

Editorial Opinion

Not enough

State legislators must pass bill that would open entire budget

Casey's cutting funds. The recession still hasn't blown over. A new Paul Robeson Cultural Center is still just a dream.

Money — or the lack of it — seems to be the root of all the University's troubles. Yet students still cannot hold their governing school officials accountable for spending their money because the University doesn't have an open budget.

Student leaders have been clamoring for the University to reveal its total budget — including individual employee salaries — for years with little result.

The Higher Education Fiscal Disclosure Act, introduced in the state Senate last week, could force the University to open more of its budget.

The measure sounds good, but in the end it could hurt the open budget battle more than it would help. As it stands now, the act calls only for a partially open budget, which could make achieving a line-

by-line budget even harder to achieve.

University officials argue that Penn State receives only partial state funding and that revealing individual salaries is an invasion of privacy and could result in faculty bidding wars. But only total disclosure can assure students and lawmakers of the University's accountability.

Senate Bill 1075, which passed the state House of Representatives 202 to 1 this summer, would force complete budget disclosure to ensure the proper use of University funds.

Those active in the fight for an open budget must keep an eye on this most recent act and the University's response to it. Anything that will open the budget a little more is only a little help. For the accountability that students and lawmakers deserve, the Higher Education Fiscal Disclosure Act is not enough.



Reader Opinion

No right to complain

Kimberlie Kranich's reader opinion, "Speak up," on Feb. 7 is yet another example of how the Rene Portland issue has been blown way out of proportion. We've all heard enough about this issue, and it's time to quiet down.

According to Ms. Kranich, discrimination based on sexual orientation is no longer allowed at Penn State, and this statement took effect in the summer of 1991. This is true.

But the point is that Rene Portland has already publicly stated that she is aware of the new University policy. Maybe I'm mistaken but isn't that the purpose of the clause — to be aware that nobody should be discriminated on the basis of which sex they prefer?

Ms. Kranich goes on to talk about Portland's alleged policy on banning lesbians, her reputation, and her weak public statements, but this makes no sense.

First, even if Portland did ban lesbians from her team in the past (which we don't know for sure), she wasn't breaking any rules. Right or wrong, the University had no clause on discrimination based on sexual orientation before the summer of 1991.

Therefore, the past is history. You can only judge Rene Portland or any other Penn State coach based on their actions from the summer of 1991 and on.

Secondly, saying that you are aware of something is not a "weak public statement." Stating that you are aware of an issue is important.

Murdering people is against the law. I think most of us are aware of that. Must we go up to every citizen in the United States and demand them to say: "You have my word. I guarantee I won't kill anybody." I would think that this isn't necessary. It is a given.

Thirdly, you can be aware of something without agreeing with it. As a member of the Roman Catholic church, you can classify me as one of the fifty percent of the students that think homosexuality is immoral.

That's my personal belief, I'm entitled to it. That does not make me homophobic! I do not "fear" such activity. I understand that people have the right to engage in whatever kind of sexual activity they please, provided it's legal. That's their business, and I have no right to tell them they're wrong.

I understand there are several diverse people out there. If 10 percent of the population wants to engage in homosexual activity, they have a right to do so, whether I agree with such practices or not.

Finally, there is a right to remain silent in this country. Keeping your mouth shut is a lot better than running around shout-

ing "Homosexuality sucks!" People who do that are wrong. I have no respect for those kind of people.

I commend Athletic Director L. Budd Tarman, University President Joab Thomas, and Lady Lions Coach Rene Portland for holding their ground against these protests.

They are not letting the media get to them. You have to put your foot down somewhere because from the summer of 1991 on, no Penn State coach has been caught in the act of breaking any rule or policy.

With that in mind, no action should be taken. If a coach is caught of violating a rule or policy in the future, then I agree that disciplinary action should be taken. Until then, these protesters have no legitimate complaint at this time.

