

Students have right to control own fees

With a little legislative luck, student control over incidental fees could be in the (money) bag — despite opposition from administrators fearful of student empowerment.

Late last week, the state Senate Education Committee granted a "do pass" recommendation to Senate Bill 830, designed to give students more control over incidental and building fees. SB830, sponsored by Sen. Larry Hill (D-Springfield) on the behalf of the Oregon Student Lobby, is said to have an "excellent" chance of passing the Senate — where the bill is now headed. "Excellent" is the right word for this bill.

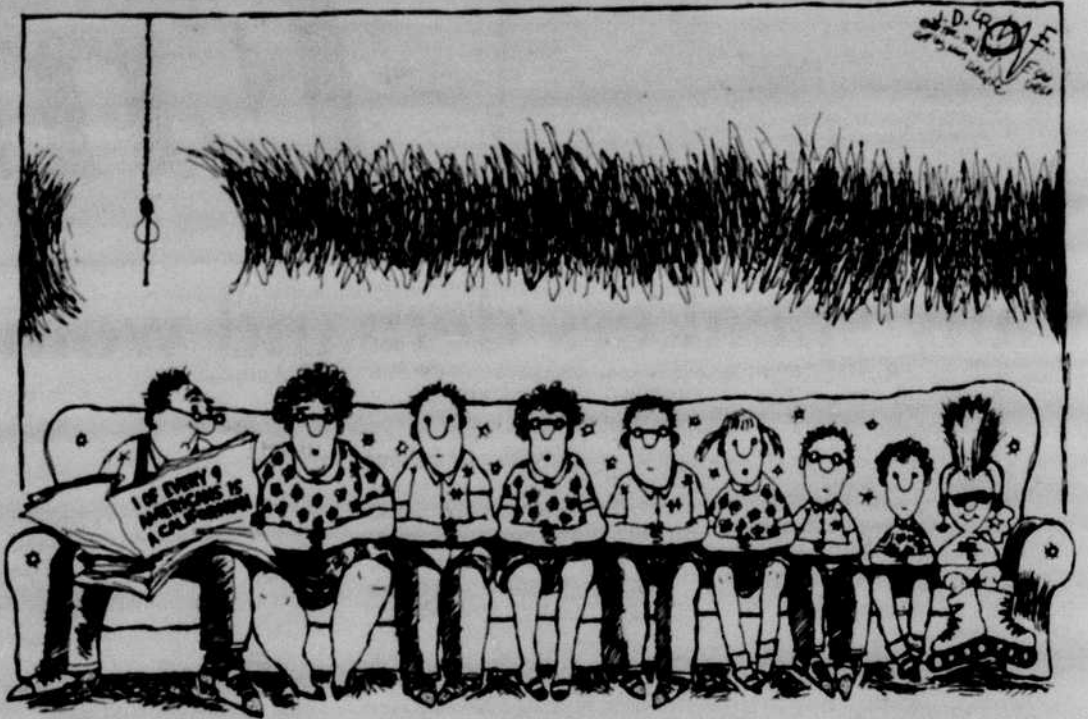
The bill is described as a "clean-up" measure to tighten the language governing how student fees are processed and appropriated. Currently, there are no laws guaranteeing student control over surplus incidental fees or ensuring building fees are not used for non-academic auxiliary buildings. It's time to tighten the language and give students a voice in fee allocation.

If passed, SB830 would reroute surplus student finances back into the incidental fee appropriation process. Appropriately, this would prevent higher education officials from diverting student building fees for other projects.

SB830 gained support from several legislators last week, including Rep. Jim Edmunson (D-Eugene), a former University Incidental Fee Committee member himself. Edmunson pointed out that incidental fees are supposed to be used for students—as well they should be. After all, students are paying for their educations—and for the all of the perks that go along with it. Although we wouldn't consider this a perk, student money contributes to administrative salaries too.

SB830 opponent Bill Lemman, former interim chancellor and state system of higher education representative, said higher education officials should control student fee appropriation because it is the universities, not the students, that levy fees. Perhaps Lemman's forgotten the bill stems partly from the controversy surrounding former Portland State University President Natale Sicuro, who allegedly diverted hundreds of thousands of dollars of excess student fees to cover the deficit in the school's athletic department. And, perhaps, system administrators would rather forget that Sicuro resigned in disgrace over these allegations.

Incidental fees are used to promote the cultural advancement and development of students. Who better than the students to determine where the fees should go? Nobody, we think. And we hope the state legislature thinks so too.



Help might be on way for University halls

They are the two oldest buildings on campus, but they are also the best loved. As symbols of the University, Deady Hall and Villard Hall have appeared on letterheads, course catalogs and film.

Unfortunately, that love and veneration for these grand old halls has not always been properly shown. Tight budgets over the past few years have led to the neglected upkeep.

