

Editorial

Federal aid change helpful and realistic

The U.S. Senate and the Internal Revenue Service have recently acted on student aid related items.

The Senate voted 93-1, Jesse Helms dissenting, to approve a five-year extension of federal student aid programs at a level higher than the Reagan administration wants.

The IRS has begun diverting loan defaulters' tax refunds to help repay their debts.

The government is finally approaching student aid in a hard-nosed yet practical manner.

Students whose socioeconomic background does not permit them to use their own or family resources to pay for college should have the opportunity to obtain higher education.

People who take advantage of government programs to attend college, and who make enough to repay their loans, should not be able to thumb their noses at the government and drive off in their Audis.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, former students defaulted on \$1.3 billion in loans in fiscal 1985 alone. Many of these are small loans made to people who did not complete their degrees and have low incomes, according to Department of Education officials.

The newly-mandated IRS enforcement campaign is not directed at these people, but at those in higher income brackets who can afford to repay their loans. The new Senate legislation also requires garnishment of the wages of all federal employees who defaulted on student loans. This provision is not included in a House version of the appropriations bill.

Student aid programs are a form of borrowing from future generations to invest in the educational health of the nation. Such programs only make sense if future generations have similar opportunities. These opportunities are threatened by people who can repay their loans, but don't. Borrowing from the next generation becomes stealing from future students.

The bill passed by the Senate provides up to \$9.4 billion in aid for the first of the five years of the authorization. The bill raises the amount available to low income students, but will make it harder for some middle income families to receive aid.

According to Senator Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island, after whom direct student grants are named, the buying power of "Pell" grants has decreased by about 20 percent in the past four years. Both the recently passed Senate bill and an earlier House appropriation recognize this by raising the ceiling for grant size to students in need.

Because the House bill includes a higher amount and higher ceilings, a House-Senate conference committee must meet to recommend compromise figures to both chambers.

Students receiving aid will also have to show satisfactory academic progress at the end of two years in order to continue receiving aid.

Some middle class families may now need to use more of their own money to send students to college. The government cannot provide everything to everyone, and people must make choices. If that means not buying that new car in order to send Jane to college for a year instead, so be it.

Higher education is an opportunity for some citizens with appropriate academic backgrounds to prepare themselves for important roles in the future of the nation and the world. This opportunity should not be denied for reasons of wealth, nor because past beneficiaries refuse to pay their debts.

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"I feel SAFER knowing we might be killed in a traffic accident right here at home than by terrorists abroad..."

Letters

Mad as hell

As many ODE readers are no doubt aware, there are some serious problems in the ASUO's management of the student group health insurance program. Ever since the ASUO, then under the Pinckney administration, gave the contract to Lone Star Insurance of Dallas, Texas, we insured students have experienced a multiplicity of hard times with the insurer.

Claims paid months late, in amounts often less than the contracted 80 percent payout, and without 1.5 percent monthly interest when paid after fourteen days, are only the tip of the iceberg.

Students should be demanding a full investigation and audit of the situation. Many of us have been ripped off and don't even know it. The ASUO's insurance coordinator receives \$8.50 hourly and her assistant gets \$4.50 an hour, yet when students turn to them for help with these problems, we're told to "call the insurer's (800) number and tell them yourself."

The media has been alerted and the Oregon Insurance Commission and Attorney General will soon be notified. The time is now for concerned students to complain about their insurance problems to Mr. Bill Kittredge in the ASUO Office of

Student Advocacy, phone: 686-3722.

Let's get mad as hell and do something to help ourselves!

Willy Bills
Law
U.O. Students for
Equity in Insurance

Editor's Note — According to ASUO officials, the contract with Lone Star was signed by the Julie Davis administration, and all complaints against Lone Star Insurance will be handled first by the ASUO insurance coordinator in the ASUO Executive office, Suite 4, EMU, 686-3724. If the complaint cannot be resolved, the ASUO Legal Services attorney, not the student advocate, will handle further complaints against the insurance company.

Big Sister

Women on campus are lucky there are so many big, strong men who have paid their taxes and helped to pay for the new shuttle van. It's a small price to pay to protect our girlfriends.

Women are also lucky they have big, strong student government to take care of them. Many SafeRide coordinators are heterosexual, and some are even men!

It is therefore lucky for everyone that we had a big, strong ASUO president who saw fit to provide a public service that would establish once and for all that men are potential rapists.

Women aren't becoming independent through SafeRide, they are merely shifting their dependence to Big Sister government, funded by yours truly.

Now we are told that the anti-men SafeRiders are right — because of one incident at UCLA, a much larger school than the UO, involving a walking escort service once in litigation which probably hasn't been concluded, all men are therefore unfit to escort women.

No. We could take this thing to court, and the men-lovers on campus (the bastards) would win. As Hiawatha pointed out, tax-funded public services cannot discriminate on the basis of sex. Furthermore, the anti-male bile of the lesbian community would probably boil over, causing a pleasurable disturbance in court.

The organizers of SafeRide are split — many, such as new ASUO Vice President Caitlin Cameron, decidedly not lesbian, seriously want to see the project get off the ground and provide a real service. Others, such as former SafeRide coordinator Mercea Mabrey, can't leave the issue in peace, and feel the constant need to remind men that they are the source of the problem, and that is why men pay for SafeRide but can't use it.

Now you tell me, is that stupid?

James R. Young
Senior

Oregon Daily Emerald

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Letters to the editor must be limited to 250 words, typed, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is turned in. The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length or style. Letters to the editor should be turned into the Emerald office, Suite 300, EMU.