Rob Polinsky
sophomore-quantitative business analysis

It's refreshing

With all of the recent talk of Chino Wilson's column, sexual orientation, abortion and many other controversial topics. It is a great pleasure to read Dave Hollingsworth's article about jingle retention.

The article was light, easy-reading, and best of all, it crossed no racial or sexual boundaries. Dave's article was The Daily Collegian's saving grace for the "My opinion" column.

Hey Dave, keep up the great work (head for the mountain) and keep your finger in your ear.

Steven McCullough
sophomore-microbiology

Column was right

Kudos to Peter Zellen for expressing his viewpoints about our basketball program. I want Mr. Zellen to know that there are some students and basketball fans that agree with him. There have recently been two letters

Japan bashing

Is Japan America's new nemesis? Are the Japanese taking advantage of the United States in trade agreements? Or is our country exaggerating the problem by whining about it? What can be done to correct the matter?

The Daily Collegian will feature an Op/Ed page on Japan-U.S. relations on Feb. 21. Students, faculty and staff are encouraged to submit letters and forums at the Colle-

gian's James Building office, 123 S. Burrows St. from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Reader opinions should be about 1 1/2 pages typed and double spaced, and reader forums cannot be longer than 3 pages.

All letters and forums are due by 2 p.m. on Feb. 18. Forward questions to opinion editors Kevin Naff or Greg Scopino at 865-1828.

to the editor that have decided that everything Mr. Zellen said is hogwash. The letters bring up numerous points that I would like to discuss.

Schedule: Two years ago, Bruce Parkhill accused Notre Dame of having a schedule catered to a twenty win season. If this year's mens schedule isn't catered to a twenty win season, please show me one that is. Be thankful we are not in the Big Ten, or for that matter in the Atlantic 10. Right now the Big Ten is one of the top three basketball conferences in the country. The Big Ten has four teams in the top 15 in the Associated Press poll.

The Atlantic 10 is no longer Temple and a bunch of teams. For proof of that, note that Massachusetts soundly defeated Oklahoma earlier this year. Also, with the highly competitive nature of the conference, it's nice to be on the outside looking in.

Graduation rates: So far, this maybe is Parkhill's biggest accomplishment at Penn State. Someone challenged Mr. Zellen to name another coach that has the same success rate as Parkhill. How about Mike Krzyzewski from Duke? While I don't have Coach K's graduation rates in front of me, but I can't help but think they are in the ninety percent range. Is he successful? You decide.

Lack of Tradition: This has been an excuse for poor recruiting. Granted, Penn State basketball doesn't create a lot of ooh's and aah's, but recruiting can still be strong. The Green Wave of Tulane is a prime example. Three years ago, Tulane wasn't allowed to have a basketball program. Now, Tulane is ranked 14th in the AP poll. Recruiting helped make this turnaround possible.

Peter Zellen has done more homework than people think. Forgive me, please, but I can't help agree that the basketball program has gone as far as it can go with Bruce Parkhill.

Donald Rinker
senior-meteorology

the daily Collegian

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Letters Policy: The Daily Collegian encourages comments on news coverage, editorial policy and University affairs. Letters must be typewritten, double-spaced and no longer than one and one-half pages. Forums must also be typewritten, double-spaced and no longer than three pages. Anyone interested in writing a forum should contact the opinion editors beforehand.

Students' letters should include semester standing, major and campus of the writer. Letters from alumni should include the major and year of graduation of the writer. All writers should provide their address and phone number for verification of the letter. Letters should be signed by no more than two people. Names may be withheld on request.

The Collegian reserves the right to edit letters for length and to reject letters if they are libelous or do not conform to standards of good taste. Because of the number of letters received, the Collegian cannot guarantee publication of all the letters it receives. Letters may also be selected for publication in The Weekly Collegian. All letters received become the property of Collegian Inc.

Letters and forums from University Park and State College: Please deliver any submissions in person at the office of The Daily Collegian, 123 S. Burrows St. All authors must be present with picture identification — either University ID or photo driver's license — when presenting the letter or forum.

