

# Condo-conversions would be unjustified

The City Council would be doing many Eugene residents a disservice by changing the current condominium-conversion ordinance. The council may vote to amend the ordinance tonight, and it should heed the concerns of the community and keep the ordinance as it stands.

While we are not opposed to the concept of condo-conversions, the proposed changes would strip the elderly, disabled and poor of protections found under the current ordinance.

Similarly, the changes would redefine significantly the meaning of "special category tenants" — those 62 or older, those with an income that is at 80 percent or less of the median income of the area, or those who have a mental or physical handicap currently qualify under this category. Under the proposed revisions, tenants would have to have an income at 50 percent of the median area's income, have substantial mental, emotional or physical disability, or be 70 years of age or older.

Relocation benefits for currently defined special category tenants are in peril if the changes go through. Many who now are deemed elderly, poor or disabled will receive little or no assistance in finding another place to live if their apartments are converted. Moving expenses would be curtailed, and the city would be obligated to provide only minimal referral services for those who find themselves displaced by condo-conversions.

The most disturbing aspects of the proposed changes, however, deal with comparable housing and lifetime leases. The current ordinance mandates converters find displaced special-category tenants a comparable place to live. If this cannot be done, then the developer is obligated to offer these tenants a lifetime lease. Under the new proposals, these benefits would be denied. This is wholly unfair in light of the scarcity of low-income housing alternatives available in Eugene.

The lack of comparable housing was one of the prime motivators for the Eugene Planning Commission's decision to change the ordinance. Providing comparable housing is a thorn in the side of developers seeking condo-conversions. By removing this provision, conversions could come much easier.

But conversions never have been a problem before. All but three of the apartment complexes in central Eugene have been converted. The Eugene Planning Commission's rationale is that the current ordinance keeps prospective developers out of our city — this rationale is questionable at best. The evidence shows that if developers truly want to convert apartments to condos, they are going to do so regardless of the current ordinance provisions.

Denying lifetime leases adds insult to injury. Special category tenants should not be financially penalized because they cannot find comparable housing. Where are they to live if they cannot find comparable housing and cannot afford to purchase their apartments-turned-condos? We would find it much easier to support changing the condo-conversion ordinance if it were not for this provision.

Private developers have the right to do with their property as they will. However, considerations should be made for special category tenants, most of whom are elderly. Changes in the condo-conversion ordinance only should come after provisions for these tenants are made. Until that happens, no condo-conversion measure should be passed.



## Letters

### Responsible

In response to the article "Legal liability of alcohol examined at fraternity-sponsored seminar," I'd like to thank Karen Creighton of the ODE. There are a few points I'd like to clarify and add regarding the issue of liability and the impetus of seminar.

Alcohol is not permitted on sorority-owned property. This is a regulation established by the majority of sorority national executive boards. Our particular incident occurred at a party co-sponsored with Sigma Alpha Epsilon. The initial complaint was issued against SAE, and the question arose of how liable a sorority is for co-sponsoring a function when the sorority does not fund or provide alcohol. Equal responsibility was the decision we made.

Alcohol liability and risk management is a hot issue. It is not an issue, however, which is inherent to the Greek system. Consideration of this issue should be extrapolated outside

the "college scene" to anyone sponsoring/hosting a party where injury may result out of irresponsible alcohol consumption.

The legal implications of hosting parties is frightening in our "era of lawsuits." More pressing than monetary matters is moral responsibility. The burden of knowing one may have been instrumental in saving another's life or quality of life following an accident is one we should all hope to avoid.

Luckily, our situation saw no injury or litigation. Hopefully others will benefit from this before having the whistle blown, and take preventive measures to stop intoxicated individuals from injuring themselves and others.

**Beth Gaiser**  
President, Kappa Kappa Gamma

### Weathermen

Dan Goulet, your generation gap is showing! Your letter referring to the "mad bomber," Silas Trim Bissell, is an example.

If memory serves me correctly, the Weathermen (Weather Underground) were anything but terrorists. My simplistic definition of terrorism is the needless taking of lives to establish a political ideal.

The Weathermen issued warnings on an intended bombing — with adequate time to evacuate the premises. Terrorists don't; they strike without warning. The Weathermen didn't hit populated areas; terrorists do.

"Our great nation" was in tremendous political turmoil in 1970 — turmoil brought on by the war in Vietnam. Naturally, ROTC buildings were often targets.

That the FBI could spend 17 years tracking an alleged perpetrator of an intended

makes me ill. Meanwhile, the Green River Killer is still on the loose.

I don't know Terry Jackson. I get the impression (from his present demeanor and past connection with the Weathermen) that he ain't no terrorist — nor has he ever been!

The ODE put it succinctly and well. They say "much ado about nothing." I heartily agree.

**Kristi Svendsen**  
Pre-Journalism

### Rebuttal

It says a great deal that "pro-choice" people such as Mary Sullivan can argue only in slogans and ad hominem (ODE, Feb. 11).

Abortion is either right or wrong. Whether I am male or female has nothing to do with the merits of my argument. Disqualifying me from the debate because of my maleness is absurd. It is roughly akin to saying anyone who is not a parent can not argue against child abuse because only parents can understand just how irritating a whining child can be.

I admit I have trouble referring to a pro-abortion position as "pro-choice." This is because I see two individuals affected by abortion, with only one given a choice. If abortion isn't such a bad thing, why does "pro-abortion" sound so terrible to you?

The idea that there is a "need" to kill innocent human beings IS beyond my comprehension. I feel that abortion for social reasons is damaging not only to the baby, but to the woman and to society in EVERY instance. I grieve for all three, not just the baby, when an abortion is performed. THAT is what you seem unable to comprehend.

**Jeff Hoyt**  
Student  
Wednesday, February 18, 1987

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