

OPINION

THE DAILY
Collegian

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Letters

We want to hear your comments on our coverage, editorial decisions and the Penn State community.

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collegianletters@psu.edu

■ **Online**
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■ **Postal mail/in person**
123 S. Burrows St.
State College, PA 16801

Letters should be about 200 words. Student letters should include class year, major and campus. Letters from alumni should include year of graduation. All writers should provide their address and phone number for verification. Letters should be signed by no more than two people. Members of organizations must include their titles if the topic they write about is connected with the aim of their groups. The Collegian reserves the right to edit letters. The Collegian cannot guarantee publication of all letters it receives. Letters chosen also run on The Daily Collegian Online and may be selected for publication in The Weekly Collegian. All letters become property of Collegian Inc.

EDITORIAL: VICE PRESIDENT BIDEN

Students should heed message

This afternoon, Vice President Joe Biden will speak on campus in what is expected to be an event exciting student participation in the upcoming election.

While he is expected to rally support for Senate candidate Joe Sestak, D-Pa., and Democratic gubernatorial candidate Dan Onorato, Biden's visit symbolizes Penn State's overall importance on the political map.

Because Penn State represents a large youth

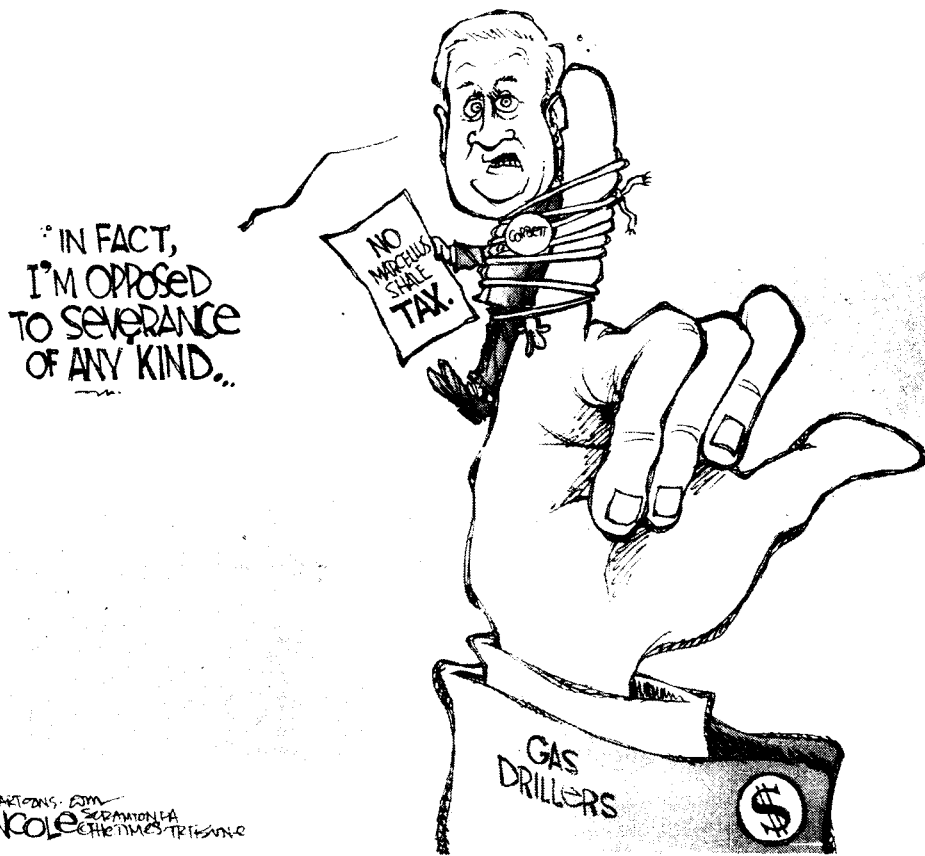
population within a swing state, students should voice their opinions to Biden while they have the opportunity.

Whether they agree or disagree with his political views, students should show their interest by listening in on the vice president's speech and taking his call to the voting booths to heart.

Biden's visit also serves as a reminder that midterm elections are important. Non-presidential elections typically see

low turnout for Penn State students.

But the election in November will determine how this state and country operate for the next four years. Students who care about the amount of funding Penn State receives from the state or expressed anger when the Pennsylvania budget didn't get passed for 100 days in 2009 should remember those issues when contemplating their participation in this midterm election.



A LITTLE SPIT AND POLISH AND YOU'LL NEVER KNOW PRESIDENT OBAMA INHERITED THIS MESS FROM US!



DADT betrays founding principles

By Michael Oplinger

OUR forefathers wrote: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

Those 13 simple yet powerful words from the second sentence of the Declaration of Independence established America as a new, unparalleled country that believes in equality.

One of the most famous phrases in American history, the phrase gave us the foundation for a nation that would be built on tolerance.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

Unless those men happen to love other men, as evidenced by the filibuster of the legislation to repeal the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy.

While the "men" referenced in the Declaration of Independence literally meant only males at the time, legislation was eventually passed to expand the term to include women and people of all races.

But, according to Congress, gay soldiers — the very people who defend our freedoms — are not equal to other soldiers because of their sexual orientation.

The "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy gets it half right. Military superiors are not allowed to question the sexuality of soldiers. Of course, this makes sense in regards to privacy and because it's of no concern to

anyone. If a soldier follows orders and is deemed a good soldier, there should be no issues, regardless of sexual orientation.

