

# Court overturns term limit law

■ The demise of term limits will change the legislative process and allow some politicians to run again

By John Liebhart  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Higher-education lobbyists are cautiously optimistic about the consequences of the Oregon Supreme Court's decision to nullify the state's term limit law.

The Oregon Supreme Court ruled Friday that Measure 3, the 1992 ballot-initiative Oregon voters passed to create the term limit law, broke state statutes by making more than one unrelated change at once to the Oregon constitution. The law restricted House members to three two-year terms and senators to two four-year terms, and placed a 12-year limit on state legislative service.

Life without term limits will not be any easier for groups who represent higher education interests in Salem, Oregon Students Association executive director Joelle Lester said.

"When lobbying someone who is new, we could have the opportunity to win them over and have them be a champion of our programs, while more experienced folks may already have their own ideas," she said.

The court's decision will allow up to 25 members of the two houses who would have exceeded the term limits to run for elections this year. Also, members who were previously ineligible because of

term limits may run for office again.

The ruling will supply the Oregon Legislature with more seasoned lawmakers and a longer institutional memory, said Tim Young, one of two student representatives of the State Board of Higher Education.

"Term limits created turnover and created a transient nature in the Legislature," he said. The ruling "should change the culture of Salem from a bus station to people



BARNHART

sticking around and caring about issues."

Well-seasoned legislators are getting hard to come by in Oregon, said Grattan Kerans, director of govern-

ment relations for the Oregon University System — the group of seven state universities. Kerans left behind 17 years of legislative experience in Salem to work for OUS.

"We had a situation that the person with six months experience was the second-in-command one day, and they were in charge the next day," he said. "That is not a good way to run a railroad."

Young said the abolition of term limits will reduce the power and influence of professional, well-funded lobbyists on lawmakers.

"It is harder to manipulate you

if you have been around for 15 years," Young said.

One junior legislator agrees. The average junior lawmaker does not have the experience to make decisions on a wide range of subjects, said Rep. Phil Barnhart, D-Eugene. To compensate, the legislator must quickly find information either from colleagues or, more commonly, from lobbyists and civil servants in the legislative branch. Both groups sometimes have their own agendas, Barnhart said.

"If you're dealing with an area you don't know much about, you may have to take a vote primarily on other people's information," he said. "And that's not a good position to be in."

Supporters of term limits have vowed to carry on the fight. The group Oregon Term Limits announced it will start collecting signatures for another, less restrictive, term limit initiative.

Regardless of the future of term limits in Oregon, the demise of Measure 3 can still be seen as a victory for some. Kerans felt the measure was too restrictive and went far beyond other state term limit laws. The 12-year ceiling on state-wide public office created a "death penalty" atmosphere in Salem.

Kerans said that Measure 3's message was "a person with 12 years' experience is dangerous to the public welfare and toxic to the process, so we must bar them for life."

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# Residence

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is on that side," she said. "It's kind of just a place to sleep and keep your stuff."

But Eyster's vision for the new residence hall, which he described as a "living-learning center," would improve the quality of rooms and the quality of students' education, he said. The new residence hall would offer not just a bed, desk and closet, but also academic support services for students to meet with professors and get involved with academic and residence life.

The residence hall would also have accessibility for students with wheelchairs, deaf students needing special alarms and other students requiring special accommodations.

Construction of a new residence hall would open up space in existing residence halls, which would allow housing officials to renovate or replace the older halls, some of which are 47 years old, Eyster said.

But before construction begins, several problems would have to be solved, he added.

First, the building proposal must survive several phases of review by University President Dave Frohn-mayer, the Oregon University System and Gov. John Kitzhaber's office, said University planning associate Cathy Soutar.

Second, the building needs a location. Eyster favors the area between Earl and Walton complexes in place of the tennis courts, but there are "significant hurdles to overcome," he said.

The campus development plan

would have to be modified and the tennis courts would need to be relocated, Eyster said.

Another possible location is the current Bean parking lot, but Eyster worries about placing the residence hall too far from classes, as students complained in a survey last year about Bean's distance from some University buildings.

The new residence hall "needs to be close to the academic heartbeat," he said.

But before a site for the residence hall can be selected, the building must be funded, Soutar said.

Residence hall funding is an auxiliary service, and the housing department raises revenue from rent.

Lack of funds has kept the department from building or renovating in the past, but Eyster said it cannot afford to wait much longer.

