

Legislature addresses teen sexuality

Senator plans to introduce bill seeking higher age of consent

By SANDY WALL
Staff Writer

A bill to be introduced by Sen. Richard Chalk, R-Guilford, could raise the age of sexual consent from 13 to 16 in North Carolina.

"I would hope that by raising the age of consent, it would discourage children from becoming sexually active," Chalk said in a telephone interview Thursday.

A draft bill written by Chalk's staff met with much negative statewide reaction. The draft bill read: "It is unlawful to engage . . . in a sex act with a minor."

Some people had concluded Chalk wanted to make sexual activity between those under 18 illegal. Those people misinterpreted his original intentions, Chalk said.

"My intent is to raise the age of consent. I think it's preposterous that the press overreacted. I'm not proposing we get out and arrest those

involved."

The bill would set a community standard as well as discourage children from becoming sexually active before they are ready, said Chalk.

"The 13-, 14-, 15-year-old children are not capable of making the decisions concerning their sexuality. I don't think they're old enough to be aware of the consequences of their actions."

Raising the age of consent would send a message to young people, he said.

An "empty" bill that would allow the criminal code to be changed by the General Assembly was sent to the Senate Thursday and will be introduced and sent to committee Monday, he said.

An age of consent bill will be substituted for the "empty" bill once it is in committee, and the proposal will be debated then.

Report requests more funding to battle teenage pregnancy

By SANDY WALL
Staff Writer

A report submitted to the General Assembly's Adolescent Pregnancy Study Commission calls for more state funding for programs that combat the problem of teenage pregnancy.

"There are currently 34 projects funded by the state legislature," said Chris Troxler, vice president of the Human Services Institute in Greensboro.

His group was employed by the state in 1988 to investigate the effectiveness of the 34 state-funded adolescent pregnancy prevention programs.

The group submitted its report to the Study Commission in October 1988.

The study concluded that many of the 34 pilot programs were effective in preventing teenage pregnancy and should be funded by the General

Assembly, Troxler said.

"We felt many of the programs deserved to be funded," he said.

The group's research team, which included two experts in the field of adolescent pregnancy, visited each of the 34 sites and ranked each program on its effectiveness, said Keith Howell, a member of the research team.

The research team also submitted an 11-point set of criteria on how programs should be judged, he said.

Howell, who is a professor of public health education at UNC-Greensboro, said the most effective programs utilized different segments of the community, including schools, health departments and social services departments.

Troxler said his conclusions were that the state should seriously consider funding many of these programs.

"We told the legislators which ones," he said.

North trial nears end as defense completed

From Associated Press reports

WASHINGTON — Oliver North concluded his defense Thursday after six grueling days on the witness stand, testifying he felt he had become the fall guy in the Iran-Contra affair when he heard himself described as "the only one who knew what was going on."

Attorney Brendan Sullivan announced soon after North left the stand, "That concludes the defense," signaling that the 11-week-old trial was nearing an end.

U.S. District Judge Gerhard Gesell said he hoped to have closing arguments on Monday. Instructions to the jurors and their deliberations would follow.

During four days of tough cross-examination, North denied prosecution contentions that he lied about his Iran-Contra efforts and personally profited from some of them. He said he had explicit authorization

from his superiors — and, he assumed, from President Reagan — for his actions and didn't take a dime to which he wasn't entitled.

He testified Thursday that two days before the Nov. 25, 1986, press conference, in which Reagan and Attorney General Edwin Meese took part, North had been interviewed for four hours by Meese and aides.

He is accused of lying during that interview. But he testified he told them readily about "the secret within the secret" — that profits from arms sales to Iran had been funneled to the guerrillas fighting the leftist government of Nicaragua. Therefore, he said, he was shocked to learn that he might be the target of a criminal investigation.

What he heard as he watched the press conference on television, North said, "was inconsistent with what I told the attorney general two days before."

Meese said North's boss, John

Poindexter, had known of the money diversion but hadn't approved it — when, in fact, he had.

North testified, "It was very clear to me that this was part of pointing the finger at Ollie North. He was 'the only one who knew what was going on' which, I must say, is the way it was supposed to be." North's firing and Poindexter's resignation as Reagan's national security adviser were announced by Meese that day.

Both at the trial, which began Jan. 31, and at congressional hearings nearly two years ago, North said he had assumed while he was directing covert aid to the Contras that he would have to take the rap if word got out about the help, which was provided at a time official U.S. aid was banned.

Prosecutor John Kecker's final questioning of North concerned two letters he wrote in December 1986 to a contractor who had installed a \$13,800 security system at North's home.

The letters were backdated to make it appear North had intended to pay for the system, which had been paid for by retired Maj. Gen. Richard Secord, whom North had recruited to run the Contra supply effort. The

letters are the basis for one charge, that North accepted an illegal gratuity.

North was still in the Marine Corps, he said, and didn't want to fabricate the letters at work because he didn't want the Marines involved in "that type of cover-up." Therefore, he testified, he went to a catalog store to write the letters on display typewriters.

Another of the 12 charges against North is that he obstructed a presidential inquiry by lying to Meese and by altering, destroying, concealing and removing documents from the National Security Council office where he worked.

Relying on notes taken at the Nov. 23, 1986, meeting by Meese's chief of staff John Richardson, Kecker led North through facts that appeared to have been omitted by him in the Meese meeting. North said that the prosecutor was basing his questions on a "very cryptic description of four hours of conversation."

He said he could not remember details of the interview. But he also said, "I did the very best I could in telling the truth and answering their questions. . . . I have told you when I didn't tell the truth."

