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## Democrats lobby to maintain tuition rate

*The plan calls for a two-year tuition freeze at Oregon public universities; republicans protest*

BY ADAM CHERRY  
NEWS REPORTER

The ASUO's tuition freeze campaign found support in the state legislature Tuesday, when Senate Democrats released their 2005-07 state budget.

The Democratic budget, which includes a two-year freeze at Oregon public universities, was hotly contested by some Republicans for its total revenue estimate. Democrats have predicted that revenues total \$12.5 billion, about \$300 million more than the Republican estimate.

Both parties' budget numbers have been in flux since Feb. 25, when a new estimate predicted an additional \$200 million would be available.

House Speaker Karen Minnis, R-Wood Village, announced Tuesday in a press release that she was pulling House Republicans from the Joint Ways and Means Committee, which works on the budget, effectively grinding the budgeting process to a halt. Reportedly, the two sides have since come to an agreement to proceed, and hearings will resume on Monday.

"There's no point in the Joint Ways and Means Committee meeting until the Senate Democrats decide to get serious about what revenue we have available," Minnis said in the release.

A Minnis spokesman said Thursday the speaker hadn't taken a position yet on the tuition freeze.

Sen. Kurt Schrader, D-Canby, co-chair of the Joint Ways and Means Committee, cited a variety of funding sources for the \$300 million difference in the two estimates.

"We're basing our programs and services funding level on the revenues we expect to get over the next two years," Schrader said.

"Based on my observations, we really have turned a corner in this state," he said of the economy. "We're actually able to move forward on this without a general tax increase."

Rep. Wayne Scott, R-Canby, Joint Ways and Means Committee co-chair, commented in a press release.

"The only way to raise that kind of money is by digging into Oregonians' wallets," said Scott. "Oregonians are tired of the legislature putting its hand out, and the House won't stand for it either."

The Democratic proposal includes the elimination of \$25 million in tax breaks.

"I think every Oregonian is ready to get rid of these tax breaks that don't benefit the general Oregon population," Schrader said.

"You're finding your Senate Democrats are very cognizant of the high cost of tuition for these young men and women," he said, adding that public college enrollment has begun to level off or decline. "It doesn't do any good to have the best universities in the country if (students) can't afford it."

Sen. Richard Devlin, D-Tualatin, chair of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on

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TIM BOBOSKY | PHOTOGRAPHER

The use of a dental dam is demonstrated as part of the HIV Alliance promotion of safe sex at the O Bar & Grill near the University Commons Tuesday night.

## WRAP IT UP

*HIV Alliance's mascot, Captain Condom, is campaigning for safe sex at Eugene bars*

BY SHELDON TRAVER  
NEWS REPORTER

B elting out tunes such as "The Safety Dance" and "Brown Eyed Girl," Captain Condom made a second appearance at the O Bar on Tuesday, singing and dancing while patrons cheered and enjoyed the drink special, Sex on the Beach.

Captain Condom, the mascot for the HIV Alliance's "Wrap It Up" campaign, was created by Allen Hall Public Relations through the School of Journalism and Communication.

The life-sized condom will make another appearance at Rennie's Landing tonight and Saturday at 10:30 p.m. as part of a three-day tour through local bars meant to inform people

about safe sex and HIV and to distribute protective devices such as condoms and dental dams.

The mascot was first introduced Feb. 14, National Condom Awareness Day, to distribute condoms and information about HIV awareness and testing.

HIV Alliance's Youth Program Director Niki Martin said the campaign is about grabbing people's attention.

"If you make it funny, it'll make people listen," Martin said.

AHPR Account Executive Kelsea Michael said humor was the point of the mascot.

"We figured getting a condom from a condom would help people remember," she said.

Michael said 50 percent of new HIV cases each year are diagnosed in people ages 15 to 25. She added that people who get tested typically change their behavior. She hopes more sexually active University students will take advantage of the easy test.

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## LTD/ATU meeting a final try for resolution

*If the parties do not come to an agreement today, the union will strike on Monday of Dead Week*

BY MEGHANN M. CUNIFF  
SENIOR NEWS REPORTER

Bus service will likely cease in Lane County on Monday if today's mediation session between the Lane Transit District and the Amalgamated Transit Union Division 757 does not produce a contract agreement.