"If we fail to (build and upgrade), we will be unable to attract high quality students to the University," he said.

Higher quality rooms and more space would also attract older students who tend to move off campus after their first year, Eyster said.

"We don't even have room for them to return but most choose not to," he said. "If we had larger rooms to better fit students' computers and to offer privacy, we'd have more returning students, which would create a richer culture and environment."

Brooks said the No. 1 renovation she'd like to see is larger rooms.

"When I first saw the dorms, I felt like I would be claustrophobic," she said. "There's just not enough space."

E-mail reporter Diane Huber at dianehuber@dailyemerald.com.



CHARLES H. LUNDQUIST  
College of Business  
UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

## Winter Business Career Symposium

Wednesday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>

5:00 to 8:00 p.m.  
Gilbert 101 & 102

- EXPLORE CAREERS: Hear from People in the Business!
- Network with UO Alumni and Employers!
- Win DOOR PRIZES! Attend the Reception!
- Compare and Contrast Jobs in the Same Field. . .

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#### Marketing/Sales Panel

5:00 to 6:00 p.m.

- Sports Bus. Marketing - Adidas
- Public Relations - KVO Pub. Rel.
- Consumer Prod. - Black & Decker
- Market Research - Ragatz Assoc.

#### Management Panel

6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

- HR Management - Sony Disc Man.
- Sales Manage. - Enterprise RAC
- Account Management - Jeld-Wen
- Product Manage. - E&J Gallo

### Track II

#### Accounting Panel

5:00 to 6:00 p.m.

- Regional CPA - Grant Thornton
- Big 5 Accounting - Andersen
- Corporate Acct. - Prec. Cast. Corp.
- Government Accounting - IRS

#### Finance Panel

6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

- Corporate Finance - Intel
- Financial Advising - Am. Express
- Banking - Wells Fargo
- Analyst - TBA

For more information, please contact James Chang at the LCB, 346-3421.

# Budget shortfall squeezes students

■ Gov. John Kitzhaber's proposal to balance the state budget would affect low-income students who depend on Oregon Opportunity grants

By Eric Martin  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Some University students who use state grants to pay for school would be forced to drop out if Gov. John Kitzhaber's initial proposal to accommodate an expected state budget shortfall is implemented, an education lobbyist said.

Under the plan, 5,762 low-income students who receive Oregon Opportunity Grants would lose grant funds completely. About 30,000 such grants are awarded statewide each year.

"It would make vulnerable students more vulnerable," said John Wykoff, a lobbyist for the Oregon Student Association. "You're just going to have students kicked out of the system."

About 1,800 students attending the University this year depend on Oregon Opportunity Grants, or "need grants." The grants allot \$1,254 to each student, each year, and help pay for books, tuition and rent.

Gene Evans, a spokesman for the Oregon Student Assistance Com-

mission, which awards grants and scholarships to students at private colleges and public universities, said the impact of Kitzhaber's latest proposal could change many lives.

Evans said Kitzhaber is considering other solutions to side-

*"It would make vulnerable students more vulnerable. You're just going to have students kicked out of the system."*

John Kykoff  
lobbyist,  
Oregon Student Association

step the budget crunch because too many programs stand to lose too much.

Oregon higher education lobbyists and financial aid officials said they expect a different final blueprint to remedy the state's projected \$830 million shortfall. Kitzhaber's initial proposal, announced Jan. 7, was formulated as a starting point for legislators to decide how to raise the sum.

Kitzhaber asked state agencies in October to detail how they would trim budgets in 2 percent

increments up to 10 percent to blunt the shortfall's blow.

He said he does not favor the Jan. 7 proposal because, among other reductions, it would mean trimming about \$300 million from the \$5.2 billion earmarked for school support during 2001-03.

"Cuts mean the difference between going to school and not going to school for some of these students," Evans said. "And these are the students that need aid the most."

Students at the University who need opportunity grants are far outnumbered by those who receive loans or other grants, such as Pell grants, said James Gilmour, associate director for the student financial aid office. He said because the cost of school is rising while funding awarded through grants remains fixed, many students are depending more on loans.

But this is bad news for low-income students, Gilmour said, because they're taking a higher risk when shouldering loans that must be paid back.

"The first couple of years, these students would be saddled with debt and they would have no degree to show for it," Gilmour said. "This has a chilling effect when these grants aren't available."

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