

July 2, 1990

33 Executive Bill #4

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO

STUDENT UNION

Sponsored by:	Co-Executive	Julie O'Brian
Authored by:	Co-Executive	Julie O'Brian

A BILL

BILL HISTORY

UCSU has been an active participant in the United States Student Association for a number of years excluding 1988-89. UCSU has been a fee paying member since 1984 and even hosted the National Student Congress in 1986.

Past administration have gathered knowledge from various USSA workshops and applied it towards goals including the 1986-87 Tuition Freeze Campaign and the creation of CSA. Three years ago UCSU sent six representatives to the National Congress, two years ago they sent two and last year four went to Berkeley.

On July 20, 1989, Legislative Council voted to support CSA (Colorado Student Association) joining USSA. On July 29, 1989 CSA became an official member of USSA, giving CU eight delegate positions at the National Congress this summer.

This year National Congress will be held July 28-August 2, 1990 in Las Vegas, Nevada.

BILL SUMMARY

This bill allocates an amount not to exceed \$1,166.24 plus GAR to send UCSU representatives to the 1990 USSA summer National Congress in Las Vegas, Nevada, July 28-August 2, 1990.

BE IT ENACTED by the Legislative Council of the University of Colorado Student Union, THAT:

SECTION 1: An amount not to exceed \$1,166.24 plus GAR shall be allocated from Central Reserve to cover partial costs of sending UCSU representatives to the 1990 USSA summer National Congress.

SECTION 2: The delegation from CU will include at least

- 1 Student of color
- 1 Woman
- 1 Woman of color
- 1 Veteran or Disabled or Non-Trad. or Lesbian, Gay or bi-sexual
- 1 Graduate Student

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SECTION 3: A written report will be submitted pursuant to 24
ECB #4.

SECTION 4: This bill takes effect upon passage.

BUDGET

1. Transportation
University 9 Passenger van
\$189 (flat fee & insurance)
\$272 (approximate mileage 1,600)
Round \$ 477.00
\$ 480.00

Note: All forms must be given before reservation can be made.

2. Hotel
2 Rooms for 8 people \$ 53.50
4 Rooms for 8 people \$ 107.00

Reservation deadline - July 13

3. Registration
After July 2nd - 205 x 8 \$1,640.00

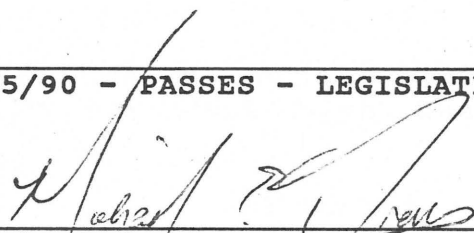
4. Food
\$40.00 x 8 \$ 320.00

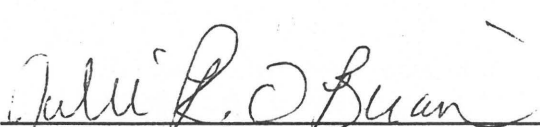
Suggested options for total:

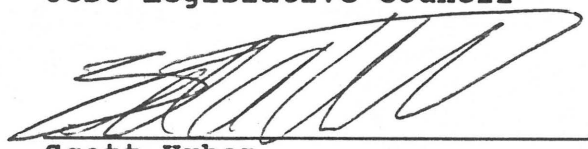
Transportation	\$ 480.00
Hotel	107.00
Registration	1,640.00
Food	320.00

TOTAL	\$2,227.00	
	<u>-1,060.76</u>	(CSA OVER COLLECTIONS)
	\$1,166.24	

7/5/90 - PASSES - LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL - SPECIAL ORDER - ACCL.


Michael Drews
President Pro-Tempore
UCSU Legislative Council


Julie O'Brian
UCSU Executive


Scott Urban
UCSU Executive

33.EB.4

Unity Through Diversity
A New Decade of Student Activism

United States Student Association

43rd Annual
National Student Congress
July 29 - August 3, 1990
University of Las Vegas, Nevada

Delegate report by Kathryn White
presented to:
U.G.G.S.
U.C.S.U.

