

New draft bill reaches Congress

Proposal is an abomination to youth of America

Ben Maras
OPINION EDITOR

It appears that those who said that there would never be a draft again were wrong, for even now, the federal government is preparing to reinstate the draft in as little as a year.

Twin bills S 89 and HR 163, both aptly titled "Universal Service Act of 2003" are currently pending legislation. If passed, for the first time in almost 40 years, all young U.S. citizens would face being shipped off to fight and even die, against their will. The bills collectively have 15 co-sponsors—all Democrats.

This is no cruel joke; the existence of these bills was verified by the U.S. Congress website (www.congress.org).

In addition to reinstating the Vietnam-era draft, this bill goes above and beyond to amend the Military Selective Service Act to include women and non-American citizens between the ages of 18 and 26.

This should come as no surprise. The National Guard (keyword being "national") has already been sent overseas, and according to *The Washington Post*, soldiers have been forced to keep serving after their contracts have run out.

Signs have been pointing to a draft for months now. In September, the Defense Department posted a want-ad on www.defendamerica.mil, wanting people to join local draft boards

"should a draft become necessary." After the notice began to draw some media attention (including that of *The Oregonian*), the notice was removed. In addition, the Selective Service System has requested \$28 million for their 2004 budget—five million more than their last budget request.

How does this affect college students? The classic dodge of being a college student would no longer be

signed a "Smart Border Declaration," with U.S. Homeland Security Director, Tom Ridge. This would effectively keep would-be draft dodgers in the country by, among other things, requiring a "pre-clearance

their own lives?

Now it seems that not only is our generation supposed to pay for the financial bill for these escapades, but we are also supposed to pay with our lives? Those who are deciding on this bill will not be affected by a draft. Yes, some may have children, but unfortunately it may come back to the fortunate son (and now daughter) complex—the middle and lower class being forced to fight, while those with the money and power get light duty stateside, if forced to serve at all.

So far this bill has made no ripples in the pond that is America, but the reason for this still remains to be seen. It is ridiculous to think that the American public would not be interested in these distressing developments, and the existence of these bills is public knowledge. It is also ridiculous to think that we should idly sit by and put up with our fates being determined by those who are above the reparations of their actions on this matter.

America is a democracy, and now is the time to take an active part in the democratic process, before it is too late.

*Sen. Ron Wyden (D) can be reached by calling (202) 224-5244, or visit: <http://wyden.senate.gov/contact.html>
Sen. Gordon Smith (R) can be reached at (202) 224-3753 or visit: <http://gsmith.senate.gov/webform.htm>
One's respective representative can be determined and contacted by visiting: <http://www.house.gov/writerep>.*

How do you feel about the re-instatement of the draft?

"I don't think the draft is as applicable as it may have been ... since the technological explosion."



Adam Omidpanah-Clark



"I think it would be time to run to Canada if they reinstate it."

Brent Georgeson

"I think that's a bad idea. You should do it of your own free will."



Melissa Campobasso



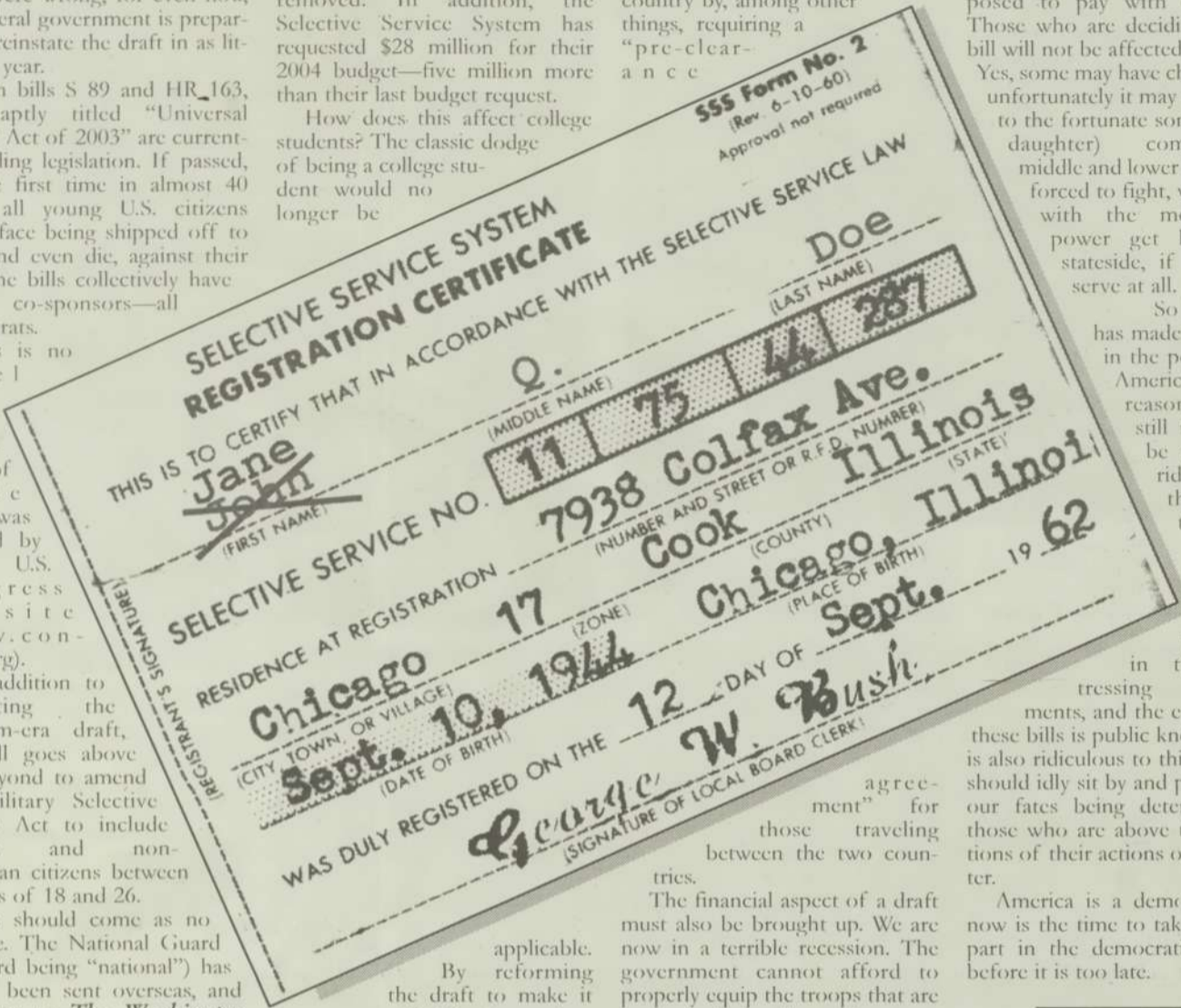
"I think it's good that they're including girls with it, but I don't think it's right."

