

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CAMPUSES STATEWIDE UNITE FOR STUDENT PROJECT TO ALLOCATE \$1 MILLION IN PUBLIC FUNDS FOR ENERGY-INDEPENDENCE, SAVINGS**

**January 14<sup>th</sup>, Alabama** - Four college campuses united through the Coalition of Alabama Students for the Environment (CASE) are participating in a statewide “Sustainable Investment Project” to allocate a goal of one million dollars in public funds for new campus “Green Funds” by January 2014. “Green Funds” would support new campus energy-independence and energy/water efficiency projects, as well as exploration into renewable technologies.

The primary goal of the project is to protect the future of public higher education in Alabama by reducing energy costs in the wake of the approaching fiscal cliff. Student groups at the University of Alabama, University of Auburn, UA at Birmingham, and UA at Huntsville will each be running concurrent projects to create new campus “Green Funds” at their individual campuses. At UA and Auburn each, the goal is to allocate at least \$350,000 in funds annually. The goal of UAB and UAH is \$150,000 each annually.

“Green Fund”, a concept common at leading higher-education institutions nationwide, was implemented for the first time at any Alabama public university at the University of Montevallo in 2011. Since that time, the campus has allocated approximately \$30,000 annually, or \$10 per student, into on-campus, student-implemented renewable energy, water efficiency, and public transportation projects. The fund is primarily supported by a \$5 per semester per student investment, with all funds available by request for student projects, and students possessing the majority vote on all major and minor funding decisions.

Though the UM Green Fund is representative of how future funds will operate on each campus, student groups have tailored their goals to fit their respective campuses’ needs. At the University of Alabama and Auburn University, student investment will primarily support the funds in their first year, but will be lower than any student charge or fee currently incurred by students. For example, at the University of Alabama, student investment will be only 50 cents per credit hour per student each semester, with funds supporting both administrative and student goals for sustainability.

The Coalition of Alabama Students for the Environment (CASE) is a statewide network of student environmental leaders from multiple grassroots environmental organizations at eight college campuses across Alabama. Coalition members work individually and collectively with public, private, and non-profit organizations to achieve legitimately beneficial collaboration on environmental issues within Alabama communities.