

Stop by
the ODE
open house
TUESDAY,
MAY 9
1-4 p.m.

LOBBY

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As it currently stands, tuition will increase 7 percent next year and financial aid will also be reduced. But last week Gov. Kitzhaber vetoed the budget and opened the door to provide more money for higher education.

"These legislators know the facts, but they don't see the faces behind their decisions," said Ryan Coonerty, ASUO state affairs coordinator.

Coonerty is encouraging University students to take a day off from classes to join students from other Oregon universities

and community colleges in the second Lobby Day of the year.

Students can meet at 9:30 a.m. in the ASUO office in EMU Suite 4 to ride in a state motor-pool van and head on a one way track to Salem. They will participate in a lobby training session at the beginning of the day to receive a briefing of the issues and advice as to how to approach legislators.

Coonerty said University students will meet with 30 key legislators to tell them personal anecdotes later in the afternoon. Coonerty said students should return to campus by 4 p.m.

"It's an opportunity for students to voice their opinions in

the legislative process — something that affects them in real terms," he said.

He said students can make a tangible impact, citing the example of one student who, during the last Lobby Day in February, was able to persuade a legislative committee to kill a bill that would have required a fifth year of school for accounting students.

"This is our opportunity to change the process," he said.

He said students don't have Political Action Committees to lobby for their interests in Salem, so personal contact with legislators is crucial.

FRESHMEN

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Although both representatives said they opposed the bill, Lehman said he wouldn't be surprised if another attempt was made to introduce an Oregon version of California's Proposition 187, which denies certain social services to illegal immigrants.

"There are mean-spirited people lurking around [the capital]," Lehman said.

MEChA member Rosaura Chavez said she was concerned about the lack of Latino leadership in the state house of representatives.

"We're very disenfranchised," Chavez said.

It's really frustrating that there isn't more Latino representation, because Latinos are the largest minority group in Oregon, she said.

"We, as well, need to be speaking out," she said. "The demographics are changing."

Prozanski and Lehman urged the group to participate in the University's Lobby Day, and bring MEChA's concerns to the capital.

"If there's enough pressure from home, I think that's where you can make the difference," Prozanski said.

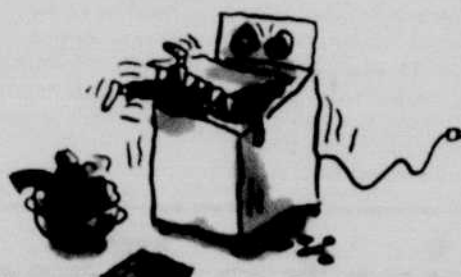
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