

TO: UC Berkeley Students and Faculty
FROM: Berkeley Energy and Resources Collaborative (BERC)
SUBJECT: Statement Regarding Change in Sponsorship of the 2007 Berkeley Energy Symposium
DATE: February 26, 2007

The 2007 UC Berkeley Energy Symposium was originally sponsored by a generous donation from Dow Chemical Company to the Berkeley Energy & Resources Collaborative (BERC), organizers and hosts for the event. The sponsorship was a gift without influence on the content or coordination of the symposium, which was created for the sole purpose of highlighting the incredible work being done at Berkeley and the role that Berkeley can play in a cleaner energy future. In subsequent weeks students raised concerns about the use of Dow funds and informed BERC of a standing ASUC resolution that directs university groups not to accept funds from Dow.

Resolution #198 was passed in 2004 by the Associated Students of the University of California (ASUC). The basis for the resolution is an ongoing international debate on the responsibilities of Dow Chemical as a result of its purchase of Union Carbide Corporation, owners and operators of the 1984 industrial disaster site in Bhopal, India. (For the full text of the resolution, please see <http://www.asuc.org/documentation/view.php?type=bills&id=366>.)

The decision to retain or forego the Dow sponsorship based on the debate and at this late stage in the planning of the event was complicated. The BERC leadership engaged in extensive conversations with administrators, affiliates, students, and Dow. In light of the ASUC resolution, the BERC leadership has decided that it is important to respect our organization's role as a representative of the larger Berkeley student community. Therefore, BERC will abide by the ASUC resolution and not use Dow funding for the 2007 Berkeley Energy Symposium. The resolution and the decision made by BERC only pertain to the use of Dow funds. Dow representatives will still be involved in the symposium as both speakers and attendees.

BERC members believe that answering the question of our energy future necessitates student organizations and the University to constructively engage with companies actively working to improve the efficiency and impact of our energy and resource choices. To address the challenges of climate change and energy security we will need academia, government, and the private sector to understand each other's needs and roles, and work together to develop real solutions. As a student led university group, BERC feels that part of its role is to act as a bridge between the University and the corporate community, to increase communication between the two, and to help foster productive collaboration. In forging these partnerships, we must be ever-mindful of the diverse perspectives on this campus, while continuing to support collaborations that help us achieve our mission of a cleaner energy future. As we move forward as an organization, BERC will continue to build these corporate partnerships in ways that can help inform and guide the impact these companies have on our world.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact BERC co-chairs Jit Bhattacharya and Merrian Fuller at berc@haas.berkeley.edu.