

OPINION

Students should pay more for education

Texas A&M University officials are worried. The monetary screws are being tightened, and it spells trouble for many programs within the A&M system.

The 69th Regular Session of the Texas State Legislature has begun, and the important item of discussion is how to make up a \$1 billion shortfall in state revenues.

State educational agencies, A&M included, have been told to prepare for cuts that could slice each school's total budget by as much as 20 percent.

The chances of a 20 percent cut being made are slim, but there are still substantial cuts to be made.

In light of the inevitable budget cuts that the University faces, it is unrealistic for the University to hang on to the notion that tuition here should not be raised.

The Battalion Editorial Board has to question the validity of a pay system that requires in-state students to pay just \$4 per credit hour at A&M. The plain fact is that we are not paying our way.

Tuition in Texas has not been raised since 1957 — despite the fivefold increase in the amount the state spends per student — enabling the state to have the lowest tuition costs in the nation.

The Legislative Study Group, a division of the A&M student government, has lobbied on behalf of students that there should be no tuition increases.

An admirable idea. But is it realistic? Even when you include all the outside fees that Aggies pay on top of their tuition, the number still puts A&M as one of the cheapest institutions in the nation.

Students in Texas should pay higher tuition, as long as their money goes back into their schools, back into improving their education.

The tuition hikes as proposed now would simply take the additional money and put it back into the state treasury, to be divided among the state agencies. But that doesn't do the schools any good, and the deficit is not the fault of the schools or the students.

Representative Wilhelmina Delco has introduced a bill to the Texas Legislature that would gradually raise tuition over the next ten years by 600 percent but would put most of the money back into the schools. Under her bill, the tuition money that now goes straight into the state treasury would still go there, but the additional money made from the tuition hikes would go back into the schools.

Under Delco's plan, Texas would still remain in the bottom 10 states as far as tuition costs.

It is not unreasonable to expect students in Texas to pay more for their education, but it does seem unreasonable to make students pay higher tuition costs if that money doesn't improve their education. Students should be paying for their education, not making up for the state's deficit.

The Battalion Editorial Board

LSG lobbied against tuition hikes in past

LSG lobbying for students

As most of you know, the 69th Regular Session of the Texas State Legislature began earlier this month, and the students of Texas A&M University are being represented. The Legislative Study Group (LSG), which is part of Student Government at TAMU, is responsible for speaking on behalf of the students on issues of higher education.

LSG was there to help defeat the efforts to raise tuition twice in the past. LSG was there to explain how raising the drinking age to 21 would hurt area businesses as well as the effects it would have on college students. LSG played a major part in protecting the Permanent University Fund (PUF) by encouraging everyone to vote for Proposition 2 during the November election, and once again we will be there to represent you, the students.

The major concern of this session is money; and, due to the increase in oil revenues, the state is faced with a \$1 billion shortfall. This has led the legislators to look into different ways of either raising revenues, trimming the budget, or a combination of both.

One area that legislators feel could offer a possible solution is that of higher education. State officials have informed all agencies, including colleges and uni-

versities, to look into ways of trimming their budgets. But this method only limits expenditures. The legislators must still look for ways of raising revenue, and the college student seems to be the prime target.

The \$4.00 per semester hour which an in-state college student pays in tuition covers approximately 3.5% of the cost to educate that student. Tuition in Texas has not been raised since 1957; and, consequently, this has enabled Texas to be ranked 50th in the nation with the lowest cost to in-state students.

This is the "side of the coin" which most legislators and the misinformed public view as the issue of tuition. Now, let us both look at the other side of the coin.

All of the above figures are correct, but they are not complete. With the exception of college students, their parents, and the people who work for the universities, John Q. Public does not realize that this is not the entire picture. When one takes into account the fees (Building Use Fees, Student Center Complex Fee, Laboratory Fee, P.E. Fees, etc.), one now realizes that we actually pay approximately 13% of the cost of our education.

Now some may think that this is still too low. Let us remember that the Founding Fathers of Texas knew that

education was very important to the well-being of this state. They felt the ability of one to attend college should not be hindered on the basis of money, but more importantly on the intelligence and their willingness to learn. This is why they meant for education to be inexpensive, so that everyone should have that opportunity to expand their knowledge. For they knew that every person who went on to better themselves would also benefit the state well.

Many bills will be introduced this session to raise tuition. LSG has appointed Chris Gavras as the Tuition Coordinator. He will be responsible for researching the effects of these bills on the college student.

The Legislative Study Group has taken an official stance on tuition, until we present our research to the Student Senate for final approval, we continue to insure that college students at TAMU are being represented, and that the issue of tuition is being considered with all aspects included.

If you have an opinion concerning this issue or any others, please feel free to contact me at the Student Government Office in the Pavilion, or call 3051.

Johnny Hatch is a junior political science major and director of the Legislative Study Group.



LETTERS:

Glad to have the freedom to choose

EDITOR:

I'd like to commend the Battalion Editorial Board for its strongly stated affirmation of the right of women to decide for or against having an abortion without governmental interference.

I've been a wife for over 17 years and a mother for nearly 14, and through the years I've faced a great many problems. Women in our society, whether or not they have careers, still bear the major responsibility for nurturing their families, and I'm no exception. In order to carry out these often enormous responsibilities, I've counted on having as many options as possible to deal with crises as they arise. One of those options is the right to choose abortion, an option I've never had to use. But I'm glad to have the right.

