

NEWS

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State House overrides one veto, sustains other

As expected, representatives allow \$267 million to be shifted into the next biennium but shoot down a \$50 million tobacco-revenue bonding measure

By Jan Montry
 Oregon Daily Emerald

It appears that the state budget battle is finally over — for now. But the budget crisis is likely to continue, as legislators remain staunchly divided along party lines.

The Oregon House of Representatives

came together Tuesday to decide whether to override Gov. John Kitzhaber's vetoes of House Bill 4056 and Senate Bill 1022, effectively deciding the fate of Oregon schools over the next budget cycle.

After short debate, House members voted to sustain the HB 4056 veto and override the SB 1022 veto.

House Democratic Leader Deborah Kafoury of Portland said in a statement that the victory was bittersweet and was made with the intention of protecting schools this year.

"I believe that the House made the right

decision today to sustain the governor's veto of (HB 4056), but I cannot call today's events a victory," she said. "We cannot consider ourselves successful as a legislature or as a state until we commit to responsible, long-term funding for our schools."

HB 4056 would have provided \$50 million to schools by borrowing from future tobacco tax revenue.

House Majority Leader Karen Minnis, R-Wood Village, said in a statement that she was "outraged" over the sustainment of HB 4056.

"I am very disappointed by the decision my Democrat colleagues made today," she said. "Simply put, their action today means \$50 million less for public schools."

Public schools will still benefit from the \$267 million stipulated in SB 1022. Revenue from this bill will be created by borrowing from the next budget cycle.

The final budget session came after three special sessions of political wrangling between new-revenue and anti-tax legislators.

For many Democrats, the final decision was especially difficult because they had

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Adam Jones Emerald

Terence Whitehead breaks through the Oregon defense at the first scrimmage of the year, held Saturday at the newly renovated Autzen Stadium.

Fife as drum

Oregon receivers look for a rhythm as Jason Fife helps to bring the team's offense together by Aug. 31

SPORTS

By Brad Schmidt
 Oregon Daily Emerald

Practice, they say, makes perfect.

But if Oregon's first scrimmage was any indication of the team's ability, the Ducks still have some work to do.

The Ducks faced their first opponent of the season Saturday — themselves — in a 90-minute scrimmage that most notably revealed the offensive blemishes of a team trying to mesh.

"I don't think that was a winning effort," head coach Mike Bellotti said. "If we're going to be the team we want to be, I think we have to improve. There's a lot to learn from today."

Oregon's offense never looked comfortable Saturday. Passes were dropped, snaps were mishandled and interceptions were thrown.

And while it was only the first scrimmage of the year, it was clear the Ducks were missing the offensive rhythm that helped them score more than 34 points per game last season.

"I thought the offense started very slowly, and I think that was a combination of nervousness and inexperience," Bellotti said. "We dropped too many passes offensively, and the dropped passes weren't the kind of the two- and three-yard variety — they were major plays."

Tight end George Wrihster, who led all receivers Saturday with three catches, admitted that the team wasn't as sharp as it could have been.

"We didn't make a lot of the plays that we should have made," Wrihster said. "A lot of balls hit us in the hands, and we didn't hold on."

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Princeton Review hits UO with two unfavorable ratings

University residence halls are 'like dungeons' and GTFs teach 'too many upper-level courses,' according to the "Best 345 Colleges" reviews released Tuesday

By Jillian Daley
 Oregon Daily Emerald

The Princeton Review placed the University in the "Best 345 Colleges" Tuesday, as well as ranking the school in two other less-savory categories.

Admissions Director Martha Pitts said that the "Best 345" ranking may attract prospective students.

The University was ranked 15th in the country in the category of "Dorms Like Dungeons." For those who live in the residence halls, this is not encouraging.

However, officials said that the ranking is unfair and will soon be obsolete.

Housing Director Mike Eyster said that he is proposing a new building complete with residence halls and classrooms, and that if his current proposal does not go through, the University will build a regular residence hall.

Eyster, who is also the assistant vice president for student affairs, estimates that the construction on the proposed residence halls will be complete by fall 2005. Eyster added that there is more to housing than appearances.

The University came in third in the country for the category "Teaching Assistants Teach Too Many Upper-Level Courses."

Director of Admissions Martha Pitts said that rankings tend to raise people's interest because they are compilations of original research on unusual topics; however, the research is based on surveys.

"The number of Graduate Teaching Fellows teaching at the University of Oregon is only 17 percent of courses taught," Pitts said. "I would take issue with (the Princeton Review's) assertion."

Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies Richard Linton said that an examination of hard data might be a better way of establishing a ranking. Linton added that the University probably compares favorably against its peer universities.

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Inspection finds no improper construction in Autzen expansion

Eugene Fire Marshal Mike Thrapp clears Cosco Fire Protection of all allegations of faulty sprinkler installation work

By Brad Schmidt
 Oregon Daily Emerald

After conducting a one-day investigation, the Eugene Fire Department announced last week that it found "no merit" to allegations of faulty sprinkler installation during the \$90 million expansion of Autzen Stadium.

The investigation — which spawned from an anonymous letter citing several specific building code infractions — report-

edly cost the city, University and stadium contractors "thousands of dollars" and about 100 man-hours, Eugene Fire Marshal Mike Thrapp said.

"It wasted a lot of people's time at a time when we don't have a lot of it," Vice President for Administration Dan Williams said.

In a prepared statement released Friday, Thrapp characterized the letter and its author as "almost criminal."

"Writing this type of letter is irresponsible and negligent," Thrapp added.

Disproving the allegations and clearing Cosco Fire Protection of any wrongdoing, however, proved to be an important step in

ensuring that Autzen Stadium will open by Aug. 31.

"I'm pleased but not surprised," Williams said of the findings.

City officials said they are also satisfied with the results of the investigation.

"It went very quickly," Eugene building official Stuart Ramsing said. "There was a lot riding on it."

Ramsing added that the investigation concluded so swiftly because "all the players were committed to getting (it) resolved as quickly as possible."

On Aug. 15, a team of investigators conducted random inspections of nine areas

throughout the project and found no construction, fire or safety code violations.

Originally, Thrapp said the sampling process could take more than a week.

"It took very little effort to confirm that these weren't missed items," Ramsing said. "They didn't exist."

The allegations — which included improper sprinkler pipe installation and inappropriate craftsmanship — were first made public Aug. 9 when an anonymous letter was sent to city officials and local media.

Contact the sports editor at bradschmidt@dailyemerald.com.