The "Don't Tell" part of the policy is where rights violations occur. Gay soldiers must hide their true identities and personalities to protect their jobs. Soldiers who admit to being gay can be fired for that reason only. Since 1993, the year the policy was implemented, the military has discharged more than 13,000 soldiers for being openly gay or suspected of being gay, according to reports published in The Boston Globe and The Guardian.

While the repeal is important to the achievement of equal rights in America, the legislative process of the repeal represents the larger overall problems of the current government.

In an era of partisanship, the right of gay soldiers to be open about themselves seems to be a topic that would avoid the conflict between parties.

Yet Republicans in the Senate continue to deny soldiers this right by filibustering the bill. This action seems puzzling coming from the party that claims to be determined to restoring the values the country was founded on. Those original values, as stated in the Declaration of Independence and Constitution, include equality and freedom for all.

The country's founding values apparently only apply to a select group of people.

The partisan nature of Congress can be seen in Republican Sen. Susan Collins' support of the filibuster despite

her feelings that "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" is unfair and immoral.

She simply toed the party line. But Collins justified the blocking of the repeal due to the action of Democratic Sen. Harry Reid, who wanted to limit the number of amendments the Republicans could place on the legislation. Reid's action shows more governing incompetence by the Democrats, who have allowed themselves to be influenced by Republicans despite a Democratic majority in Congress. Given Congress' inability to agree on even the most basic civil rights issues, the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" seems to be on hold.

However, there are signs that steps are being made in the direction of equal rights. Flying under the radar of the larger scale debate last week, a federal judge ruled that Margaret Witt, a flight nurse in the Air Force who was discharged for being gay, should be reinstated.

Anecdotal evidence such as Witt's case suggests that the courts will slowly overturn "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." Equality will most likely be achieved.

But Congress will have missed an enormous opportunity to make a statement. A statement almost as powerful as "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal." A statement that Congress supports the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the country's founding documents.

Michael Oplinger is a senior majoring in media studies and political science and is the Daily Collegian's Tuesday columnist. His e-mail is mjo5071@psu.edu.

LETTERS

Sports teach college students what they can't learn in class

Regarding Monday's letter, "Philanthropy Squandered on Sport," Mr. Spiegler's short-sightedness is very disappointing.

A certain Joe Paterno would likely disagree with his opinion on the educational value of sport. Perhaps there is no better vehicle than team athletics for young men and women to learn valuable skills such as teamwork, leadership, work ethic, personal accountability and honesty.

As a successful, practicing attorney in Pittsburg, I dare say that the things I have learned from both watching and participating in team sports have proven equally valuable to me and my career as those I learned in the classroom or the library.

I heartily commend the Pegulas for their unparalleled generosity. I fully expect the \$88 million donated to the new NCAA hockey program to generate 10 times that amount for "traditional" education at our beloved university.

Chadd C. Collin
Class of 2006

Ticket-holding students need to ticketgate less, support the team

It is really beginning to grind my gears that a great number of students can't be bothered to put down the Natural Light and Vladimir vodka for a few hours and take advantage of the fantastic opportunity you have to use your tickets and cheer on the Nittany Lion football team. It's absolutely pathetic, disgraceful and embarrassing to see a huge, vacuous section of seats completely empty until the first half is nearly over, and even then it's sparsely populated. You like to think that you're the best student section in the nation? What a joke. Showing up and being loud for a game or two each season is fair-weather fandom at its finest.

Not a year goes by without hearing verbal and written complaints from students about how they're not allotted enough tickets by the university, that it's not fair that the donors and alumni get so many more tickets, that students deserve more, and various other forms of baseless whining. Well, maybe you would get more respect if you proved that you actually deserve it. Until then, I am in full support of continuing to cut the number of student tickets available, or increase the price so that those who are lucky enough to receive them actually feel compelled to show up and support the team.

Yes, games like Kent State and Temple don't carry much cachet, but as students you only have a very limited number of games you can attend during your tenure at Penn State. For many of us alumni, these are some of our best memories — memories that are much more cherished than blacking out in the parking lot after a dozen games of beer pong.

So show up, be loud, be proud, and if you don't, please save your breath on the whining about not getting enough tickets. There are plenty of us in the public who would gladly pay full price for season tickets, and the athletic department would gladly accept the extra revenue.

Andrew Smith
Class of 2002

Student section dearth shows disgrace for the 'great show'

As an alumnus, I am embarrassed that the students cannot fill their area, and they will be getting more seats next year? Large areas of empty seats does not look good on TV, and make the "great show" look bogus. Please support your team!

Eugene Risser
Class of 1969

blog lines

CAN YOU DIG IT?

Downward spiral

The Penn State women's volleyball team (11-2) is No. 4 in the latest AVCA Coaches Poll — its lowest ranking since November 2006.

The slide comes only three days after the then-No. 2 Nittany Lions fell to then-No. 9 Illinois, which snapped Penn State's streak of 65-straight wins against Big Ten opponents.

In this week's poll, Stanford (11-0) is the unanimous No. 1 team in the country, gathering all 60 first-place votes...

Emily Kaplan
Women's volleyball reporter

FOOTBLOG

Latest on the Lions

-Right now, the biggest concern for the Nittany Lion offense is its struggles in the redzone. The Lions have moved the ball well, but haven't been able to turn that into touchdowns.

-Evan Royster had a career day, rushing for 187 yards while silencing his critics.

-Collin Wagner may be the Lions' most improved player this year. He went 5 for 6 to tie a school record for most field goals in a game.

-Royster will have to adapt to a season that hasn't gone as planned for the senior running back.

Football reporters

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