

**local**

# A&M study group favors changing fee hike rules

by Kelley Smith

**Battalion Staff**  
The Texas A&M Legislative Study Group was the only organization to testify in Austin last week in favor of a bill to change the procedure for setting higher tuition fees.

Seven Texas A&M students spent four days during spring break in the capitol lobbying on higher education fees, the raising of the drinking age from 19 to 21, minority recruitment funding and faculty salary increases.

House bill 894 would require that all state fees, including tuition, be levied in the state budget, which is changed every two years. Currently, to change a state fee, the Legislature must pass a bill.

The Texas A&M group lobbied in favor of the bill, while students from the Texas Student Association, the University of Texas and the Texas Student Lobby lobbied against the bill.

Fred Billings, administrative director of the group, said the other organizations were opposed to a tuition increase. They feared if the bill passed it would make it easier for tuition increases to pass.

However, by opposing the bill the other groups cut their own throats, Billings said. The Legislature would not listen to them because they already knew what they were going to say.

"When we got the idea out that we weren't going to unequivocally oppose a tuition in-

crease, our credibility shot way up," he said. "The legislators saw we were mature enough to deal with the whole problem but still represent and protect our constituency."

Because of this, he said, the legislative study group is in a better position than the other student groups to work with the legislators.

The group supported the bill so they could work to set up a framework by which tuition can be increased for the benefit of the students if the increase is inevitable, Billings said.

The group will work for an amendment to the bill to have tuition cover a set percentage of certain operating costs. Therefore, tuition could only increase at the same rate that those costs increase, protecting against any large jumps in tuition, Billings said.

The proposed bill also will allow for more channels of public testimony to justify any increases, he said.

Under the present system, increases are proposed in the House Higher Education Committee. The public only is allowed to testify in the committee hearings.

If the proposed bill is passed, the public would be able to testify in the appropriations committee where the budget is drafted, in the House Higher Education Committee and then again in the appropriations committee.

It also calls for the Legislative

Budget Board to go to the universities to work with them to justify budget increases. This allows the students to have a voice through their administration, Billings said.

The legislative study group also lobbied against raising the drinking age from 19 to 21.

"It looks like the drinking age bill might be blocked," Billings said.

The group also supports tougher DWI laws. It is trying to make mandatory an alcohol awareness test that must be passed at the time a person takes his driver's license test.



*Sneak preview*

staff photo by Irene Mees

Manal Fares, a sophomore special education major from Egypt, performs a belly dance in the Memorial Student Center during the International Students Association's Talent and Fashion Show Preview.

# Mosher run planned, money to go to charity

by Kathy Wiesepape

**Battalion Staff**  
Five women, 24 hours and 175 miles add up to plenty of money for charity, say members of the Mosher Hall Council.

The council has organized a 24-hour relay to be run by a team of five Texas A&M women students. The relay will start at the aerobics track Saturday morning at 10 and continue until 10 a.m. Sunday. At 1 p.m. Saturday, the women will run to the track at Kyle Field and finish

the relay there.

Money has been pledged for each mile the team runs. Peggy Benham, a Mosher Hall wing representative and one of the members of the team, said they hope to run 175 miles within the 24 hours.

Benham said proceeds will fund a Senior Citizens' Day at the hall council sponsors at the Crestview Retirement Home. Extra money will be donated to the Brazos Animal Clinic and the bonfire fund.

The five team members will take turns running a mile each, which Benham estimates will take each member eight minutes to complete.

"We'll have about half an hour to rest in between times," she said.

The five runners are Benham, Tasha Garty, Jennifer Hartzell, Stacie Reich and Leslie Scandt. Selina Mendieta is an alternate. All of them have experience running track and were in advanced aerobic classes here, Benham said.

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