

ASUO's new plan is on the right track

Although somewhat vague, in an attempt to not dispel any false expectations, ASUO President Eric Bowen announced that the ASUO is considering a project to institute a new sub-committee plan that would replace the Incidental Fee Committee and allocate student funds.

The plan is fueled from the University's concern that the current politics arising between the IFC and the EMU Board of Directors may have an ill effect on the EMU budget. The University's concern seems appropriate and there is a large amount of money at stake — a large amount of "student" money that must stay in control of the students.

The administration has tried to divert IFC funds into the power of the EMU board, a board that has substantial administration influence into one of the larger dispersals of student funds, the EMU budget. The ASUO's new plan allocates the money without a conflict of interest between groups, like the IFC and the EMU board; yet at the same time, the new plan incorporates a system of checks and balances.

A radical change in the allocation of student funds is needed.

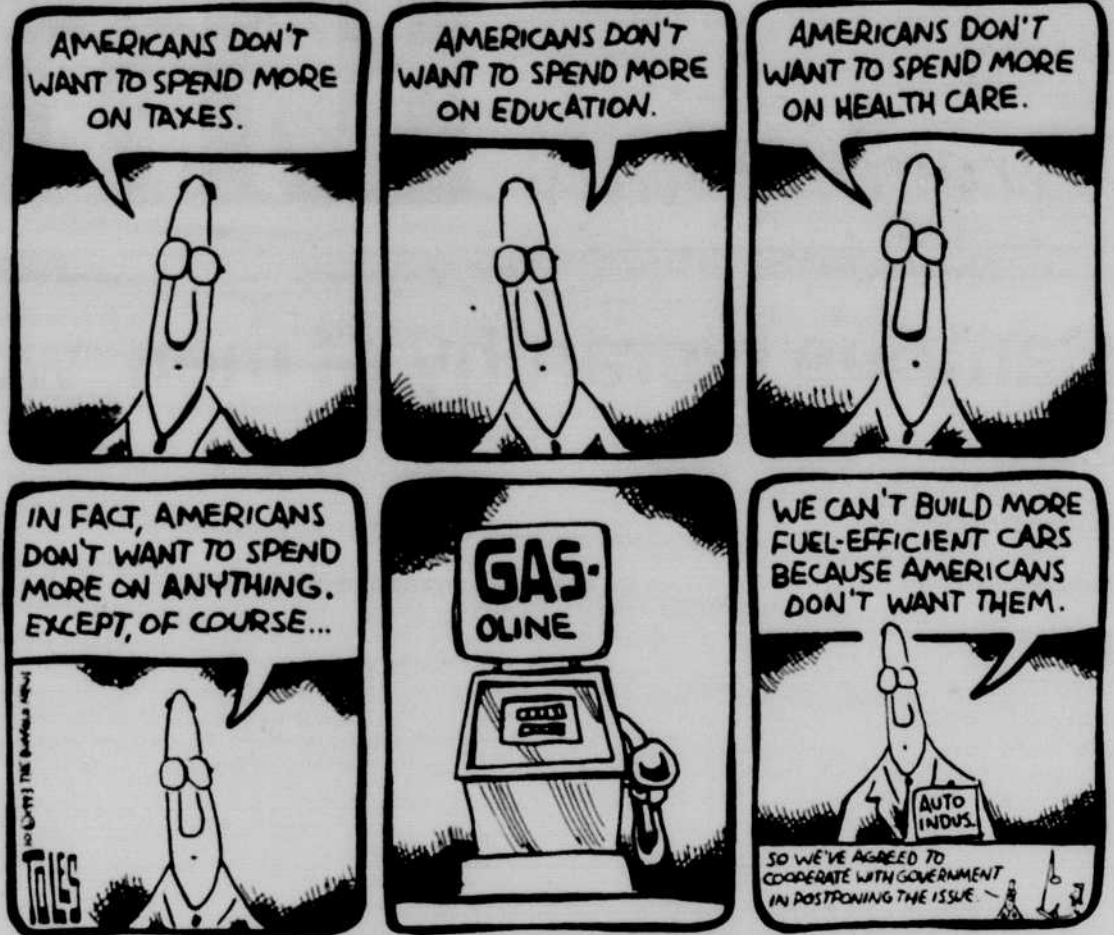
The ASUO's new method works well in student interests. Granted the administration will not gain the control of the money that it would like to have, but it shouldn't because it is student money. The new plan removes some of the line-item control that the IFC currently has over different groups and allocates the line-item control to a sub-committee.

Essentially, as it is understood, the IFC will be broken down into four sub-committees. One will allocate a lump sum to each of the other three who will in turn allocate student money where it sees appropriate. Currently the IFC mandates control of nearly all student funds, and line-item control is in the hands of the IFC for many University organizations.

