

Editorial

New drinking policy ineffective, unfair

"We would like the keg and volume purchase of alcohol by your organization to stop immediately." That was the request — or demand — the University administration dropped on University-affiliated living organization presidents Monday, on official University letterhead.

No, it's not a plot by convenience stores to increase their sales of bottled alcohol. Rather, the University administration, the Oregon Liquor Control Commission (OLCC) and local law enforcement agencies are cracking down on drinking sponsored by Greek organizations and housing cooperatives.

It's going to be difficult, to say the least, to enforce this new policy. People who want to drink are going to drink, regardless of their membership in a living organization or their age. The difficulty of enforcing this policy makes it an ineffective one from the start. Student efforts are already underway to strike deals with beer distributors to buy bottled alcohol at a discount.

The new drinking policy dictates that a housing "organization shall not use living organization funds or credits to purchase alcoholic beverages," or "organize any subscription or voluntary collection of funds for the purchase of alcohol involving three or more members." Furthermore, no members or guests may bring a keg onto the premises of or to an event sponsored by an affiliated living organization.

In addition to being ineffective, the policy is unfair. It does not discriminate between those who may drink from a keg legally and those who are under the legal age of 21.

When the policy is enforced blindly against those 21 and older, it is a violation of their civil liberties — including their right to buy and drink from a keg.

In effect, it's a sort of "localized prohibition" leveled by an administration that is supposed to foster an open, enlightened community, not a close-minded one. The policy discriminates against housing cooperatives and fraternities while the dormitories, where the illegal consumption of alcohol is widespread, remain unaffected. While most of the attention over drinking violations has been directed against fraternities and cooperatives, the enforcement of drinking laws in the dorms has been unsuccessful.

Instead of trying to ban the purchase and consumption of bulk alcohol by all members of campus living organizations, University officials and living organization members should allow segregated parties, where those 21 and over may drink responsibly without fear of reprisal against the rest of the organization.

This policy clearly intends to make living organizations accountable and responsible for rowdy behavior, especially when it involves the illegal use of alcohol by minors. Although it is within the right of the University administration to enforce drinking age laws at housing organizations, the enforcement should stop where the law does: at the age of 21.



DO WE REALLY BELIEVE THAT THIS IS THE ONLY SUPPORT HOLDING EVERYTHING UP?

Letters

Booth blues

I can't think of a more idiotic or less safe place to put an election booth than in the middle of the west end of 13th Avenue. Traffic is high, and the street is made narrower by the presence of bike racks on both sides of the street. The only more inappropriate spot would be in the east end of 13th Avenue, in front of the construction zone!

John Oberst
Biology

Bookstore biz

A focal point of student interaction with the University Bookstore, I've found, is despair over the spiraling cost of textbooks. I've learned that to have an impact on anything of consequence, it is necessary to get involved. The opportunity for doing so is presenting itself with the upcoming elections for the University Bookstore Board of Directors.

I attended an Annual Meeting and learned of the University Bookstore's cooperative ownership, non-profit status, and 11 percent textbook discount. I

was largely unaware of the Bookstore's unique qualities, regarding it as merely an outlet for textbooks and other products.

I have found my tenure on the board extremely rewarding, with an opportunity to witness and influence the workings of an organization that significantly impacts the University community and generates more than \$9 million in annual sales. The high caliber of personnel I've encountered throughout my two-year term has enhanced the educational benefits I've realized. With an impending graduation, I am confident my experience on the board will prove valuable in my job search.

Nominations for board positions close today at the University Bookstore annual meeting (3:30 p.m., Gilbert Room 231). Board officers will report on the state of the Bookstore and be available for member questions. Those in attendance will gain an appreciation for the University Bookstore's commitment to membership service and be eligible for \$255 in Bookstore gift certificates.

Michael Sawyer
Treasurer, University
Bookstore Board of Directors

Peter and Paul

How dare the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Endorsement Committee slam the majority of middle-class, white and able-bodied students on this campus for not supporting the Lane Transit District ballot measure!

To many students who don't have access to or find it too inconvenient to ride the bus, this measure amounts to another tax that cannot be afforded. Any measure that would make the cost of education more affordable should be supported by the City of Eugene and not funded by students who are already in debt to finance their education.

The GALA Endorsement Committee seems to think that all white, middle-class students have money to burn. This is just

not the case.

Although the LTD measure is a noble idea, the funding procedure is a case of robbing Peter to pay Paul. No one would consider taxing only a low-income area to pay for their medical care; why support this particular funding plan? The GALA Endorsement Committee should have considered alternative funding plans before making a slam against a majority of financially strapped, white, middle-class students.

Russell Stoddard
Sociology

Rights of poor

It is blatantly apparent that Emerald staff members do not need to ride the bus every day. Their casual denial of the rights of poorer students leads me to believe their ignorance must pervade other economic decisions about student needs.

As one of those who rely on LTD for transportation, and the mother of three, term and monthly pass prices are outrageously beyond my budget. The lack of affordable transportation means just one thing: Hardship. I must avoid activities that require transportation. I am continually fatigued from excess exertion. I lose countless hours of valuable study and family time. And if I did not live within walking distance of the University, I would be forced to overburden my frail budget with the purchase of approximately \$105 to \$120 worth of bus passes for myself and my children each term!

It may be that the particulars of Ballot Measure 82 are not finely tuned, but the lack of an economic relationship between IFC money and LTD is a signal that University students are concentrating on creating economic barriers rather than enabling disadvantaged students to better themselves.

Deborah Martin
Student

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