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## Career Center 2005 Ctaduate Admissions: What Works, What Doesn't and Why? Presented by Don Asher Tuesday, October 25 Gerlinger Lounge 3:30-5:00pm Career Center 20 UNIVERSITY OF OREON

## Estate tax: Senator Smith supports repealing decision

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Abrams said that the current federal budget deficit doesn't create a climate where the government can politically or monetarily afford to make such a decision, especially in light of Hurricane Katrina relief costs.

"I wouldn't be suicidal if it did pass, but I don't think it will," he said.

The report estimated total contributions to decrease 6 to 12 percent, or \$13 billion to \$25 billion, if the tax is repealed. The government collected \$24.1 billion in estate tax revenues in fiscal year 2004.

According to the report, more than 60 percent of charitable donors in 2000 came from families in the top 20th percentile in adjusted gross income. Families from the top 10 percent contributed about half of the total \$196 billion given in 2000. Those in the top 5 percent gave about 45 percent of the total.

Only about 2 percent of all estates are subject to the estate tax, according to IRS.com

Chris Matthews, spokesman for Sen. Gordon Smith, R-Ore., said that Smith is in favor of repealing the estate tax because it protects hard working families and small businesses.

"(Senator Gordon) believes that after a lifetime of work and savings the government shouldn't come in and take the estate," Matthews said, adding that families usually have to sell the estate, in most cases farms, to pay off the estate tax.

"No family farm should be sold off because somebody died," Matthews said. "The government shouldn't derive tax revenue from death because it penalizes savings and breaks small businesses."

Matthews also said that it doesn't make sense that charitable donations would be affected. If families don't have to pay more taxes, less money will be going to the government and more will remain in their pockets, Matthews said.

"They'll have more money for charitable giving," he said. "It only reduces giving to the government."

Adam Hughes is budget policy analyst for OMB Watch, a watchdog coalition that tries to "lift the veil of secrecy shrouding the White House Office of Management and Budget." He said that this repeal could cause drastic cuts in contributions to nonprofits as well as reduce federal funding to universities in general.

"Giving a tax break to multi-millionaires is not a good decision right now," Hughes said. "This doesn't affect small businesses, it protects the rich."

Hughes said nonprofits will get a "double-whammy" as charitable contributions are cut and federal revenues decrease. He said government money in some form constitutes about one-third of college funding.

"If this tax is repealed, you're looking at drastic cuts," he said.

The U.S. House of Representatives has voted to eliminate the sales tax in four of the last five years, but the Senate still hasn't voted.

Contact the campus and federal politics reporter at nwilbur@dailyemerald.com