☐ **Affiliate Meetings Attended**

- △ National Women's Student Coalition
- △ Graduate/Professional Students
- △ Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual Students

☐ **Workshops Attended**

- △ Who Decides? Reproductive Freedom in the 1990's
- △ Out Is In: Defending The Rights of Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual Students on Campus
- △ Coalition Building Skills: Building a Broader Student Movement
- △ Fighting Student Apathy: Getting More People to Help

(any person wanting specific information about these workshops may contact me through the CU Boulder Women Studies Department, 492-3207)

☐ **General Sessions**

- △ Donna Bivens
"Organizing Across Difference: Building Unity Through Diversity"
- △ Frank Hale
"Education: A Challenge For Our Generation"

☐ Plenary Sessions

These sessions were open to all delegates and observers and were a forum for debate about proposed platform or constitution and by-laws changes. The CU Boulder delegation actively participated in these debates, despite that fact that we were indeed a numerical minority.

In general, the plenary sessions were lengthy and involved a good deal of discussion/controversy around issues not personally relevant to all of the delegates. However, I was interested in hearing about issues that did not relate directly to my own experience because I understand that as a white middle-class person my perspective about what it means to be a university student will vary from those individuals with experiences different from my own. Furthermore, as a woman and a feminist, I appreciated the opportunity to make the reality of my experiences known to other students. Unfortunately, some individual delegates felt "left out" of the process (in that the issues being discussed often had little relevance to their personal lives), and isolated themselves from the opportunity to learn about the perspectives of others. It was this group of individuals who leveled the most criticism against the organization (USSA) and the congress.

☐ Issues Plenary Committee

I served on this committee which was in charge of planning and carrying out the Issues Plenary sessions. This work entailed meeting with the committee in order to prioritize the agenda, and spending many hours typing proposals into the computer.

☐ Regional Meetings

During these meetings we had the chance to talk with delegates from Arizona and Nevada schools about strategies for increasing the participation of Rocky Mountain Region colleges and universities within USSA. Our discussions were lively and educational; and, in general I would have to say that our region is not unified in its perspective, interests, or tactics. A portion of the delegates from the Rocky Mountain Region submitted a "statement of minority opinion" in one of the Plenary sessions which sought to limit the concerns of USSA to issues of access to education, quality of education and student empowerment. The "statement of minority opinion" did not go over well with the majority of delegates present, and seemed to display a lack of knowledge about the history of USSA. There also seemed to be a wide range of different ways to define "student issues" and "education issues." As I stated earlier, there are many ways of experiencing the status

of "student." First generation college and university students, students with children, women students, students of color, differently-abled students, lesbian/gay and bisexual students have very diverse concerns, and yet we are all "students".

☐ Graduate Student Representation at the Conference

USSA is clearly not an organization concerned with graduate student interests and needs, at this point in time. Of the 200 (approx.) students at the Congress, there were about 15 graduate students. Of the 15 graduate students registered at the Congress, even fewer came to the Affiliate meetings. I was able, however, to obtain a some information about graduate student concerns at other campuses by talking with those graduate students who were active at the Congress and with undergraduate students familiar with the graduate student governments on their campuses.

☐ Overall Impressions of USSA

My overall impression of USSA is that it has the potential to become a strong and influential student lobby. At this point, however, the range of issues USSA attempts to address is too broad for any effective change to be accomplished. Nonetheless, there is a definite interest within the organization to target specific issues and focus the energy intensely on them.

Currently the Rocky Mountain Region is dramatically underrepresented within USSA. I strongly encourage a campaign to increase the participation of other universities in our area within this organization. I cannot emphasize enough the potential USSA has to promote a nation-wide student empowerment movement. If the Rocky Mountain Region's participation continues to be so small we risk being "represented" by a national student organization that has no knowledge of our interests and needs.

