OPINION

editorials, letters, commentary and perspective

SOUND OFF

Has Warner Brothers' movie production of "Pre" on campus affected your daily routine? Let us know.

Measure 47 must be defeated for education to prevail

■ OUR OPINION: *The Oregon Student Lobby needs everyone's support to stop further increase of college tuition*

CONTACT US

What do you think? Write us a letter expressing your opinion or E-mail us at ode@oregon.uoregon.edu
Letters to the editor must be limited to no more than 250 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.

Ballot Measure 47 has the potential to cripple Oregon's wounded-but-healing system of higher education. Taxpayers will vote in November on "the cut and cap initiative." The measure, if passed by voters, will cut property taxes by 10 percent or roll them back to 1994 levels, whichever is lower. It will also cap future increases to 3 percent.

If this measure passes, higher education in Oregon should brace itself for more of the same tuition hikes and budget cuts. As students and as voters, we cannot allow this to happen. Oregonians must know that when they vote to cut taxes, they essentially cut education.

The last five years are proof of this.

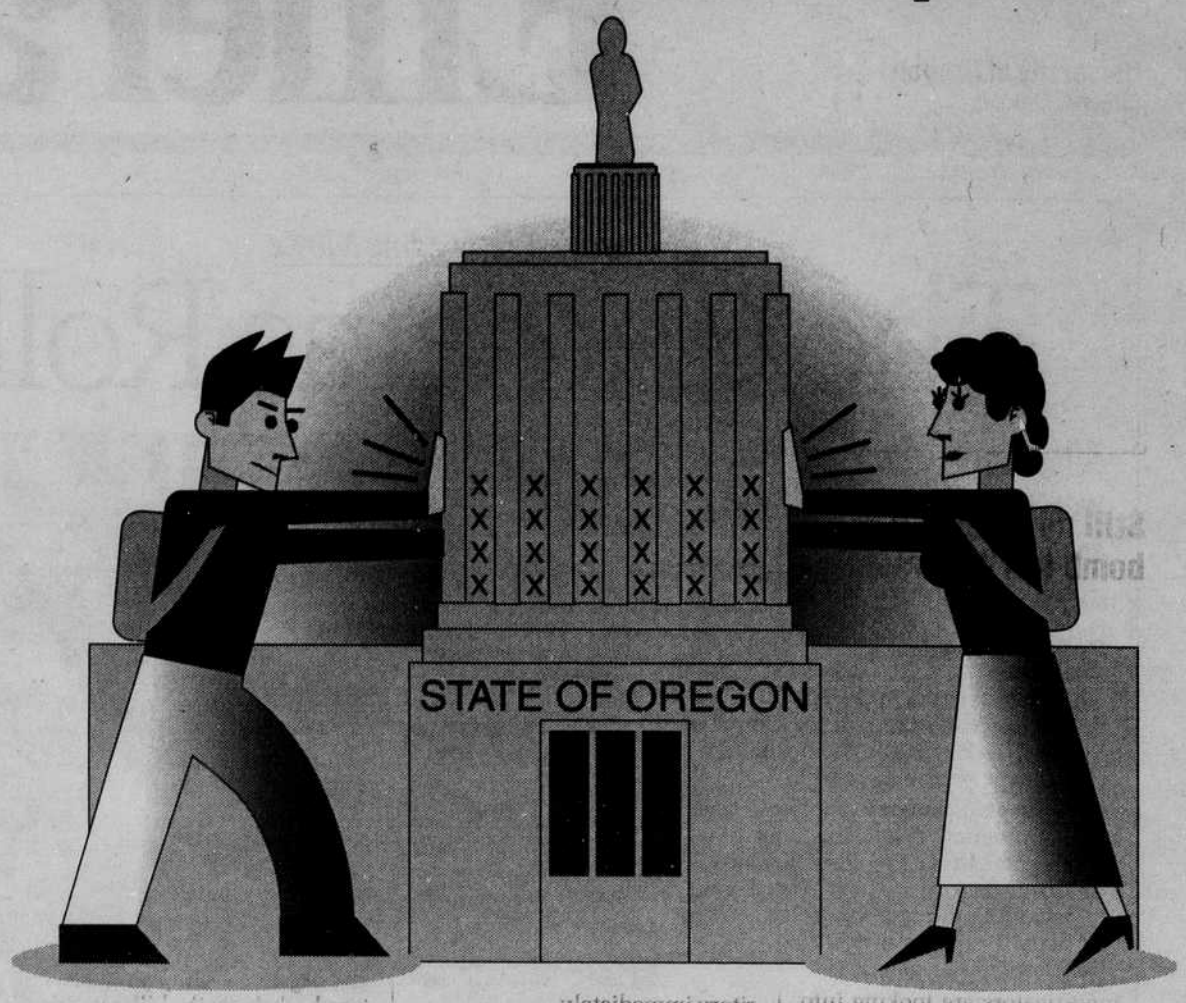
The sweeping effects of 1990's Ballot Measure 5 — the property tax limitation law — have been felt throughout the state's higher education institutions. Tuition has increased as much as 80 percent at some colleges and universities. The number of students who say they have to borrow at least $20,000 to get their degree has doubled since 1990. Many institutions have been forced to cut budgets and programs. Funding from the state's general fund has dropped significantly.

