

EDITORIAL

DELA Y'S REMARKS

House Majority Whip Tom DeLay is a respected Republican congressman who exercised terrible judgment in comments he made that questioned if Texas A&M is truly a conservative university. It is disheartening that an official who represents the state would criticize two of Texas' most prestigious universities to appeal to his audience.

"You know, Texas A&M used to be a conservative university," DeLay said. "It's lost all of its conservatism and it's renounced its traditions."

DeLay should visit the University and see for himself before making brash comments, especially anything dealing with the controversial topic of traditions. There is much heated debate among current and former Aggies regarding the role of Aggie traditions in the future. For DeLay, who has minimal ties to A&M, to declare that A&M has renounced its traditions is absurd.

Furthermore, by implying that sex on campus is what makes A&M not welcoming to Christians, DeLay shows his unfamiliarity of A&M. Contrary to his comments, A&M indeed has a welcoming atmosphere for Christians, as it strives to be an institution where students of all backgrounds, religions and races are welcome.

Despite DeLay's opinion that it is time to "throw the P.C. out and bring God in," A&M remains a conservative campus.

His comments were out of line and his defense that the comments were taken out of context is a stretch.

Fellow republican congressman Kevin Brady defended DeLay's comments and said that it was "underhanded" that DeLay's comments were taped and released.

As a public official, DeLay needs to be reminded that he represents all Texans all of the time, not just when it is convenient for him. His call for people to write legislators in hopes for change is fine. But it was completely unnecessary and inappropriate for him to single out A&M and Baylor.

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In need of a miracle

High malpractice premiums hurting Texas doctors

Gov. Rick Perry has many fans among his constituents, but very few doctors can be counted among them.



GEORGE DEUTSCH

Physicians across Texas steadily are being robbed as a result of Perry's politics, but the governor refuses to address the soaring liability insurance premiums of the sue-happy South in a timely fashion. Because of Perry's inactivity, doctors are going bankrupt and striking, patients are losing the best available care, and Texas is faced with a medical industry that is about to implode. Maybe Perry never gets sick.

How can doctors be expected to provide meticulous medical care when many cannot afford to insure themselves? Short of practicing from their basements, they cannot.

According to *The Dallas Morning News*, Texas physicians face a 30 to 60 percent increase in insurance premiums — the minimum they must pay if sued — for the 2002 cycle alone. Imagine the results in five years if this horrific trend is allowed to continue. Make no mistake; a problem this big will adversely affect the entire state's medical care.

Where does the ill-gotten insurance money go? Greed-driven insurance companies get it and end up shelling out a much smaller portion to their lawsuit-abusing clientele. However, the 2002 malpractice premium increase is by no means indicative of a proportional increase in claims or continual doctor incompetence, which makes the insurance companies' actions seem all the more illegal.

While many people may not care if several hundred "fat-cat" physicians whine about increasing insurance costs, they should. The more unhappy doctors are, the poorer the quality of medical care in the state will be, and everyone, at some point in their life, needs a doctor. It is in the best interests of the residents of Texas to get this issue resolved.

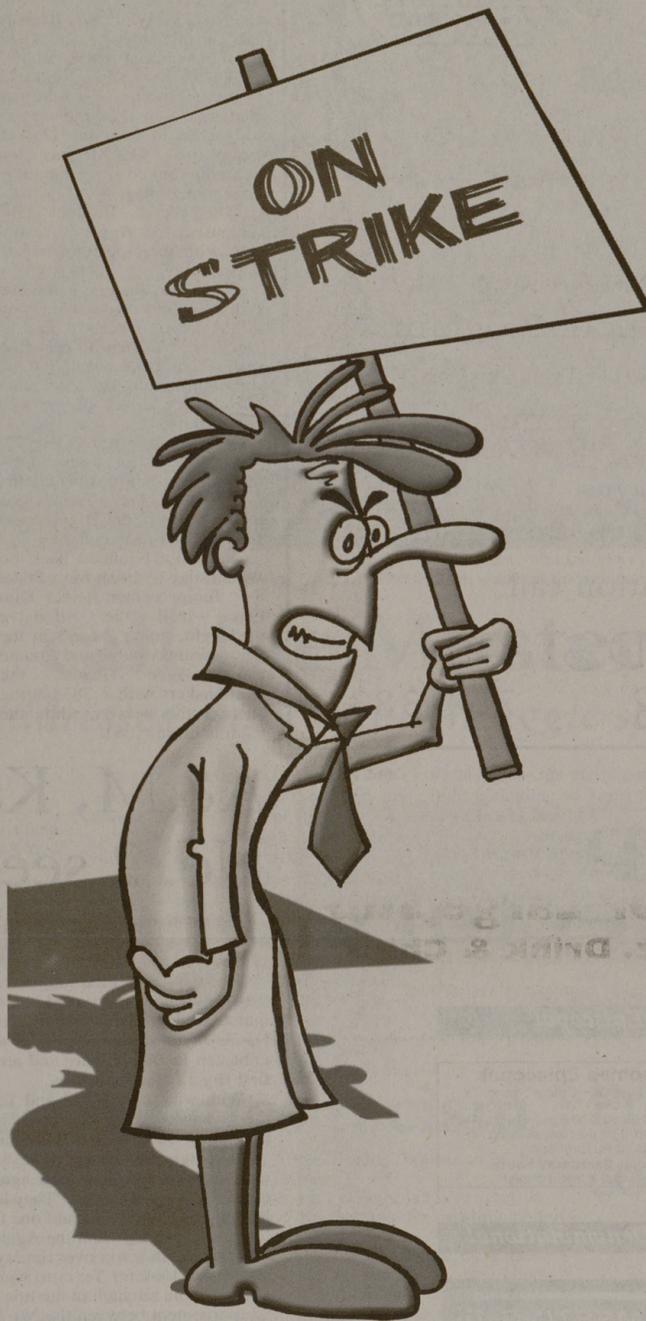
The power to change all this, or at least initiate the processes to encourage change, essentially lies with Perry. Physicians as well as Republicans and Democrats across the state are encouraging him to call a special session to address the issue swiftly, and Perry should heed their advice.