Accordingly, Elisabeth Potter of the state's Historic Preservation Office has recommended that both Villard and Deady be placed on a federal list of endangered buildings that might need emergency financial help.

If Potter's recommendation is enacted, it will not be the first time Villard and Deady have been federally recognized. In 1977, the two were placed upon the prestigious list of National Historic Landmarks. That achievement was quite an honor—the landmark status is granted only to "the creme de la creme of historic buildings across the nation," according to Potter.

Being placed on the "Section 8" list is not something to be so proud of. The structures here are recognized for having fallen into disrepair; it would be a mark that shows the state has not taken care of its historical

landmarks.

Clearly, the two buildings are worth saving. Despite the shape of the trimmings, the structures themselves are still solid. And as monuments of living history, their foundations are better yet. If federal funds are necessary to save them, we'll have to swallow our pride and accept it.

The Historic Preservation Office has been concerned with the fate of the two buildings since 1978 when the state Board of Higher Education couldn't come up with the matching funds that would have allowed the University to qualify for federal building restoration grants.

The burden of upkeep then fell upon the over-taxed University, which tried to do the best it could with limited means and fundraisers such as the well-publicized Villard Hall Centennial in 1986. Still, it hasn't been enough.

Potter's recommendation is a scolding of this neglect. Her "Section 8" proposal would place Villard and Deady on a lower priority waiting list for the federal funds. If the state doesn't get the message she is sending, then Potter will recommend the two buildings be placed on the top priority list next year.

Letters

Library

Eugene needs a new library.

Libraries are one of many public organizations which represent intangible qualities with which all citizens can identify: the police exist to protect, city hall exists to administer, museums exist to enlighten ... and libraries exist to educate. Together they form the nucleus for communal life; they are in fact, the very reason for the city's existence.

The role of architecture is to embody these intangible qualities in buildings which make us aware of the value of that service to the community. Each of these buildings, then, becomes part of the civic identity of that city, and the stronger that identity is, the more cohesive the city becomes.

It follows that every public building must satisfy one simple, yet very important question: Will this project contribute positively to the civic identity of the city? It is obvious that if the architectural manifestation of a public organization is overshadowed by the interests of a private enterprise,

then the answer to that question would be no — its potential contribution to the city is substantially weakened.

The formation of a positive, unique identity for Eugene through its public institutions must be the driving force behind the decisions that shape the environment in which we live.

The long-term rewards will by far outweigh the short-term costs; not only resulting in a better library, but in a better future for our city.

We deserve a better solution.

Scott Wolf
Architecture

For us

We are determined to get Students for a Progressive Agenda off students' backs. Excessive rules, burdensome fees and Incidental Fee Committee spending have combined to stifle individual freedom, penalize work and destroy incentives for educational growth.

When the young politicians of the IFC try to increase your fee burden and spend your hard-earned money, they don't

blame the special interests but students' inability to pay. But then, they always blame students first.

Student associations have been bribed and blackmailed into IFC funds. They have been bribed by the temptation of much-needed money, and they have been blackmailed by the thought that other associations will get their money, money contributed in part by their own members.

Why is it wrong to let students keep more of their money and spend it the way they like?

The University needs a fair fee which does not force students to work more for the IFC than they work for themselves.

All of us need to be reminded that the SPA government did not create the associations; the associations created student government.

It is our intention to curb the size and influence of the SPA establishment and to demand recognition between the powers granted the ASUO and those reserved to student associations.

There are more things that can be solved by students

themselves, if given a chance, by student associations that are closer to individuals.

For us, all of us.

Charles Carter
Student

Clark/Wyckoff

Through my involvement with student groups on campus, I've become aware of the wide diversity and incredible amount of energy and commitment that student leaders possess. It is unfortunate that these resources have gone unrecognized and untapped by our student government.

The ASUO has been run by a select few who have taken control and responsibility for the entire student body. It is time to move from a closed, centralized government to a diversified, student-responsive and responsible administration. For this reason, I endorse Andy Clark and Scott Wyckoff for ASUO president and vice president.

The Clark/Wyckoff ticket stands for diversification and student empowerment. Andy

Clark has concrete experience in confronting important issues and making changes happen right here on campus. He is a member of the Council for Minority Education, the AIDS Task Force and is a residence hall assistant. Scott Wyckoff has worked on the University Relations Council, as a housing program assistant and on Oregon's successful campaign for Jesse Jackson.

AIDS, racism, substance abuse, violence against women and housing concerns are all areas where both Clark and Wyckoff have worked successfully in creating positive change on campus. They have demonstrated leadership skills and the strength of direct activism.

It is your school and government, you can make the choice: direct action or the same old rhetoric — an open, responsive government of the cliquish organization of the past. It is time for a change in student government. Vote Clark/Wyckoff.

Robin Schaefer
President, Pre-Law Society
Monday, April 10, 1989