The Oregon Student Lobby has worked tirelessly, trying to counter these effects by making its presence felt in Salem. Last Friday, members of the OSL presented Gov. John Kitzhaber with 3,000 postcards from students demanding a tuition freeze.

However, the money that will help freeze tuition has to come from the state's general fund, which is generated with taxpayers' money. The OSL has been mobilizing to launch a major voter registration and education campaign for the fall. Voters must turn out in force to defeat Ballot Measure 47. Students, administrators and faculty must educate the public-at-large that a vote for this initiative is a cut in education.

This is the first step. Once Ballot Measure 47 is defeated, students and staff must keep the pressure on as the legislature goes into session. Gov. Kitzhaber said, "I can put it in my budget, but the legislature has to pass it."

The OSL cannot save higher education by itself. Students, faculty and administrators must fight for funding for education. It is Oregon's future that is at stake.



HISTORICAL

PERSPECTIVE

In 1990, Oregonians passed a property tax-limitation law with Ballot Measure 5.
In 1990-96, students saw tuition increase as much as 80 percent in some institutions.
On August 9, the Oregon Student Lobby presented Gov. John Kitzhaber with 3,000 postcards from students demanding a tuition freeze.
In November, voters will decide whether to approve another property tax-limitation law, the "cut and cap" Ballot Measure 47 that would cut even deeper into potential funds for higher education.

Oregon Daily Emerald

P.O. BOX 3159, EUGENE, OREGON 97403

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. A member of the Associated Press, the Emerald operates independently of the University with offices at Suite 300 of the Erb Memorial Union.

Unsigned editorials represent the opinion of the Emerald editorial board; signed columns represent the opinion of the columnist.

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LETTERS

Shame on NBC

The Centennial Olympic Games mark the first time that all members of the International Olympic Committee have come together for an athletic festival. A record number of nations proudly joined the "Parade of Nations" in this non-boycotted Olympic summer event. However, criticism of the TV coverage of these games has come from many different countries in many different languages.

The major criticism is focused on NBC's one-sided and biased coverage of the events. NBC ignored many great athletes from different countries. This failure to cover the games in such a way that reflects the deep-rooted Olympic spirit to promote peace, prosperity and friendship reached its climax when NBC's Bob Costas made his comments concerning the Chinese delegation and its athletes.

"With an economy growing at the rate of about 10 percent a year, every economic power, including the U.S., wants to tap into that huge potential market. But, of course, there are problems with human rights, copyright disputes, and the threat posed to Taiwan. And within the Olympics, while they have excelled, they were fourth in the medal standings in Barcelona, with 54 medals, 16 of them gold; this after a 30-year absence which ended in 1984. They've excelled athletically. They've built into a power, but amid suspicions, Dick, especially concerning their track athletes and their female swimmers possibly using performance enhancing drugs. None were caught in Barcelona, but since those games of 1992, several have been caught."

Obviously, there is no connection between China's economic growth, tapping into markets, copyright disputes, human rights issues and relations with Taiwan, and the Olympic Games.

When controversial conduct occurs and can be substantiated, then that is legitimate news and should be reported. However, broadcasting unsubstantiated accusations and suspicions only disgraces the values and principles the Olympic Games represent. Sportsmanship demands that NBC and Bob Costas apologize to the world for the misleading information they have broadcast and the unfair commentaries they have made during their coverage of the Centennial Olympic Games.

Luchen Li
President, CSSA of the UO

Bottle bill

This November there will be an initiative on the ballot to expand Oregon's Bottle Bill. This new measure will cover all single-serving, non-carbonated beverages with a five cent deposit. It's about time! It's been 25 years since we passed the original bottle bill, and since then we have been inuandated with huge numbers of new non-carbonated drinks. Many of these beverages such as juices, iced teas, and bottled water are not covered under the current deposit system, and are ending up on our roadsides, parks and landfills.

The major opposition to this campaign is coming from out of state. Big corporations like Safeway, Coke, Pepsi and Philip Morris are spending millions of dollars to prevent this law from passing. They have gone so far as to hire Winner, Wagner and Mandabach, a high priced PR firm out of Los Angeles, to run a multi-million dollar ad campaign against the bottle bill.

I urge my fellow citizens to pass this measure, expand the Bottle Bill, and keep Oregon clean for generations to come.

Micheal Arthur
Eugene