But Perry has made every effort not to help these doctors in spite of the building tension. He claims that a special session would not work because the 77th Legislature already has voted down bills on medical liability.

Even those who once opposed the doctors' strikes, like Sen. Eddie Lucio, D-Brownsville, are angry with Perry and want him to stop wasting time.

That was then, and this is now. Increasingly more elected officials and physicians are growing frantic about the industry's troubling fiscal matters. How is Perry so sure a special session will not work if he will not call one?

George Deutsch is a junior journalism major.



ADRIAN CALCANEO • THE BATTALION



MAIL CALL

Student leaders should speak up for cookies

Too many acts of aggression against the student body by the administrators, professors and workers of this University have taken place in my four years. I am petitioning a call to the student leaders of this campus because this latest one will not stand.

Now don't get me wrong, I am a fan of Sbsia. "Sbsia," a shrewd young philosopher once told me, "is a haven", and I would tend to agree. This daily dining facility is a safe place for one and all, and they will greet you with open arms and a plethora of food.

When you break Sbsia down to its core competencies it can be as nurturing as mother's milk. However, I must complain about the lack of chocolate chip cookies. Students prefer these to any other manner of cookie provided. Yet, they refuse to realign the cookie distribution patterns to match those of the students. And my insatiable appetite for warm delicious Mrs. Fields chocolate chip cookies goes unrequited.

So I am petitioning the Zac Coventries, Yell leaders, Senators, and other magis-

trates and noblemen to speak up for the plebians. Get off your soapbox of unfilled promises and delve into the problems of the students.

Andrew Edwards
Class of 2002

Vision 2020 causes A&M traditions to change

In response to Richard Bray's April 18 column:

A&M's traditions didn't come out of nowhere. They were created by the culture and people who have made A&M what it is today. To say that the culture can change and the traditions will stand fast is foolish. Our traditions are not immovable nor incorruptible; Bonfire made this painfully evident.

I applaud any efforts to improve A&M academically, but to purposely try to change the type of people who go here will inevitably change what made A&M great in the first place.

Shane Zercher
Class of 2001

Airport security goes too far

Security officers forced boy to drink stream water

After Sept. 11, airport security was revolutionized. Every aspect of security was tightened, including what passengers can bring onto an airplane. But airport security went too far when they asked a passenger to drink tainted water.

Elliot Gosko, a 14-year-old traveling from Colorado to Pennsylvania, was carrying a bottle of stream water with him, when airport security stopped him. According to CNN, officers searched his bags several times and then asked Gosko to drink the water in the bottle. Gosko began to feel ill shortly after and is suspected to have giardia, a microorganism found in untreated water. CNN said George Gosko, Elliot Gosko's father, believes security measures were taken too far.

Airport security goes too far when it exceeds the norms of behavior necessary for people to enjoy their flight. In Elliot's case, security officers focused their attention upon a young teen simply trying to get home. By searching and questioning passengers, security officials appear to be doing their job. However, the system that airport security uses is an inefficient irritation. Airports use random searches to regulate what passengers carry, including those who do not pose a threat.

According to CNN, George Gosko

was amazed that his son was even suspected as a bio-terrorist. While security is attacking harmless travelers, true hazards are being overlooked.

Airport security turns the average passenger into a suspected criminal. Travelers go through numerous X-ray machines and personal searches. The contents of their bags are viewed so many times that their right to privacy diminishes. Travelers are humiliated as their belongings are laid on a table for everyone to see. If airports are insistent

Airport security goes too far when it exceeds the norms of behavior necessary for people to enjoy their flight.

on baggage checks, they need to establish a respectful way to do it.

Traveling is stressful to many passengers, especially when they are forced to go through added security. Travelers are given no choice when confronted with security measures. According to CNN, Elliot Gosko drank the water because he felt he had no choice. As a teenager traveling alone, he was not aware of his rights and was not informed of them by



ANDI BACA

security officials.

After Sept. 11, passengers are required to drink from open containers they are taking on an airplane to show that they are not dangerous. CNN said security officials never asked Elliot Gosko about the contents of the bottle.

Airports need to provide a safe trip for their passengers. However, security measures should not alienate passengers. Other security efforts can provide safety results and avoid subjecting passengers to embarrassing practices.

According to *Daily Local News*, national identification cards can help airports regulate passengers. Background checks can give security an insight on passengers and are more effective than random searches in identifying hazardous travelers. Clearly, Elliot was treated unfairly. Airport security easily could have helped the boy and explained the threat he posed, instead of allowing him to make an uninformed decision. There comes a point when we lose our freedom in regulations that are supposed to protect us.

Airport security clearly crossed the line when it forced Elliot Gosko to drink stream water. According to CNN, George Gosko said he just wants security to tell his son that they were wrong

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