieves complete carbon neutrality, but we believe it should serve as a vehicle leading our university to make smart environmental investments in the future.

With regard to potential concessionaires, USG believes that certain electric utilities have a conflict of interest due to their near-complete reliance on fossil fuels. During the warmest year on record, climate change must be a foremost interest of the company. USG expects that they have an extensive history of pursuing renewable energy, rather than primarily investing in “clean coal” technology or carbon capture and storage. In addition, we believe there cannot be a history of funding climate-denial organizations or spokespeople propagating the false narrative that global climate change is not caused by human greenhouse gas emissions. These large utilities would not be well-suited to Ohio State’s commitment to carbon neutrality and fighting climate change.

If an agreement is reached between the university and a potential concessionaire, USG holds that proceeds remaining after paying for campus energy costs should be directed towards achieving the Sustainability Goals, as well as affordability objectives. In order to accomplish this, we provide the following 6 recommendations:

1. We encourage a campus “Investment Campaign” written into the affinity portion of the contract with concrete, binding commitments. Revenues generated from the



concessionaire ought to support a major investment in sustainability projects.¹ Some of these revenues should be used to implement a revolving fund at Ohio State, similar to that of Harvard University. [Harvard's fund](#) started with \$1.5 million and is now valued at \$12 million. Their Green Revolving Fund invests in projects that have clear environmental returns within 10 years. CEMP revenue presents an opportunity to launch the largest revolving fund in the nation, from which students, administrators, and faculty can apply for research or academic grants. Further revenues should be invested in other initiatives that might not have clear monetary returns but that will nonetheless propel our university towards its Sustainability Goals.

2. We believe that CEMP revenue should supplement previous sustainability funding, rather than simply displacing our current commitments. The CEMP has been advertised as an environmental initiative; therefore, it should be used to significantly increase our funding for sustainability. USG feels that further capital expansion, unless explicitly meeting the above definition of a sustainability project, should not be funded by CEMP revenue.
3. We believe the concessionaire should provide extensive student scholarships of equal or greater value than what was provided by the CampusParc agreement. In addition, the concessionaire should provide competitive research funding for those interested in sustainability, natural resources, or renewable energy.
4. Student employment should be a major priority for the concessionaire. USG believes that the company should actively hire OSU students from a variety of backgrounds to work on issues related to sustainability and renewable energy. Renewable energy is the future; thus, the company should actively assist students seeking to enter the field.
5. Ohio State's unique relationship with the City of Columbus is critical in enhancing our collective sustainability goals through outreach and engagement. Columbus recently

¹ We define a "sustainability project" as an initiative that raises campus awareness of environmental issues, increases environmental research, reduces our natural resource consumption, or cuts harmful emissions.



received the “Smart City Grant,” which will stimulate innovative sustainable practices. We recommend that there be a concrete strategy to deepen our partnership with the city through the CEMP.

6. Because the CEMP will significantly influence the campus community, USG expects that the university will commit to the highest standards of financial transparency. Drawing precedent from the CampusPARC deal, the Senate Fiscal Committee and the University Senate should receive an annual report from the Office of Business and Finance concerning how any revenues from the partnership are being managed. Such a report could include: (1) balance of partnership revenues available, (2) interest earned through investment, (3) sustainability projects funded through CEMP revenue, (4) progress towards achieving the Sustainability Goals, and (5) a list of personnel that are overseeing the concessionaire. After it is presented to the Senate, this report should be made publicly available to all members of the university so they can easily track the use of funds. This report should be prominently advertised and conveniently accessible.

The Comprehensive Energy Management Plan has been marketed as a large-scale sustainability project that aims to cut energy costs and significantly reduce our carbon footprint. These recommendations reflect USG’s stance on how to most effectively build an infrastructure at The Ohio State University in order to achieve our Sustainability Goals, confer extensive benefits to students, and further our national leadership on climate action.



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