At first, the new plan sounds like committees for the committees is a somewhat complicated system. However, although only under preliminary constraints, it is a plan that sounds very workable and very much in the benefit of the student's interests.

With the administration's hopes of simply diverting funds to the EMU board from the current IFC budget, the problems will still exist — they will just exist in a different set of hands. The ASUO's new plan would ratify the current system and incorporate necessary changes that must be made in order to successfully allocate student funds by the students.

The current dispersal of funds by the IFC is not working, and the administration is right, something must be done. A radical change in the allocation of student funds is needed. With this new plan in the making, it offers students an adequate checks and balances of their own student funds, rather than simply passing more money into the hands of the administration.



COMMENTARY

Support alternative transport

By Mike Haertel

You don't have to be an alternative person to use alternative transportation. Many perfectly ordinary, sensible people ride their bikes, walk or take the bus, instead of driving to school. If you didn't drive today, keep reading and we'll give you a warm, fuzzy feeling.

On the other hand, if you prefer to drive, keep reading: We have a little guilt trip for you.

First, some not-so-meaningless statistics:

- Driving causes more air pollution in Oregon than anything else. Auto exhaust accounts for six times as much air as industry. Particularly in Eugene, we have real air quality problems: We're surrounded by hills that trap all the smog so we can "enjoy" it.

- One-third of our nation's total energy use is by automobiles. We use 17 million barrels of oil a day. This number is so large it's almost meaningless, but here's how you can imagine it: First, imagine a barrel of oil. That's quite a lot right there, isn't it? Now, imagine a thousand of them, spaced out about every five feet, so you see a line of barrels stretching for about a mile. Next, instead of a line, imagine a square of barrels of oil, a mile on a side. Finally, stack another 16 barrels on top of each barrel, so your square mile of barrels is 17 layers deep. That's 17 million barrels of oil. That's a lot, isn't it?

Finally, imagine 365 of these square miles stacked 17 barrels deep, and you have our annual oil consumption. Three-hundred-and-sixty-five square miles is also hard to imagine, but think of it this way: If you line them up in a row and put a road down the middle, you could drive at highway speed for six hours, seeing nothing but barrels of oil stacked 17 deep on both sides.

- We live in an ever-expanding sea of concrete. In most

cities, 25% to 35 percent of the total land area is set aside to accommodate cars, including roads and especially parking lots. The current local controversy surrounding the Ferry Street Bridge is just another example of how we are allowing our over-reliance on automobiles to dictate our habitat.

The "concrete habit" is ugly, unpleasant, and ecologically harmful. Have you ever seen a beautiful parking lot? Neither have I. How about quiet? Our concrete seas reflect and amplify the noise pollution that permeates downtown areas. On any hot summer day, you can bake in the trapped heat while enjoying the wonderful aroma of hot asphalt mingled with car exhaust. Finally, rainwater runoff from large covered areas causes many problems, including polluting groundwater, overloading sewer systems, and contributing to downstream flooding.

OK, that's enough for the guilt trip! Now, here are some things you can do to help.

First, don't be part of the problem. Walk to school, or ride your bike. Not only will this get you from point A to point B, but you'll also have a chance to enjoy the outdoors and even get some exercise. Or ride the bus, or organize a carpool. Vote with your feet: The more non-car transportation is used, the more society will support it.

Second, keep your car's engine well-tuned, and make sure your tires are properly inflated. A properly maintained

Make a nuisance of yourself: Write to your favorite (or not-so-favorite) politicians about the need for stronger fuel economy.

car burns less fuel more cleanly. Also, if you have an old gas-guzzler, consider replacing it with a more fuel-efficient car — you'll save money in the long run. Vote with your wallet: Support only energy and environmentally conscious manufacturers. The car companies can't build gas-guzzlers unless there's somebody to buy them, so make sure that somebody isn't you.

Third, make a nuisance of yourself: Write to your favorite (or not-so-favorite) politicians about the need for stronger fuel economy and pollution standards and better public support for alternative forms of transportation.

Finally, call OSPIRG at 346-4377 and join our "curb your car" group. Come and talk to us about cool stuff like environmental issues, the top-10 gas-guzzling car models, how to make your politicians earn their living, and lots of other things we didn't have enough room for here.

Mike Haertel is a graduate teaching fellow in the computer science department.

COMMENTARY POLICY

The Oregon Daily Emerald welcomes commentaries from the public concerning topics of interest to the University community.

Commentaries should be between 600 and 800 words, legible, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is submitted.

The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length or style.

Oregon Daily Emerald

P.O. BOX 1159 EUGENE, OREGON 97402

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published daily Monday through Friday during the school year and Tuesday and Thursday during the summer by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co., Inc., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

The Emerald operates independently of the University with offices at Suite 300 of the Erb Memorial Union and is a member of the Associated Press.

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