ATU has declared a strike date of March 7, the first day of Dead Week at the University.

If bus drivers strike, the University will be sharing a free shuttle service with PeaceHealth Medical Group, open to anyone with a University student identification card.

The shuttle will leave the Lane County Fairgrounds at 796 W. 13th Ave. and arrive at Sacred Heart Medical Center, 1255 Hilyard St., every 10 to 20 minutes from 5:20 a.m. until 11:30 p.m., according to a memo from Department of Public Safety Interim Director Tom Hicks addressed to University faculty and staff.

Hicks and ASUO Community and Housing Coordinator Scott Lu said students and staff are encouraged to either ride bikes or walk to campus to avoid an influx of vehicles.

"Parking in the area is already severely constrained without the added demand for parking for those who normally ride the bus now driving to campus," Hicks wrote in the memo.

"The ASUO exec is really trying to recommend that students ride their bikes or walk because of the influx of cars," Lu said.

There will be specific parking spots reserved for carpools, and carpool parking permits can be picked up at no cost from DPS, Lu said.

Parking will also be available free of charge at Autzen Stadium from 7 a.m. until 6 p.m. Monday through Friday for the duration of the bus strike. Security personnel will patrol the

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## Group to ask for public arena hearings

*The West University Neighbors also approved a resolution to ask for improved services for parolees*

BY MEGHANN M. CUNIFF  
SENIOR NEWS REPORTER

University, city and county officials will soon be presented with a request from the West University Neighbors to hold public hearings to allow citizens a voice in the administration's plans for a new basketball arena.

The neighborhood association unanimously approved the resolution in a two-hour meeting attended by more than 30 people Thursday night at Central Presbyterian Church.

"It's a multifaceted issue," community activist Zachary Vishanoff said, adding that a public process for a project like the arena is "common sense stuff that should have been happening anyway."

The resolution, proposed by Vishanoff, was modified to include the University in the request for a public process at the urging of Ward 3 City Councilor David Kelly.

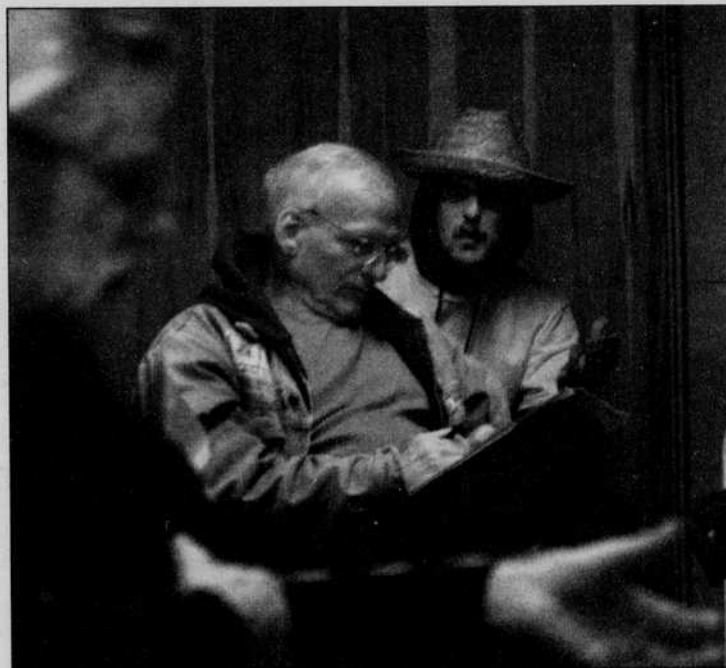
Kelly said a demand for a public process is best directed at University officials because city zoning laws can only require the University to answer the question of how it will mitigate potential traffic problems.

"It is not the city or the county that will be a decision-maker," Kelly said.

The association also passed a resolution asking for improved services to parolees living in the neighborhood after hearing a presentation from Richard Green, chairman of the board of directors for Sponsors, Inc.

Sponsors, Inc. is a non-profit organization that aims to aid prisoners

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TIM BOBOSKY | PHOTOGRAPHER

West University Neighbors Chairman Drix Rixmann, left, and board member Don Goldman, center, listen to community activist Zachary Vishanoff at Thursday's West University Neighbors meeting.