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House opposes bill to limit incidental fees

By Chris Norred
Of the Emerald

SALEM — A bill proposing to limit the fees students must pay for student programs was effectively killed Thursday with a visible turnout of students who

legislative session.

The bill's sponsor said it would lower tuition at the University by cutting \$41 a term from the student incidental fee. But student leaders argued those "insignificant" savings would not be worth the devastating effect such a cut would have on programs funded with the fees.

The incidental fee is a portion of total tuition by which students finance non-academic student activities and services such as athletics, student unions, and various minority student organizations.

ASUO President Steve Nelson, Incidental Fee Committee Chairwoman Jodi Moonie, and Portland State University student body President Michael

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opposed the bill.

About 25 concerned students from around the state filled a session of the House education committee in a show of opposition that convinced committee members to table House Bill 2252, thereby eliminating its chances of passing in this

OSPIRG budget approved

By Carolyn Lamberson
Of the Emerald

Controversy surrounding the proposed budgets of the Oregon Student Public Interest Research Group and the Incidental Fee Committee prevailed during the IFC budget hearings on Thursday.

At the hearing, the IFC approved OSPIRG's budget request of \$95,537.28 by a 5 to 2 vote.

IFC member Ron Munion, who voted against funding OSPIRG, contended that

OSPIRG is a primarily political organization. Because of restrictions placed on the use of incidental fee money, it can not use incidental fees for any political activities, he said.

Any funding for lobbying or political activities comes from a separate account, said OSPIRG State Board Chair Maureen Kirk. IFC-allocated funds are used strictly in an educational manner and are important to the cultural and physical develop-

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Frohnmayr addresses issues surrounding incidental fee use

By Scott Maben
Of the Emerald

Oregon Attorney General Dave Frohnmayr reiterated opinions issued from his office in 1985 on whether student incidental fees should fund politically active groups on a Thursday evening visit to the University.

His lecture, sponsored by the College Republicans, came as a heated first week of University budget hearings on distribution of next year's fees drew to a close.

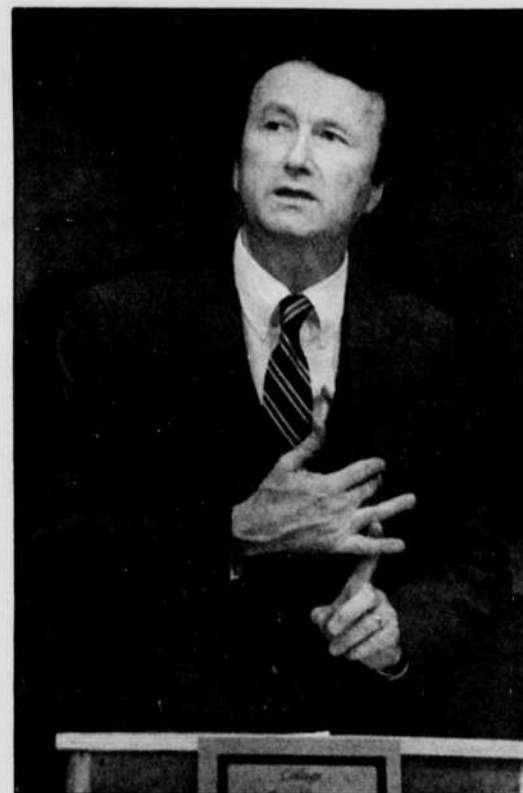
Frohnmayr began by offering a short background on the Oregon student fees statutes and how students in the early 70s gained control of distributing incidental fees.

"This issue is one that poses some significant and interesting challenges to us as attorneys and as constitutional lawyers, and I know obviously that it is and has been a politically volatile issue on this campus for many years," Frohnmayr said.

The bulk of Frohnmayr's address focused on questions about the incidental fees statute, which states that the fees can be levied from students for programs that are "advantageous to the cultural or physical development of students."

State Representative Larry Campbell and Bill Lemman, vice chancellor of the State Board of Higher Education, originally brought the issue of incidental fee usage to Frohnmayr's attention in 1985. The questions arose from student concern at campuses across Oregon. In response, Frohnmayr's office published the opinions on which he based his lecture.

The question dominating the lecture asked whether incidental fees can fund groups that advocate through expenditures of those funds positions on current Oregon ballot measures, legislation before the assembly, administrative rules or policies of state or federal agencies, or issues before state or federal



Dave Frohnmayr

tribunals.

Concerning ballot measures, "The answer is no. That's really a corrupt practice under Oregon law. These are public funds and public funds cannot be used to advocate for or against the measure," Frohnmayr said.