Mail other letters to: The Daily Collegian, 123 S. Burrows St., University Park, Pa. 16801-3882.

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Childhood friend illustrates the true spirit of marathon

This weekend, one of Penn State's most extraordinary events is going to take place. It has received national attention, been appreciated by many, and taken over the schedules of hundreds of involved students.

I'm talking of course, about the Interfraternity Council/Panhellenic Dance Marathon.

For those not familiar with the event, the marathon is a 48-hour fund raiser for the Four Diamonds Fund, an organization that helps children with cancer. Each year the amount of money raised has gotten larger and larger until it seems like the people involved become obsessed with breaking every record ever set.

The whole event started with one child. Christopher R. Millard died of cancer when he was 14 in 1972. He wrote a story called "The Four Diamonds", which later became the name for the fund-raising group. That was back in 1972 when I was only one year old. Obviously at that point I had no comprehension of what

My Opinion

Kim Felts



sickness meant, especially when it dealt with children.

But unfortunately, it didn't take me long to learn.

Six years after that, in the middle of first grade, I had to go into a children's hospital for a neck operation. I don't really remember any fear when I was entering the hospital because it was unknown and the check-ups there hadn't been bad. After all, it was a children's hospital, so they were careful to make things as fun as possible. I don't even remember that much

fear while I was actually there. It was when I was home again that I remember being afraid.

During my short stay in the hospital, I made a friend who touched my heart and who has since failed to let it go. Her name was Amber. She had long, straight blond hair and a goofy-looking, but kind smile. She was thin and very frail.

I have other memories of Amber that aren't so fond. I can remember hearing her whimpering in pain as nurses picked her up out of bed and into her wheelchair and her red-eyes when she would come over to me afterward. She would never let me see her actually cry though, she was too worried that I would become homesick or scared. Me, a naive kid who was only there for four days. And Amber, a terminally-ill girl who lived her life in and out of hospitals far away from her home in Virginia.

Amber made those days some of the most enjoyable of my life. We used to go into a long hallway where I would jump onto the back of her

"We used to go into a long hallway where I would jump onto the back of her wheelchair and we would go careening down the hallway together until a nurse came out and told us we shouldn't be doing that in our condition."

wheelchair and we would go careening down the hallway together until a nurse came out and told us we shouldn't be doing that in our condition. What condition? We were kids! Causing a commotion was what we were supposed to do and nothing was going to stop us.

It wasn't until I was home that I realized something did stop Amber. While I went home to all my get-well cards and special treatment, Amber was in the hospital without me. She still slept behind the taunt, crisp white curtains, still poked around in her wheelchair, still got shots three times a day.

As a seven-year-old, I didn't really understand.

After my surgery, I went back several times for check-ups and each time I thought of her. I always hoped I would pass her in the halls or get up the guts to ask if I could see her, but I never did. A few months went by, maybe a year, and I remember begging my mom to find out how she was. The feeling in my stomach when she answered me was unforgettable.

It was the first time I had to deal with the death of a friend.

To this day, I have no idea what was wrong with Amber, but in a way I don't even need to know. There is no sickness that hits a child that hurts less than any other. And even if my memory is starting to get a little

foggy, Amber has become almost a symbol in my mind, to occasionally prick my conscious.

I still have a picture of her and when I look at it I see the images of the kids at marathon in my mind. Many of them could be in a worse situation than Amber, yet somehow, they still can smile.

Perhaps you have never taken marathon seriously before or maybe it wasn't clear that it's not just a two-day free-for-all for lunatics who like standing up for two days straight. But this year, please, make an effort to realize the impact of what is being done.

If you're walking by White Building this weekend, stop by and say a word of encouragement to the participants — that's all they need to make this weekend really make a difference.

I'll be there, and Amber, this one's for you.

Kim Felts is a junior majoring in journalism and a Tuesday columnist for The Daily Collegian.