

Walker proposes state bill targeting racial profiling

■ If passed, House Bill 2441 will help ensure that Oregon law enforcement agencies do not target minority groups

By Kendall Larsen
Oregon Daily Emerald

Over the past few years, determined students, parents and community leaders all over Oregon have been rallying for legislative recognition for the issue of racial profiling. With Oregon House Bill 2441, they may get it.

On March 30, the House Judiciary Committee heard a proposed bill by state Rep. Vicki Walker, D-Eugene, to aid law enforcement agencies' participation in data collection and analysis. The bill is an expanded version of HB 2433, which was passed in 1997.

"This builds upon that work that was started in 1997," Walker said. "But it gives law enforcement some direction for where to go and how to accomplish what we want them to accomplish; to make sure that law enforcement agencies do not engage in a practice of discrimination based on race, color or national origin."

Bola Majekobaje, a working advocate for the Multicultural Center, said nearly all her friends have been targeted by police officers for no reason other than the color of their skin. These instances range in severity from being pulled over to being sprayed with mace.

Majekobaje said students can help

stop the occurrences of racial profiling.

"If we tell our law enforcement that we know that racial profiling is wrong, and if we can tell our representatives and senators that it's wrong, then we do have a voice," she said.

HB 2433 made changes to Oregon's stop and search laws, giving more authority to police officers in making traffic stops and conducting weapon searches. A part of the bill addressed data collection by law enforcement agencies for the purposes of ensuring that no community's police force specifically targets members of minority groups.

Walker's introduction to the issue of racial profiling came when a constituent brought her attention to the lack of funding for helping law enforcement agencies conduct data collection. She then met with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and became aware of the many Oregonians who believe that racial profiling is a serious and prominent issue.

"We originally were going to mandate that every law enforcement agency in the state of Oregon do data collection," Walker said. "But that just became an impossible task, because the citizens of Oregon passed a law that says the Legislature cannot impose an un-funded mandate on local communities."

Instead of spending precious money on mandating data collection, the facilitators of the new bill are calling for the creation of a Law Enforcement

Contacts Policy and Data Review Committee to analyze the data collected by the various law enforcement agencies. The bill will also provide technical assistance to law enforcement agencies, Walker said.

Marla Rae, facilitator of the Governor's Public Safety Council, has worked with the Community Relations Work Group to create a prototype for the data collection.

The work group has also tried to ensure the data collected is proportional to the actual percentage of minority groups in each community. This is tricky, Rae said, because the demographics of minorities in a certain area may not represent the driving population of that community.

Rae added that even if racial profiling is not a common practice within Oregon law enforcement, the bill will help to strengthen the trust relationship between police officers and their communities.

"Law enforcement agencies do not fear data collection," Walker said of the support she has received from agencies around the state. The bill would allow each community the flexibility to develop its own system without a great deal of legislative control.

Some students at the University have shared personal experiences they have had with racial profiling. Walker said she was impressed with the students speaking their minds, which she believes is important when dealing with legislators.

To earn a 4.00
in Brewology
all you need to
know is
STEELHEAD.

- 9 Award-Winning Micro-Brews
- Soups, Salads Ribs Fresh Pizza
- Sandwiches Pastas Burgers
- Spirits Home-Made Rootbeer

TAKE A BREW HOME IN STEELHEAD'S BOX O' BEER



Steelhead Brewing Company

199 East 5th Avenue Eugene, OR Phone 686-2739

Eugene, OR - Burlingame, CA - Fisherman's Wharf, San Francisco, CA - Irvine, CA

If you advertise, they will come. Try it.

Advertise your event in the Oregon Daily Emerald. Call 346-3712

GREATER GOODS

515 HIGH ST EUGENE 485-4224

Compact Fluorescents

special **SPRING** Savings on selected Energy Star® approved lamps turn on your lights, longer, for less!



\$9 each



Money Isn't All You're Saving

europe ON A budget
S E M I N A R

Learn everything you need to know about traveling to Europe on a budget. Our free seminar covers:

- Discount Airfares • How to Get Around • Budget Accommodations • What You Need to Know Before You Go
- Planning Your Itinerary • Tours • Travel Safety

Enter to win a trip to Europe

Other giveaways include: rail passes, travel gear, travel books, and more!