Leevan Arellano

"I don't think girls should be included. I don't know why!"



Tracy Morgan



applicable. By reforming the draft to make it more "fair" along class lines, it has been made so that underclassmen would only be given a deferment until the end of the current semester, seniors until the end of their academic year.

Planning to relocate to Canada? Sorry. In December of 2001, Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs, John Manley

agreed for those traveling between the two countries.

The financial aspect of a draft must also be brought up. We are now in a terrible recession. The government cannot afford to properly equip the troops that are currently in hostile combat, even down to the ceramic plates for their Kevlar flak jackets not being supplied. Some parents have gone as far as to purchase the plates on eBay for their children and have them shipped out. With the multi-trillion dollar debt we are in, how can we except draftees to be properly equipped to preserve

FCC cracks down after recent TV fiascos

Jeff Sorensen
THE CLACKAMAS PRINT

After late-night leniency and describing the F-word as an "adjective," it took a bare breast in the middle of the single, highest-rated broadcast in the world for the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to shed their "Barney Rife" exterior and do their job.

Janet Jackson and Justin Timberlake have been losing one gig after another, sending their credibility beyond "rock bottom." But whether it was their place to take action or not, something needed to be done to show just how lackluster the FCC has become. Committees and lawyers spent so much time discussing decisions to be made that nothing was actually accomplished. Thanks to all that wasted time, our nation's youth has new ideas on what body parts are cool to pierce and how. Nice work.

Yes, this classic example of an "Oops, I did it again" was presented by the same folks who allowed rock singer Bono to

throw out an F-word on a nationally broadcast award ceremony as if he were tossing a fishing line. What he been trying to throw back what he caught on that particular cast, but it seems like that is one fish willing to die for a worthy cause.

The FCC's rules on profanity and content affect everyone that communicates directly or indirectly with public masses (including journalists). Many feel they restrict the rights of an American's freedom of speech, which to some far-fetched extent can be true. The real issue with the FCC, however, is not their mission statement, but how well they do their job of carrying out that statement.

On Jan. 14, 2004 (roughly 18 days before the Super Bowl), CNN.com posted an article that FCC Chief Commissioner Michael Powell had called for a dramatic increase in fines charged for broadcast obscenities. Their maximum charge of \$27,500 was set "decades ago," and Powell wanted to multiply that number tenfold. If the FCC weren't still

tiddling their thumbs about it, every single affiliate of CBS in the entire country (around 150) would have been fined \$275,000 for the circus they called the "Halftime Show." One can only imagine the meeting where the primary words from Powell's mouth were, "I told you so."

So it's comforting to know that at least one guy in a position of power is trying to do his job, but what took so long? It's a common misconception that TV has ruined America's children. It is not the TV itself, but the content our children view on the magic glowing box that has warped their reality into the violent, profane and sexually liberating behavior that today is considered "cool."

An excellent example of our children's mentality occurred at a recent teen dance in Oregon City. A young girl made sexual advances at the DJ's assistant for most of the evening. Denied his attention, she finally asked if she could have his children. The girl is in the eighth grade.

The FCC was originally put in

place to set a standard for decency on public airwaves. They don't know what that standard is, but they're there to set it.

It's high time someone set specific rules and started enforcing them. There should be no questioning, discussing or trying to find loopholes in the rules, because it only wastes time and diminishes the effectiveness and intent of the rules as a whole.

Asking the FCC why they exist in the first place would likely produce a single answer: "because." Well, "because" might be a good enough answer when kids ask parents why they have to clean their rooms, but it's not when it comes to a commission that's responsible for controlling our nation's media content.

The FCC needs to start doing their job, or disband and stop wasting tax money. They need to pick one side of the fence and stick to it, or we may never see the end of this incessant bickering that wastes time while our children are growing up too cocky to realize how confused they've become.

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