

OPPOSING FUNDING...

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is one of compassion and understanding. Now, let's look at exactly what my positions are not only on CGLA funding but also on Campus Watch.

In the book The Campus at Chapel Hill, Dr. John Allcott states that "the University was not located in an established North Carolina town, not even in Raleigh, especially created as the seat of state government. Instead, the legislators envisaged the University at its own special place, the seat of higher learning for the state." The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill was created as an autonomous community of scholars and students. This being its purpose, both the faculty and the students had a tremendous influence on the molding of a great institution of higher education. Throughout the history of the university, students have believed in self government and have taken on such projects as the renovation of Old East and Old West with their own money, the collection of books for a library, and the construction of a ballroom for student use--and all of that in the 19th century.

As a leader in student government, it disturbs me that a group such as Campus Watch wishes to ignore historical tradition and attempt to wrench away the prerogative of the Student Congress allocation of student activity fees.

A gruelling process. The budget process is open to all officially recognized organizations on campus. In

order to be funded, an organization must gain student government recognition, deliver its budget and request for funding to the Finance Committee chairperson, present its budget and request for funding to the finance committee, and finally, appear before the entire Congress on budget day. Student Congress then carefully considers the proposals of each group before it decides to which group it will allocate the fees of students. Students allocate the money of their fellow students whom they represent.

A viable democratic process. The Student Congress is elected by the students and all students are represented by a member of Student Congress. Every student has the right to vote for a member of the Congress.

Confidence in the system. I believe that, as students, we must stand in support of our student constitution. We must not give up on the autonomy that we have over our money. We must fight against Campus Watch and organizations which share its goal--to take away the rights of students.

Having considered my stand on Campus Watch, we should now consider my position on funding of CGLA by student activities fees vis-a-vis the Student Congress budget process.

Since I believe that CGLA performs many useful tasks for the Gay and Lesbian community on this campus, I support the organization. Some examples of CGLA's meritorious purposes include the dissemination of information about AIDS and support groups provided for members of the homosexual community. Although the CGLA does provide beneficial services to the campus community, however, as an organization that furthers homosexuality and homosexual ideas on campus I do not believe that it should be funded with student activities fees.

I am in favor, however, of the formation of a Sexual Awareness Committee in the Executive Branch whose purpose would be to distribute information about AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. This committee should be composed of both homosexuals and heterosexuals. The committee should research sexually transmitted diseases and form a plan of attack to make the student body aware of the prevalence of these diseases, the ways in which they can be contracted, and the ways students can protect themselves.

We as a campus community should debate the merits of CGLA funding, but once the debate is over and the votes have been cast, let's put the past behind us. We must not allow our stand on this issue to lead us to a hatred of our opponents. Unfortunately, there are many students on our campus who hate homosexuals. There are too many occasions in which people are motivated by hate. We must fight hate wherever it is found and wherever it affects.

You see, there was one night last spring semester that I will never forget. I was eating dinner with one of my dearest friends. After dinner, as we were talking, his voice changed from his usually friendly, casual tone to one more serious. He told me he was gay. At that moment I was swept with a compassion that can only be described as supernatural. I promised myself that I would work against hate on our campus. When I look at the leaders of Campus Watch I see a group of people who hate homosexuals. When I look around our campus I see many people who hate homosexuals. No, I do not endorse the funding of CGLA, but I do stand firm in my belief that all students should look at one another from a view of compassion and understanding and never, never one of hate.

--Gene Davis