☐ Impressions of CU Delegation

In general I was pleased with the participation of the CU delegation at the congress. Three out of the eight CU delegates were elected to the Board of Directors of USSA: Mary Lee (Asian and Pacific Islanders Coalition), B.J. Warclub (Native American Indian Coalition), and myself (National Women's Student Coalition). Liza Berglin and Christof Kheim were very active in networking with lesbian/gay/bisexual student groups from the various universities represented. Julie O'Brien served on the Board this past year, and was active keeping us informed about the details of the congress. I was

unhappy with Scott Wittaker's behavior at the Congress. He was consistently absent from meetings; and, when he did show up his behavior served to embarrass me (and other members of the delegation). Unfortunately, I had to leave the Congress before the final plenary session, at which he apparently made a drunken fool out of himself, and therefore also of CU. I'm sure he has an explanation for this, I simply couldn't guess what it would be.

□ Suggestions For the Next CU Boulder Delegation

I suggest that CU student groups have the opportunity to carefully select and recommend individuals for the delegation. This would ensure that 1) delegates are committed to getting something out of the experience, 2) delegates are responsible to bring resources back to CU, and 3) delegates *truly represent* the affirmative action category they are filling within the delegation. In order to do follow through on these suggestions, UCSU needs to begin the process of approving funding and searching for delegates far in advance of the deadlines.

□ USSA-Related Work Since the Time of Congress

△ **NARAL Op-Ed piece:** I co-authored an editorial article currently being sent out to all USSA press contacts. Be looking for it in the Daily!

△ **Women's Caucus Constitution:** Valeda Dent (Co-Chair Nat'l Women's Student Coalition), Kian Fredericks and myself are receiving input from the Women's Caucus members and putting the finishing touches on our new constitution.

△ **Board of Directors meeting planning:** I am making arrangements for lodging for Mary Lee, B.J. and myself for the October 27th Board meeting in Washington D.C. I am also arranging meetings for Valeda and I to network with other women Board members, NARAL representatives and USSA officers.

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USSA REPORT
Submitted by Mary Lee
Presented to U.C.S.U.

AFFILIATE MEETINGS:

- National Women's Student Coalition
- Women of Color
- People of Color

During these meetings members discussed platform, the affiliate's Constitution and by-law, and USSA Constituion and by-law changes. Board of director members were elected during these meetings. Each caucus within the People of Color, such as the Asian and Pacific Isanders, People of African Decent, etc, eleacted representatives to sit on the Board of Directors.

WORKSHOPS ATTENDED:

- English Only

Discussion of how employers are abusing the English Only Law as a form of discrimination.

- Fighting Racism on Campus

This workshop was supposed to help students find methods of fighting racism on campus. The result: The definition of racism surfaced as "white supremacy".

PLENARY MEETINGS:

Voted for or against proposed constitutional and by-law changes. Unfortunately, these meetings were dominated by the New York Region, AKA **EMPIRE REGION**.

OVERALL IMPRESSION:

Understandably, like any meeting, the affiliate meetiongs lasted longer than the scheduled time. The Pleanary sessions were "uncivilized" at times, just like UCSU Leg. Council. All in all I did gain a lot of information and enjoyed it at the same time. It was definitely a growing experience. As an elected board member I hope to have the cahnce to get more involved, pending UCSU support.

***Next time the delegates should be chosen in a more respon-
sible manner.(i.e. Elected board memembers interviewing prospectful delegates.

USSA National Congress Report
Representative Scott Whitaker

I feel compelled to submit a fully documented account of the proceedings at the USSA conference 1990. The experience was at most interesting, and at least very discouraging.

The motto of USSA is "Unity through diversity." The organization excels at the diversity aspect, but is far from united. In fact, the way the conference is organized encourages dissention and factionalization.

