

Kulongoski: Governor hopes to make transferring to University easier

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student lobbying efforts made a big difference.

"This was not a done deal until the very end," he said. "It all made a difference."

ASUO Federal Affairs Coordinator Ashley Rees and ASUO Student Senator Jared Axelrod attended the signing and praised the bill, saying they were pleased the student government's lobbying efforts had made a difference.

"The opportunity grant was our number one priority. Seeing it happen is great," Rees said.

"It's good to know that work is being done through the ASUO, through the Oregon Student Association and other organizations to help students (afford college)," Axelrod added.

Flanked by University Senior Vice President and Provost John Moseley and ASUO President Adam Walsh, Kulongoski held a roundtable discussion with 20 students representing various areas of campus life prior to signing the bill. The discussion touched on many aspects of education, from community colleges to the need to help students of color attend four-year institutions.

Kulongoski said he wants to make it easier to transfer credits from community colleges to universities in Oregon.

"I just think it's ridiculous that (after) the cost of education and the time it takes you to actually spend two years at a community college, get a degree, then go to a four-year institution, somebody says 'Well, you're going to have to take half of these things over again,'" Kulongoski said.

ASUO Multicultural Advocate Ty Schwoefferman asked Kulongoski how he plans to help increase the number of students of color attending four-year institutions.

The biggest obstacle facing students of color is the socio-economic factors that plague many of them,



TIM BOBOSKY | PHOTO EDITOR

Gov. Ted Kulongoski replies to Ty Schwoefferman, the ASUO multicultural advocate, in a meeting in Lillis, where he signed the Oregon Opportunity Grant Tuesday at 3:45 p.m.

Kulongoski said, and making higher education more affordable could help them clear that.

"I don't think this is an issue of ability. It's money," he said.

Making it easier to attend college is very important, but decreasing the amount of debt graduates are faced with is equally important, Kulongoski said, calling the huge debts some graduates are faced with "staggering."

Students thanked Kulongoski for his work on fully funding the Oregon Opportunity Grant, and Kulongoski

encouraged them all to stay involved in education lobbying efforts.

"I look out at you, and I see that this was the right thing to do," he said.

Residence Hall Association President Todd Mann attended the signing and discussion and said afterward that being a recipient of the grant himself "really brings it home."

Without the opportunity grant, Mann said he would not be able to afford to live in the residence halls, which is an experience he credits with getting him involved in campus

politics and with student leadership.

"It really is exactly what it says — it's an opportunity," Mann said.

Contact the news editor at mcuniff@dailyemerald.com

HOUSE BILL 5584

Signed on campus Tuesday by Governor Ted Kulongoski.

Increases Oregon Opportunity Grant funding by 71 percent to \$78 million.

All students eligible for the grant will now be able to receive it.

Disabled Oregonians settle with Regal theater

PORTLAND — Three disabled Oregonians have accepted the terms offered by movie theater giant Regal Entertainment Group, ending a five-year legal battle.

The settlement forces Regal to make 1,000 of its theaters wheelchair friendly. The company has also agreed to retrofit three-fourths of the auditoriums in its five Portland-area theaters and one-fourth of those in Salem, after the three Oregon women agreed to dismiss their suit against Regal in federal district court in Portland.

The disabled women objected to the company's stadium-style theaters, in which moviegoers enter the auditorium at the bottom of a large staircase and work their way up to the best seats.

Those in wheelchairs were forced to park in the front row, where they had to crane their necks to watch the show, the three women said.

According to the terms of the agreement, new Regal theaters will be designed with wheelchair seating in the middle rows or farther back.

The disabled women — Kathy Stewmon of Forest Grove, Tina Smith Argetsinger of Portland and Kathy Braddy of Toledo — had the choice to press Regal for retrofits in more of its 6,273 auditoriums nationwide, said Kathy Wilde, their attorney.