For the other situations Frohnmayr said the basic answer his office came to "was really one of statutory instruction, that is, the fees have to be deemed to be to the cultural or

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Extension of seatbelt law could save money and lives

By Shawn Wirtz
Of the Emerald

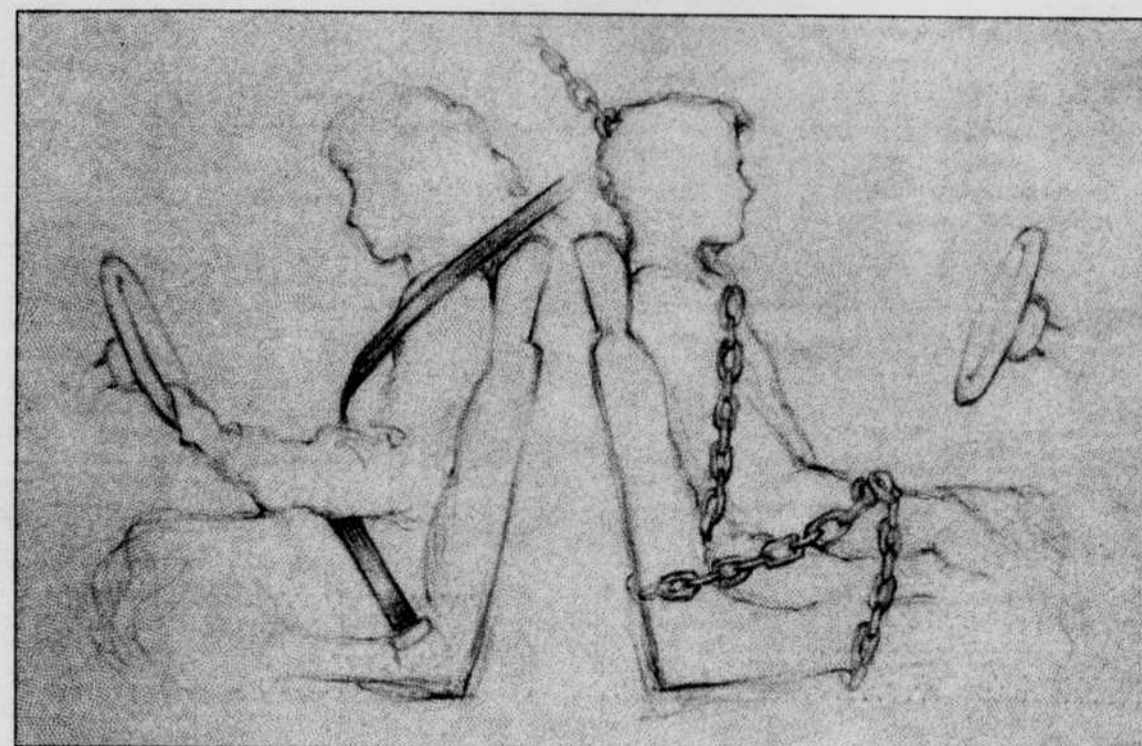
Some people have a hard time restraining themselves when it comes to discussing mandatory seat belt use, an issue that divides civil libertarians and public safety advocates and creates a rift across which opponents often hear only echos of their own arguments.

"It blows me away. I can really hardly believe it's as emotional as it is," said Sandra Flicker, the coalition director of Oregon Traffic Safety Now.

This session opponents will take up arms again in the Legislature to defeat Senate Bill 87, which would extend the state law requiring passengers under 16 to wear seat belts to include adult drivers and passengers.

A similar bill, SB 355, passed the Senate 19-11 in the 1985 session, but the House blocked its passage 30-28. The 1977 Legislature also repealed a law that required motorcyclists to wear helmets, an issue opponents consider parallel to the seat-belt law.

The Senate Transportation



Graphic by Lorraine Rath

Committee will hold hearings on SB 87 soon, and Chairwoman Jane Cease, D-Portland, expects the bill to come out of committee virtually intact, she

said.

Supporters expect a January report issued by OTSN to be their best weapon in getting the legislation passed, Cease said.

Based on the increase in usage of seat belts in Hawaii, Connecticut and California after they implemented similar laws, the coalition projected a

"conservative" estimated increase in the compliance rate from 34 percent to 55 percent.

A compliance rate of 55 percent in 1985 would have saved an estimated 45 lives, and would have prevented 1,463 moderate to critical and 631 minor injuries, according to the report.

"The moral part of this issue is the fact that these seat belts save lives," Flicker said. "We are losing far too many to traffic fatalities. It's something that can't be ignored any longer."

While seat belt use among passengers under the age of 16 has increased from 28 percent to 67 percent since the law was instituted in 1985, "I don't think we've seen a reduction in fatalities," Flicker admitted.

"Kids are still dying in cars," she said, but mainly "because of the increased traffic due to Expo."

Rather than focus discussion on the emotional issue of violent traffic fatalities, however, supporters emphasize the economic costs. If this tact is cold, it also may be the best way

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