



TO: Senate
FROM: Jason Leung, Arts SSMU Senator
SUBJECT: Question Regarding the Recognition of Student Referenda
MEETING DATE: February 15, 2012

PREAMBLE: In the Fall 2011 Referendum held by the Students' Society of McGill University, two questions were brought forward regarding the existence of two Independent Student Groups – CKUT Radio, and the Quebec Public Interest Research Group (QPIRG). CKUT is the student-run campus-community radio station that is staffed by over 200 student volunteers. QPIRG- McGill is a non-profit student-run organization that conducts research, education, and activism on environmental and social justice issues at McGill and in the local Montreal community. The two questions received an overwhelming majority “yes” vote - 65.6% in support of CKUT, and 72.3% in support of QPIRG.

In spite of this resounding vote of approval, the McGill administration has deemed these results invalid and is unwilling to recognize the existence mandate supported by these referenda. The questions are constructed in such a manner that a “yes” vote could only mean student support for CKUT and QPIRG's existences.

As the SSMU is an accredited student union under the Quebec Accreditation Act, the Society is bound to guarantee the legitimacy of the votes of its members in all referenda regarding student activities. The Society has mechanisms within its electoral institutions to ensure legitimacy of all decisions made in accordance with provincial law, and all of these provisions had been adhered to in the Fall Referendum.

QUESTION: While concerns have been brought up over the wording of the questions, the results are clear in that a majority of students unequivocally voiced their support for the organizations. What steps will the administration actively take to reflect this student sentiment, and ensure these activities, which greatly enhance McGill students' academic experience, can continue to exist and are funded properly?

Students are troubled that their democratic processes, and therefore their ability to contribute actively and influence change at their own university, are being threatened. What will members of administration do to guarantee that democratic decisions made by students through legitimate processes are respected now, and in future?