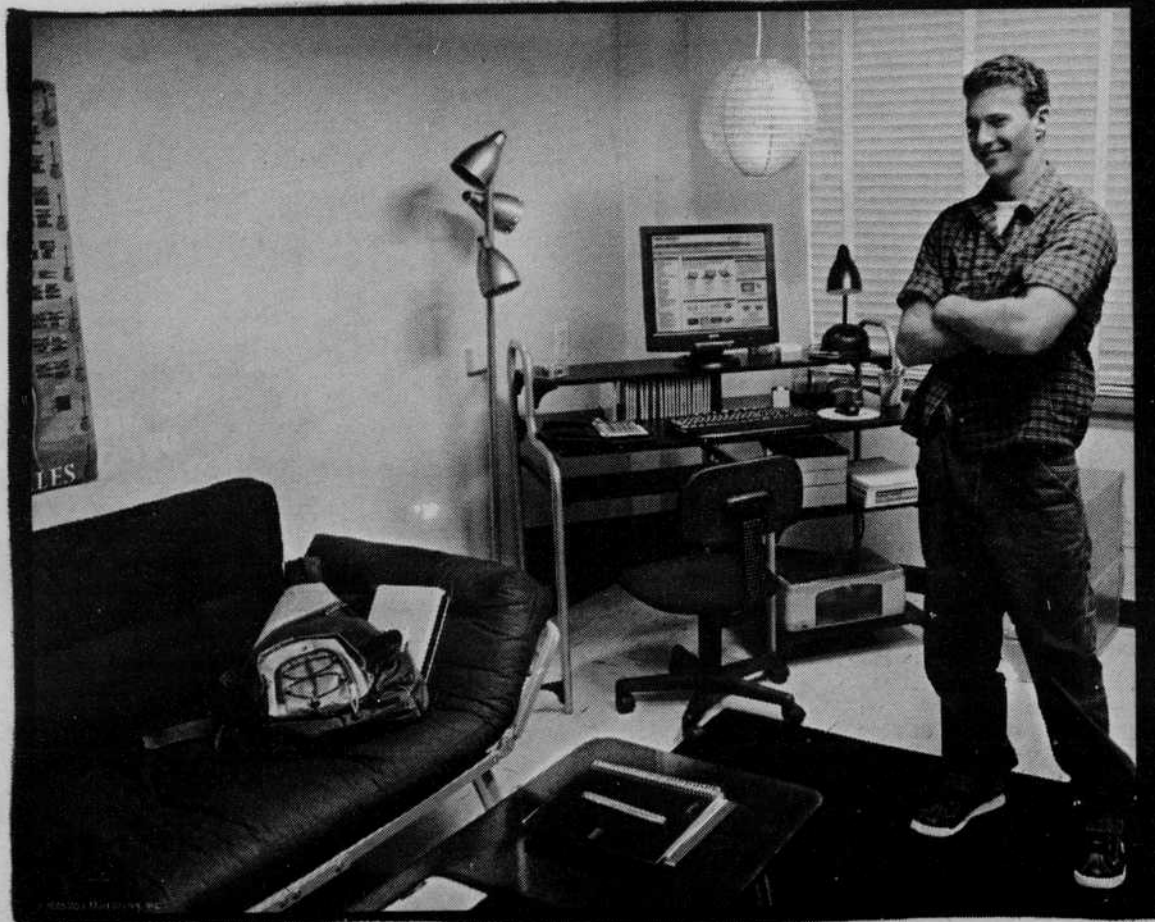
But that would have been more costly and after five years of often bitter litigation, Wilde said: "We decided it was enough," she said.

Argetsinger, who has a degenerative bone disease, said she was stunned to learn that the new theater she tried to attend in 1998 restricted wheelchairs to the front rows. She said going to the movies was one of her few pleasures.

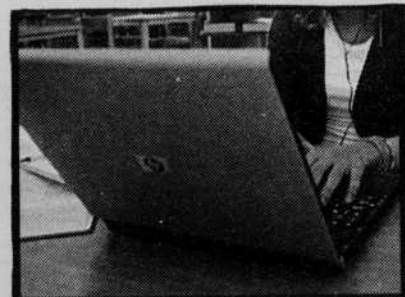
"I started to cry. It was the first time I experienced what felt like discrimination," she said.

—The Associated Press

Share your space, but live on your own.



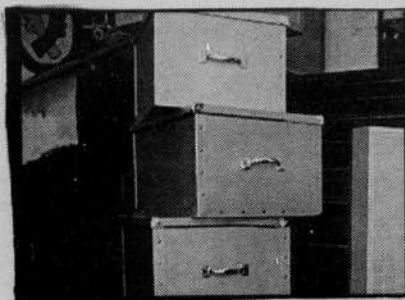
All furnishings pictured are from Wal-Mart.



HP Laptop



Bedding



Storage

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