Congress appears closer to approving Contra aid

From Associated Press reports

WASHINGTON — Congress moved Thursday toward approval of a \$49.7 million package of non-military aid to the Nicaraguan Contras, even as a critic said the bipartisan compromise with President Bush "hinges on winks, nods and handshakes."

Members of both the Senate and the House cautioned that attempts to amend or derail the agreement would, if successful, represent a body blow to hopes of future bipartisanship on foreign policy issues.

The plan, reached after more than two months of negotiations, would provide at least a temporary truce in the war that has been waged between the White House and Capitol Hill since then-President Reagan moved in 1981 to arm the Contras as a force to battle Nicaragua's leftist Sandinista government.

Indeed, many of the suspicions and much of the distrust that characterized past debates over aid to the Contras were still visible as both chambers opened debate Thursday.

Some members clung to hopes more arms could be sent to the Contras; others said all forms of aid, logistical as well as military, should be ended.

The compromise plan would give the Contras food, clothing and medical assistance to sustain them through next February. But it would bar aid for weapons and ammunition to renew the guerrillas' fight against the government.

Supporters of the compromise said it would put the Sandinista leadership under intense international pressure to keep their promises, permit free and fair national elections next February, and observe the other "deadlines for democracy" set by

agreements among Central American presidents over the last two years.

In the Senate, Majority Leader George Mitchell, D-Maine, urged Republicans not to offer amendments, which he said could upset the delicate balance represented by the compromise plan.

"President Bush telephoned me this morning, urged me to move this legislation promptly . . . and made clear his opposition to any amendments to the legislation," Mitchell said.

He asked that "the president's urgent desire for this legislation be taken into account by members of his own party."

As debate opened on the House floor, Republican Leader Bob Michel of Illinois, supporting the agreement, told his colleagues that what "lacks in perfection it makes up in real effective help for the cause of progress and democracy in Nicaragua and Central America."

"I wish we could do better but as legislators it's not given to us to act only when conditions are perfect," Michel said.

But Rep. Thomas Foglietta, D-Pa., said continued support of any kind for the Contras would derail the diplomatic peace process, keep the Contras in place as a fighting force and not integrate them into Nicaraguan society.

"This accord hinges on winks, nods and handshakes," he said. "I'd really like to say I trust this new administration, the Bush administration, for reintegration of the Contras. But how can I when I read . . . that then-Vice President Bush played a role in supplying covert aid to the Contras?"

Rep. Henry Hyde, R-Ill., a long-standing Contra supporter, said he would go along with the compromise.

Union

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saying 'don't do this' and 'don't do that.'"

The Union receives money from two pools of student fees, Copeland said. One fee covers programming at the Union, and it goes to the Union Activities Board for events such as concerts, lectures and movies. The board receives about \$150,000 each year.

The other funds the Union receives are used to pay off the bond debt left from building the Union and to cover operating expenses.

This costs each student \$60 per year

for a total gross of about \$1.3 million per year, Copeland said. The money pays for utilities and salaries for student employees and staff, supplies and renovations, he said.

The money is also used to continue payment on the bond debt. It will not be paid off until the year 2007, Copeland said.

Before 1969, the Student Union was housed in Graham Memorial. The new Union was constructed in 1968 and an addition was built in 1981 to house the offices of student publications, Copeland said.

Testmakers praise changes in format of LSAT sections

By CHUCK WILLIAMS
Staff Writer

The Law School Admissions Test has undergone a great deal of change recently, and testmakers say it will make the test a better predictor of law school performance.

The changes will first appear when the LSAT is administered on June 12, 1989. About 130,000 students are expected to take the test this year.

The primary change was the elimination of a section called "Facts and Issues," which tested memorization as opposed to critical thinking skills. Testmakers say the section was easily coached and students depended on memorization strategies too much.

"The section was fairly formulaic, and it was skewing the results of the test," said Bob Verini, a senior researcher at the Kaplan Education Center in New York City.

"They (testmakers) dropped the Facts and Issues section and added 10 minutes to each section. I think the test overall is fairer now and will reward the students with thinking skills."

Dropping the section was a good move, said Elizabeth Furr, assistant dean for admissions and student affairs at UNC law school.

"It was probably wise to get rid of that section since it was easily coachable," she said.

The test had six 30-minute sections with a total of 120 multiple-choice questions before the changes, Furr said. After the changes, there will be four 45-minute sections and a total of 100 multiple-choice questions.

The changes could make the tests easier in some ways but harder in others.

"Since many of the Facts and

Issues questions were easy, they (testmakers) have to replace them with easy questions," Verini said. "On the other hand, it may be harder for non-test-wise students who won't recognize the easy questions."

Both the old and new tests have questions that can throw some people who would do well in law school, said Patricia Krebs, director of the Princeton Review. "It's made it harder for students who have trouble with reading."

The test is scored on a scale of 10 to 48, and the scale is based on the number of questions answered correctly. The scoring system will remain the same on the new test.

UNC Law School has a median score of 38 for in-state students and 39 for out-of-staters, said Furr. She stressed that these figures were based on past years, and this year could be different. GPA and extracurricular activities are also considered in admissions.

The LSAT probably counts more in law school admissions than the SAT does in undergraduate admissions, Krebs said.

Many students take courses which offer strategies and tips for taking the LSAT. Kaplan Educational Center and Princeton Review both offer courses in LSAT preparation.

"We focus on the intellectual and psychological aspects of the test, as well as offering strategies and tactics," Verini said. "We also try and get students to relax when taking the test."

Princeton Review has achieved great success with coaching, Krebs said.

"We have techniques for helping students break the problems down."

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