

Bill puts the ban on 19 assault weapons

The vote was as close as a snipe shooter's best shot. The House passed a bill banning 19 assault weapons, but the effects of the ban probably won't be felt — at least for quite some time.

Supporters ranged from today's president to presidents from terms past, big game hunters to police officers; but the other side of the argument was there to cast their vote as well. Representatives who voted against the ballot voiced concern that the bill really won't do much at all.

Not doing much is a feeble excuse to vote the bill down. Even if one life is saved because of the ban, it deserves approval. Sadly enough, the bill won't make drastic changes.

The legislation stops gun manufacturers from producing and selling 19 assault-style firearms. It also stops manufacturers who produce copycat models and limits magazines to 10 rounds. But, if you've got one of them now — hold on to it. There is nothing in the ban that requires owners of such guns to turn them over to the authorities.

Assault weapons are, like their name sounds, used for assault, used to kill people. Certainly you won't see someone hunting game with an AK-47. According to the head of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, you're certain to see assault-type weapons in the hands of criminals rather than law-abiding citizens. This is where the problem comes into play.

Law-abiding citizens abide by the laws. The law-abiding citizens with the assault weapons probably aren't the threat. The criminals who use the weapons will, without a doubt, still use them. They may be more expensive to get, but they will get them and they will use them.

Because they have been banned, another market is open for criminals to tackle. The underground market for assault weapons will turn quite profitable in the future. Banning the manufacture of the weapons will make it more difficult to get the weapons, but at the same time they will become more appealing to criminals simply because they are against the law and they will be expensive to get.

It was reported that only 10 percent of gun-related crimes committed between 1988 and 1991 used assault weapons. It was reported, however, that crimes involving assault weapons are on the rise.

Banning the production of the guns is a step in the right direction in the fight against guns, but if legislation is going to have an effect on gun control then it must be drastic and complete. There was really no reason for any of the representatives to vote against the ban, but in order for the legislation to be effective, it must be followed up.

The anti-crime bill passed last fall needs to be fulfilled. The new assault ban and the anti-crime bill are steps in the right direction toward taking guns out of the hands of people who don't deserve them. A yes vote is common sense because any move toward gun control is necessary in this country. The intentions are good, but the effects won't be felt for quite some time.



LETTERS

Disservice

I feel it is my duty to bring to light the truth about multiyear incidental fee funding. The May 2 *Emerald* editorial incorrectly stated that "under the ASUO constitution, ballot measures are unconstitutional if they have multiyear funding." I have no idea where the *Emerald* "discovered" this section of the ASUO constitution. No such provision exists. Actually, we have been doing multiyear funding for years.

This year's interventionist Constitution Court dug out a court opinion from the 1970s that stated student programs could not receive funding from the ballot for more than one year at a time and incorrectly applied it to all incidental fee funding.

In order to clear up the confusion regarding multiyear funding, I have been working with the administration to clarify the matter in the Clark Document, which outlines the relation between the ASUO and University administration over the incidental fee process.

The Constitution Court chose to ignore the clarification and lurched forward with an incorrect review of Ballot Measure 3, which provided multiyear funding for a recreation and fitness center. In light of the Court's confusion, I chose to put the matter before the students.

What disturbs me most is not the overzealous Constitution Court, or even the general confusion, but the disservice the *Emerald* did to students by spreading lies about their governing document, the ASUO constitution.

Next time maybe you should actually read the constitution, or at least ask someone who has.

Eric M. Bowen
ASUO president

PTA 86s OCA

The Oregon Parent Teacher Association recently passed a resolution opposing the Oregon Citizens Alliance's measure of discrimination targeting Oregon's homosexual citizens. The PTA declared "prejudice against homosexuals — children, teach-

ers, parents — would affect students." (*The Oregonian*, May 4).

Over 400 PTA delegates, representing over 28,000 PTA members statewide, attended the convention and worked together to pass this resolution. Yet OCA Director Lon Mabon had the usual head-in-the-sand effrontery to seek to discredit the members of this organization by claiming this "is another example of how far this new way of looking at right and wrong has captured the establishment of this state."

The PTA, not exactly a bastion of "liberal" thinking, took the just and right stand opposing the harm that discrimination and divisiveness inflicts on citizens and communities. There's no "new way" about it. The PTA's job is to protect parents, teachers and children from the ill effects of bigotry and discrimination — the stock-in-trade of the OCA. The PTA recognized the need to take a stand.

Good for the PTA and the growing list of community groups and religious organizations networking together to put a stop to the blight of bigotry being promoted by the OCA.

Carol Berg
Eugene

Students lose

It seems that the University has found yet one more way to spite individuals attempting to graduate on time. Most students who were planning to graduate next year should now find it extremely difficult — if not impossible. A recent curriculum decision changed most of the three-credit classes to four credits. Because the University limits students to 18 credits a term, one must now pay extra to take the classes he/she needs to graduate.

Contrary to popular belief, future students will not benefit from this change, either. Four-credit classes will ensure that students will remain in school for over four years. There is not enough room in each individual's schedule to take the classes required within that student's respective major/minor departments. Indeed, students will get less for their money — even if

these classes are intensified.

A solution, short of repealing this change, would be to either allow these students to exceed the credit limit at no charge, or tailor major and minor requirements within the departments to match the former system. If nothing is done about this, I will expect the office of Academic Advising and Student Services to be extremely lenient with petitions dealing with this matter.

I urge the students who are concerned about this to cut this letter out, sign it and send it to: the University president's office, the Dean of Students, your major/minor department offices, or academic advising and student services. This matter will affect all students, so as a warning, plan accordingly.

Joshua Thomas
Public Liaison
ASUO Student Senate

Nix sux, Rob rox

I'm very tired of reading letters that condemn Mr. Reeves column (*ODE*, April 28) that painted Richard Nixon as the dishonest man he was. I too am weary of all the postmortem praise our 37th president has been receiving. I will be the first to admit that his foreign policy was not only insightful, but brilliant. I will also be quick to point out his political beginnings, such as his seat on the House Un-American Activities Committee and the infamous Checkers speech. It is clear that when it came to furthering his political ambitions, *he had no morals*. Those who praise him would do well to remember the bombings that occurred in Cambodia were exposed after the fact. It was clear then that he was lying and I find it hard to believe that some peoples' memories are so short.

It is time that his memory is treated with the respect that it deserves, which is the same respect that should be given to any person who has abused a position of power. Just because he was president at one time doesn't make the man sacred. After all, this is republic — not a theocracy.

Mats White
Political Science / History

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