Much emphasis is placed on the caucus system (also referred to as the "affiliates"). A good deal of time is allotted for meetings within these groups. They are organized for what most would call "minority" groups. The caucuses are as follows: people of color, lesbian/gay/bisexual, women of color, people with disabilities, veteran's, non-traditional student, graduate/professional, community college, national women's student, and private college. They are designed to be a forum for the voicing of issues directly related to the affiliate members of each group. While an opportunity for this is not all bad, it is my opinion that too much time and emphasis was focussed in this area. It encouraged delegates to solely represent the causes of their caucus and not their varied student populace back home. It also encouraged extensive agendas for each caucus which may not have come about in such mass had not so much time and importance been placed on the caucus meetings. In all, caucuses submitted resolutions and additions to the platform which often represented biased views which were sometimes directly offensive to other delegates. For example, there was a series of resolutions which proposed the recognition of the PLO. In short, a terrorist organization was recognized with no consideration given to the concerns of Jewish students present at the conference. Therefore, the organization disenfranchised all Jewish students, many of whom vowed not to return to USSA. Also, it was determined by the people of color caucus (predominantly dominated by african-american students) that a new definition was needed for racism. It was passed that racism be defined by USSA as based in White Supremacy. Based on the attitudes and opinions exhibited at the conference, this is clearly not the only type of racism that exists. The only discussion or amending allowed was merely related to verbiage disputes between caucuses, allowing some censorship privileges on wording.

Not only is too much emphasis place on the affiliate system, but it is also not a system based on equality. While it appears that there are quite a few caucus groups, there is not one for every delegate. To even participate in or vote in a caucus, one must be a member either by race, gender, age, level in school, or sexual orientation. Under the current system, there is no caucus for caucasian males. Actually, there is no caucus specified for caucasians. In an equal system, where balance was the goal, there would at least be a forum for all delegates. By omitting the caucasian male from the affiliates, USSA is practicing

discrimination-something the organization claims to fight. One might think that these non-affiliates could then attend other caucuses and learn what was going on there, but for most this was not allowed. To my knowledge, only the non-traditional student, graduate student, and gay, lesbian, bi-sexual caucuses allowed non-members to attend their meetings. All others had non-members thrown out of their proceedings. It was, therefore, impossible for any delegates to represent any other students besides those that fall under their classification. While in truth, we all know that any elected official represents a variety of students.

It is clear that USSA dealt very little with truly educational issues. In fact, to my knowledge, only two pieces of legislation dealt directly with education-one related to student health insurance, and the other to encourage students nation-wide to unify about the higher costs of education. Many delegates said that their state's elected officials would not touch or support the USSA platform or positions because of that reason. Why is it even necessary for such an organization to have a foreign policy or a position on every life issue?

Out of despair, a few of us submitted a minority opinion during one of the plenary sessions. We stated that while students will often have issues that they feel strongly about, they are not necessarily student issues. We felt that there are many national issue-based organizations with which one can affiliate that work on one specific thing or area quite effectively. It was our resolve that USSA should focus on education in the areas of quality, access and empowerment only, and that if this were the case, we could enlist the support and involvement of many more students. Before our statement was even completely read, we were booed and yelled at by various delegates. Many were delegates that we respectfully endured as they dominated proceedings earlier. They could not tolerate a differing opinion.

The only thing that was encouraging was the Rocky Mountain Region. Our number of delegates was at least double, and many of those delegates were elected to board seats from their caucuses. The delegation as a whole felt that USSA had lost its focus and agreed that anything our region would submit would fall directly under educational quality, access, or student empowerment. We discussed holding a regional conference (possible in accordance with a grow conference), and organized recruitment of other school in our areas. While this was encouraging, based on the delegates that said that their schools would not return and the way the numbers are stacked already, it's doubtful that the Rocky Mountain Region can greatly change the USSA direction now or in the near future.