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'Spending bias' in Congress

by **Lezlee Hinson**
Battalion Reporter
U.S. Rep. Phil Gramm told a group of public school educators Friday that government spending continues to be a major problem because of the decision-making process in the legislature.

Gramm told about 200 educators attending the Conference on Education in Free Enterprise

that the decision-making process in Congress results in a spending bias.

The group that will benefit from any given measure is well-organized and pressures its congressman to vote in favor of the bill, Gramm said.

On the other hand, the average taxpayer, who will ultimately pay for the measure, doesn't even know a vote is being taken.

The only way to minimize the influence of special interest groups, Gramm said, is to place binding constraints on government spending. If a balanced budget were required, many programs receiving federal funding would have to compete with each other for the available funds.

This would mean funds would be distributed on the basis of merit rather than according to who has the most influential lobby, Gramm said.

Gramm's wife, Dr. Wendy Gramm, a chief economist for the Federal Trade Commission, also addressed the conference and explained the complexity of the decision-making process

within the bureaucracy.

The FTC is one of about 20 independent regulatory agencies, Dr. Gramm said, and is responsible for maintaining competition in the marketplace and protecting the consumer.

The FTC is subject to a great deal of pressure from a number of sources, Dr. Gramm said. All decisions are made by the FTC commission, which consists of five members appointed by the president for seven-year terms.

When considering an issue, the commission examines all evidence compiled by the attorneys and economists employed by the FTC.

It tries to determine if the firm in question has violated the law, if the proposed action makes economic sense, if the action will benefit the consumer and if the benefits will exceed the costs.

The FTC tries to ignore the outside pressures and judge each individual case on its merit, Dr. Gramm said. But this isn't always easy, and this is why changes within the bureaucracy take so long.



staff photo by G...

Congressman Phil Gramm spoke to a group of about 200 educators Friday afternoon in Rudder at the 6th Annual Conference on Education in Free Enterprise. Gramm was awarded a Distinguished Service Award from the American Academy of Who's Who in Small Business.

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Library, snacks don't mix

by **Donn Friedman**
Battalion Reporter
Sterling C. Evans Library officials say they want out of the vending machine business be-

cause students continue to smuggle snacks into the book section of the library.

The officials say the smuggled snacks create problems

with littering and insects. But, the business services department which is in charge of the machines says no immediate action is planned.

Library officials want to remove the vending machines from the second floor lounge, said Dr. Irene Hoadley, director of the library.

"If we could keep the food in the lounge, then we wouldn't object to it," she said. "But people carry their Cokes and candy out of the lounge. This attracts bugs. And bugs and books don't get along too well."

The library requested that the Office of Business Services remove the machines, which contain soft drinks, candy, coffee and cigarettes, but the machines remain.

"At this time there are no plans for removing the machines," said Jerry Smith, associate director of business services. "Removing the vending machines would be a disservice to the library patrons."

As long as the machines remain, the library requested that a monitor be hired to prevent people from taking their snacks out of the lounge, Hoadley said.

Since last fall, the library has had a student worker who serves

as a monitor to check for and drinks outside the lounge and for excessive noise level the building.

Library officials say there has been somewhat effort in fighting the transit of food from the lounge into the library, but the problem exists.

Evidence of the problem is hard to spot. Wrappers for items such as candy bars and snack chips were seen around the study area shelves Wednesday. Several students openly sipped soft drinks as they studied.

Carol Ann Ross, an animal science major, said she often eats snacks while studying in the library.

"Even though they ask us to take food out of the lounge, do sometimes take stuff out of the library," Ross said. "The lot of people take food out of the lounge. If they issued an ultimatum maybe people would follow."

Officials in the business services office don't think removing the machines would resolve the situation.

"What is needed," Smith said, "is cooperation of the students who use the lounge area to keep the food in the designated area."

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Psychiatrist flies to keep sanity

United Press International
HARLINGEN — Psychiatrist Richard Bohannon may deal with crazy people all day, but he says he keeps his own sanity by flying an airplane over desolate miles of South Texas ranchland.

Bohannon manages to combine the two things he loves most — psychiatry and flying — by flying to see patients in the remote towns between San Antonio and Brownsville on the Mexican border.

"I'd rather fly than do almost anything," he said. "It's not as good as sex, but it lasts longer. It's an escape, and it keeps me from going insane."

Bohannon is clinical director of the Rio Grande Mental Health-Mental Retardation center in Harlingen, conveniently located at the airport. He flies the 30 miles from his McAllen home each morning, spends a few hours at the clinic then

points his twin-engine Aero Falfurrias, Freer, Alice, Comstock or Laredo.

Except in Laredo, Bohannon is the only psychiatrist in the area. He visits Alice and Laredo every two weeks and the other towns monthly.

A private practice would make him richer, but Bohannon said his work is more rewarding than sitting in a plush office day talking to depressed middle-class people.

"It commands a lot of respect for people, even if they're there in dirty, smelly clothes," he said. "It's an inspiration. It makes me feel like I should do more with less."

Bohannon pays for the flight himself, and it is not part of his job at MH-MR. He simply visits other MH-MR clinics if he would mind his flying in professionally to visit their patients.

Short-hop rocket planes in future

United Press International
With the Space Shuttle a routine operation, the next venture may be something called the Sortie Vehicle, a compact space plane that kicks free and fires its engines from the back of a rather unconventional Boeing 747.

If Boeing Aerospace designers can prevail upon the Air Force, Science Digest reports, these short-hop rocket planes could be a reality by 1988, since the ship could be launched with existing and proven aeronautical equipment.

The Sortie Vehicle would be carried aloft on the back of a Boeing 747 supplemented by a specially fitted space shuttle main engine mounted in the back. That would be needed to carry the craft to a 37,500-foot altitude and a 45 degree flight angle.

At this point, the Sortie Vehicle would break away and fly up, carrying on its underwing mammoth fuel tank and feed its nine ravenous engines.

During flight — and after tisoning the fuel tank — the Sortie Vehicle will be able to "glide" in and out of the upper fringes of the atmosphere, entering and leaving orbit at will. The logical use for the vehicle would be military surveillance and reconnaissance. Because it would not be fixed in orbit, it would be much more flexible than military satellites.

At this point the Sortie Vehicle is no sure thing. But Boeing engineer James Jenkins is hopeful and says, "People have always dreamed of a space plane you could just hop into and fly around the world."

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