

Student funding caught up in Congressional deadlock

by Caryn Rousseau

TMS Campus Washington Correspondent
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WASHINGTON — Just days before the presidential election, Washington politics is hitting college campuses where it hurts — the pocket book.

Education spending has created a deadlock in budget negotiations leaving both parties packing home for the election without an agreed upon Labor, Health and Human Services spending bill, which funds higher education.

Funding will be frozen at 2000 levels until both parties come to an agreement. Earlier this week Republicans killed sections of the bill's conference report, or House and Senate compromise, because of non-higher education issues including school construction funding. That move threatens the solvency of the entire bill, which included a \$500 increase in Pell Grant funding. Current Pell Grants are issued up to \$3,300 with total spending at \$7.6 million, according to a U.S. Department of Education report issued this week. The House and Senate agreement would

up the maximum grant to \$3,800 and raise total funding to \$9 million.

"It's to the students' advantage to get this done now," said Corye Barbour, legislative director of the United States Students Association. "They are talking about a lame duck session after the election and that would be bad for education funding."

Barbour believes that leaving education funding in the hands of a lame duck congress, which will occur when the Senate meets November 14, will hurt student interests.

"People who have influence and power in Congress in ways other than votes can wait," she said. "That only student pull is to withhold votes."

After the election student interests won't be as influential for congressmen, Barbour said.

Other threatened higher education spending initiatives include GEAR UP funding, which will be frozen at \$200,000 when it was agreed upon at \$325,000. GEAR UP programming provides financial assistance and mentoring opportunities for low-income middle and high school students to help them get to college.

Penn State resolves to have Boobirds take flight

by Andrew Bagnato
Chicago Tribune
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CHICAGO — Penn State's faculty recently took time out from the consuming business of instruction and research to tackle a truly important issue: fan decorum at Beaver Stadium. Seems the Blue and White faithful have been jeering the Nittany Lions as they have stumbled to a 4-5 mark this autumn.

In response, the faculty has passed a resolution against "negative cheering" in the stadium. For those unfamiliar with profspeak, that means booing. The move has generated snickers among students and made the school a target of barbs from the national media.

"I think as soon as they make that announcement there's going to be a chorus of boos," senior Matt Brinker told the Associated Press.

Perhaps not surprisingly, Penn State coach Joe Paterno supports the resolution.

"I'm glad to see that they would come out for that, but it may be a little bit of overreaction in the sense that I don't know that there has been that much (booing)," Paterno said. "Once in a while, you're going to get some booing of your own team. We've had a little of that, but not very much even with the lousy start we had."

"I think it's admirable as a resolution. I think we all ought to be aware of the fact that this is a college game and that respect for everybody who's trying out there should be part of the whole game experience."

Still, the resolution seems an effort to evoke a time when college sports were an innocent diversion involving real students — a time that probably never existed, at least not on Penn State's level.

The truth is that Nittany Lion followers are exactly like most big-time college football fans. They're passionate. They're obnoxious. They jeered quarterback Kerry Collins when he was a junior, then cheered him when he won the Tribune's Silver Football as a senior. Win or lose, they converge on tiny State College

in their multitudes every Saturday.

It's heartless to heckle college athletes, especially given the fact that they aren't seeing a nickel of the profits generated by their efforts. But the notion that big-time college sports fans should behave differently than a crowd at an NFL game is at best quaint. Perhaps that's why it lingers in (aptly named) Happy Valley.

Sidelines: Paterno and his wife, Sue, telephoned Washington's Rick Neuheisel to offer support for Husky senior safety Curtis Williams, who remains in intensive care at Stanford Medical Center after sustaining a spinal cord injury Saturday. The Paternos and Penn State went through a similar experience with Adam Taliaferro this season. Taliaferro is in a Philadelphia-area rehabilitation facility.

Purdue won't reap the recruiting benefits of its superb season until February's National Letter of Intent signing day. But head coach Joe Tiller said he already can see a difference.

"We're in the hunt for a lot of really good football players right

now," Tiller said. "We need to find a way to win another football game, because it seems like each week that you win, that player continues to answer the phone and continues to have good things to say about your program."

Wisconsin's 13-7 rout of Iowa last weekend may save the Badgers the ignominy of becoming the first Big Ten school in 40 years to go from first to worst. The last Big Ten school to go from first to worst was Wisconsin, which finished first in 1959 and last in 1960.

Badgers coach Barry Alvarez said the two-time defending champions never recovered from the mass suspensions handed down by the NCAA a few hours before the season opener Aug. 31.

"The fact that we have rarely started the same group two weeks in a row has been a problem," Alvarez said.

"That never leaves you. That's always a distraction, just the fact that I'm talking about it now and we're in the 10th week of the season."

U. Of Illinois students urge university to cancel Eminem concert

by Billy O'Keefe
TMS Campus
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Eminem's coming to town. And like a devoted groupie, controversy is following him everywhere.

A group of students from the University of Illinois is asking the university to cancel a concert featuring the controversial rapper, who has come under constant fire for lyrics depicting acts of violence against women and gays.

More important to the group, however, is that the university issue a public apology for hosting the concert, to be held Thursday night at Assembly Hall. Should the concert go on, the group has also requested that proceeds from the con-

cert benefit organizations committed to women's and gay rights.

versity is simply dragging its feet until the concert ends, and that profiting from the concert, whether administrators admit it or not, is the school's only priority.

"Gene Barton signed the contract," he says. "He can also break the contract. [The administrators] have so much political clout, but they won't stand behind anything. It's always 'we'll schedule more meetings, we'll have more talks.'"

"The profit issue is probably the most important issue, but the university is trying to divert from that and turn it into a freedom of speech issue," he continues. "But freedom of speech occurs when the government is not profiting from it."

Barton says that he is "very

"We are not doing this to [tick] off people who are going to the concert, and we are not doing this to censor anyone. We're asking the university to do the right thing."

sophomore Nick Sakurai, one of the founders of an anti-discrimination group at the University of Illinois.

cert benefit organizations committed to women's and gay rights.

The students claim that the university's support of the concert violates its anti-discrimination policy, which prohibits harassment of any kind toward minority groups on campus.

"We are not doing this to [tick] off people who are going to the concert, and we are not doing this to censor anyone," says sophomore Nick Sakurai, one of the group's founders. "We're asking the university to do the right thing."

But Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Eugene Barton says that the Assembly Hall advisory board, which consists of both students and faculty, met the concert with "great enthusiasm," and that the administration and the concert's promoters signed a contract based on their own approval of the event.

In other words, simply telling Eminem "Thanks, but no thanks" is not a realistic option.

"We can't just cancel it, especially this close to the event," says Barton. "It just doesn't work that way."

Barton notes that despite the university's inability to cancel the concert, he and other administrators have been in contact with the students and are willing to give them an avenue for their opinion.

But Sakurai thinks that the uni-

versity is simply dragging its feet until the concert ends, and that profiting from the concert, whether administrators admit it or not, is the school's only priority.

"It's their right as a student group to voice their opinion on this issue, and it's important to us," he says.

But Sakurai says that a protest, much like his pleas to the administration, would fall on deaf ears, and that he would not chance an appearance at the concert for fear of physical retaliation.

Instead, the group has fashioned an online petition, located at <http://www.dayofsilence.org>. The group is also considering litigation against the university but says that the odds of a legal confrontation are slim.

Sakurai hopes that students, who he says have expressed indifference toward the group's crusade, will see that the show's cancellation, however important, is not the group's primary goal.

"This campus is hostile toward non-predominant students without exacerbating more hostility," he says. "If we can't hold the university accountable for something as vile as this, what can we hold it accountable for?"



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