Anti-abortion activists tell women (who historically have been expected to place their own needs and opinions second) that the life of a six-weeks embryo must by law take precedence over every other consideration in her life. They say this embryo is a "child" and a "person" as much as, say, my 13 year-old is, and fully formed, which is scientifically incorrect. They suggest that 15 million women in this country are murderers, when, in fact, they are 15 million women who, for 15 million different reasons, decided that abortion was the right thing to do in a difficult, often devastating situation. Their individual decisions are none of my business, nor are they the business of anti-abortion activists — and certainly none of the government's.

The number of abortions that have been performed since 1973 is often compared to the Nazi Holocaust. Only if the government were forcing women into abortions, as the Chinese government's one-child-per-family policy is, would it be even slightly comparable to the Holocaust. I think it's instructive that Romania's President Ceausescu wants his countrywomen to have more

babies and now has a network of spies, I read, to report women who have abortions. In both Communist China and Communist Romania, women aren't free to choose, as they are in this country. Let's keep America free.

**Kristin Parsons
College Station**

Right to lifers' rights count, too

EDITOR:

The Supreme Court in the Roe v. Wade case legalized abortion. This decision, in my opinion, was made in response to the "back-alley" abortion.

In this regard I would have to agree with the Supreme Court decision. The Supreme Court also affirmed the right of a mother to have a "choice" regarding her pregnancy.

However, one has to ask what about the rights of the pro-life groups? These people regard abortion as a life or death issue. Are their rights being respected?

Specifically I would like to point out the use of federal money in paying for abortions. This money is collected from all taxpayers. To me this is the most disturbing area in the abortion question.

Why is federal money being used to pay for abortions when a very significant proportion of the U.S. population is sincerely opposed to abortions? What choices do these people have — stop paying taxes or bomb abortion clinics?

The Founding Fathers spoke of the "tyranny of the majority." Therefore I propose that the right to have an abortion never be made illegal but also to end all federal funding for abortions.

Then I could live knowing that I'm not paying for abortions and as a Christian I could pray for the souls for anybody responsible for an abortion.

**Stephan A. Y'Barbo
Class of '83**

Abortion editorial didn't show all sides

EDITOR:

Battalion Editorial Board:

Even though an editorial board's opinion is just an opinion, a lot of people respect its views and believe what is printed to be the whole truth. It is too bad that someone in your position can give a view on a subject and say that the personal feelings have been put aside.

If your job is to let people know what is going on, then let them know all of the subject and not a one-sided personal view.

In your editorial on abortion entitled "FREEDOM TO CHOOSE MUST NOT BE DENIED," a major part of the issue was left out. Since the personal feelings were not there, why did the article seem so biased? What about the child? Is the idea behind pro-choice intended to keep "the government from intruding in its citizens personal lives" or just the mother's life? Why do you ignore the other half of this subject as if they are non-existent? Everyone, mother AND child, should be allowed to have a choice.

I offer no solution to this problem. Just remember who all is involved when discussing the issue. Do not leave someone out when they cannot voice their own ideas or fit into your personal view.

With opinions like yours, it is easy to see why a woman might take the simple way out, without even considering the baby. She possibly would feel obligated to have an abortion in order to keep the federal government in line.

Your editorial was signed the "THE BATTALION EDITORIAL BOARD," does the whole board have the same narrow view and writing style?

Mark Gatewood

Battalion Ed Board for 'liberal stupid causes'

EDITOR:

The Battalion's pro-abortion editorial on Jan. 23 is just one of a series of overwhelmingly liberal articles that shows once more that this paper has forfeited any claims for objective coverage. It became rather a cheap liberal propaganda piece. I don't agree with the argument that anti-abortion legislation would interfere with citizen's private lives. On the other hand, I believe that such governmental programs as affirmative action and taxation for funding of welfare is an imposition on individual freedom. Charity should not be made compulsory. (Incidentally, statistics shows that social programs cut initiated in the last few years resulted in decrease of crime rate. This is to a large extent due to the fact that the cut off of welfare provided an incentive for productive activity which diverted the previously unemployed people from crime and drugs.) The argument that the unborn babies are not human seem to me similar to the Nazi theory of superior and inferior races. Could we really condemn bombings of Nazi concentration camps if this could prevent the murder of millions of people? It would be just as wrong to condemn the abortion clinics bombings which had the purpose of saving lives of innocent babies. It is amazing that the same groups that sponsored 15 million mass murder in America and advocate a continuous torturous experiment on animals in the name of science, have a nerve to self-righteously demonstrate against South African apartheid policy for various other liberal stupid causes. Do advocates of free murder have a right to judge others?

**Leon Luxemburg
Electrical Engineering grad student**

Editor's Note: The Ed Board on Jan. 23 was pro-choice, not pro-abortion. There is a big difference — which was the point of the editorial.

It is also an opinion, not a news article, and as such does not claim to be objective or unbiased.

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(ISPS 045 360)**
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The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting newspaper operated as a community service to Texas A&M at Bryan-College Station.

Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the Editorial Board or the author, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Texas A&M administrators, faculty or the Board of Regents.

The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Communications.

Letters Policy

Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must be signed and must include the address and telephone number of the writer.

The Battalion is published Monday through Friday during Texas A&M regular semesters, except for holiday and examination periods. Mail subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester, \$33.25 per school year and \$55 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request.

Our address: The Battalion, 216 Reed McDaniel Building, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843. Editorial staff phone number: (409) 845-2631; advertising: (409) 845-2611.

Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Battalion, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas 77843.