Location: International Lounge, EMU

Date: April 11th

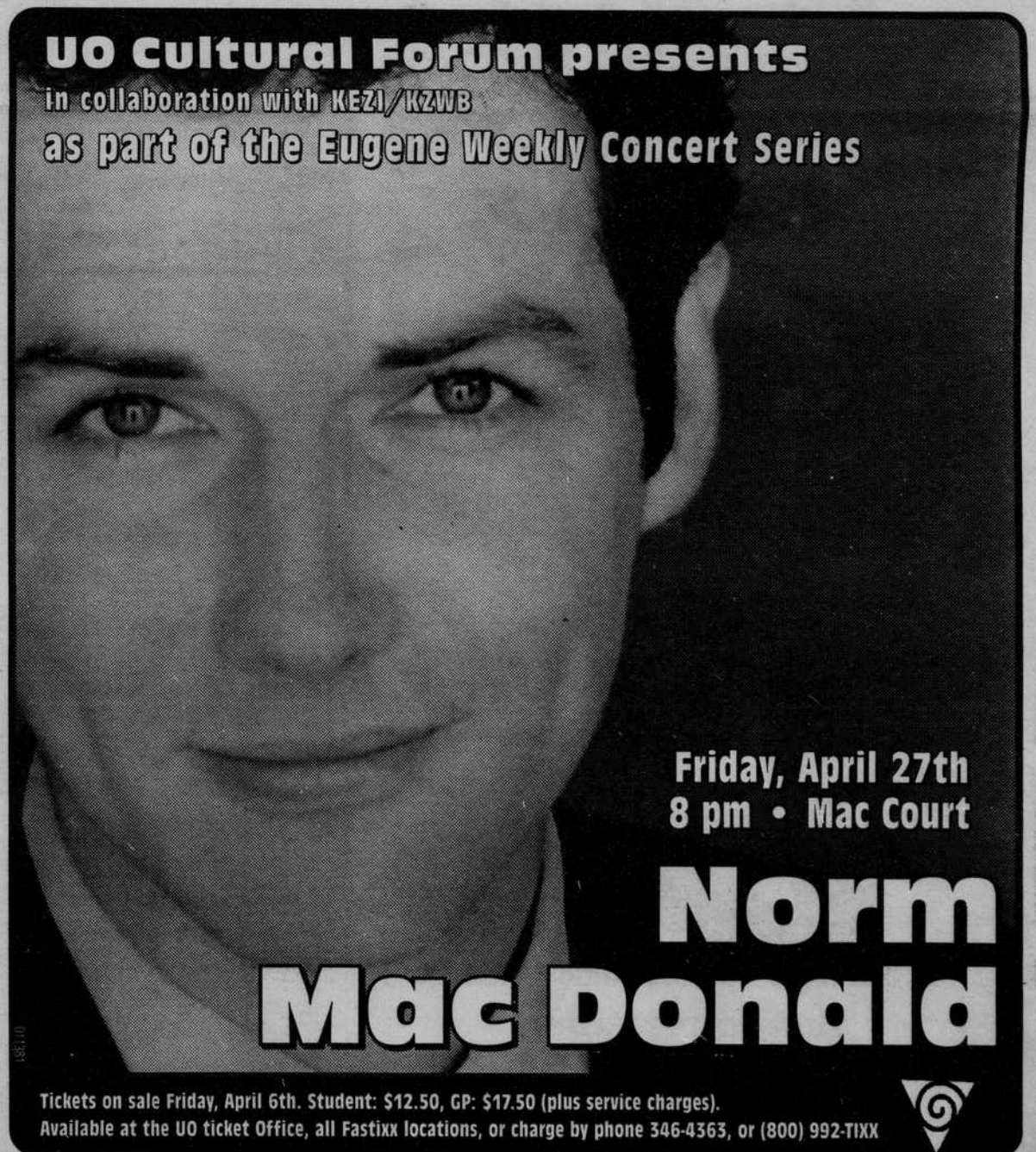
Time: 6-9 pm

At the intersection of campus and the world.

Council Travel

phone: (541) 344-2263

UO Cultural Forum presents
in collaboration with KEZI/KZWB
as part of the Eugene Weekly Concert Series



Friday, April 27th
8 pm • Mac Court

**Norm
Mac Donald**

Tickets on sale Friday, April 6th. Student: \$12.50, GP: \$17.50 (plus service charges).

Available at the UO ticket Office, all Fastixx locations, or charge by phone 346-4363, or (800) 992-TIXX



Nowhere to run to. Nowhere to hide.

The Oregon Daily Emerald on the world wide web.

www.dailyemerald.com

