**BOARD EDITORIALS** 

# **NECESSARY DEBATE**

If Student Congress is to hold a referendum on the issue of stipends for student leaders, it should come in February — not in a couple of weeks.

Congress meeting, where representatives will vote on whether to put the issue of stipends for student govern-ment leaders on a referendum before the student body. The fundamental question is simple: Should people such as the student body president receive a few hun-

dred dollars per month as payment for all their work?
But the debate about stipends has turned out to But the debate about stipends has turned out to be more divisive than expected — for the campus, for the Congress and for The Daily Tar Heel editorial board — and the campus needs a full debate to put this matter to rest. Representatives ought to vote down this proposal — and back one that calls for a referendum in February's campus elections.

In an Oct. 4 editorial, this page came out against a referendum on stipends. And we still have major reservations about nutting a rather obscure issue

reservations about putting a rather obscure issue before an uninformed student body.

But the issue has proven more contentious than we originally believed. Student groups, columnists and Student Body President Seth Dearmin all have

ometimes, the simplest questions have the hardest answers.

The fierce debate helped assuage one of our major concerns — that students would not be informed. about an issue they don't think about on a daily, or even yearly, basis. If the campus debates an issue, that will serve to inform students, who then should be able to make a good decision on the issue.

That won't happen, however, if Congress gets its way and puts the issue to a vote Nov. 1. It's simply too short a period to have the debate this campus needs

in order to wisely pass judgment on the issue.

If we give ourselves until February, we will have time to have a full, healthy talk about the issue — one that includes all students, as well as those who would like to lead student government next year. The DTH likely would give the issue more front-page play, according to Editor Ryan Tuck. Advocates on both sides would use the time to preach their messages to

passers-by in the Pit and to put fliers on campus. Our Oct. 4 editorial supported stipends, and we're sticking by that stance. But we don't want to jam that down anybody's throat now; we just want to be part of a good debate. Let's not end it prematurely.

### GETTING IT DONE

The campus community's response to the crisis in Sudan is a good example of what can happen when students favor action over talk.

"t's not often that a student group gets enough support — and has enough dedication — to effect real change.

But it appears that Students United for Darfur Awareness Now, one of UNC's fastest growing groups, is doing just that by bringing attention to an issue that otherwise might have escaped students'

consciousness. It deserves accolades.

The group has taken it upon itself to make UNC more aware of a situation that former Secretary of State Colin Powell described as "genocide" — the mass murders in the Darfur region of Sudan that too eerily echo similar killing sprees in Cambodia, Kosovo and Rwanda. But it deserves real credit for not stopping there — and recognizing that in some cases, awareness just isn't enough.

For example, the group recently held a fast in which hundreds of students participated. But that's just symbolism — which is why the "Stand for Sudan" event ended with 300 phone calls for the U.S. State Department calling for action in Darfur. No matter how much students talk about ending genocide - or no matter how many average citizens watched last year's stunning "Hotel Rwanda," a film about that

country's mass executions - the real change comes

through action.

The trick is for SUDAN to continue raising a call to action, particularly because the outside world has done little to address the problem.

The United Nations needs to do more to provide both relief and security for refugee camps. As the world's pre-eminent humanitarian organization,

the U.N. mustn't repeat past mistakes that allowed bureaucracy to trump human life.

Our own government has been sitting idle as well. And with military forces engaged in a series of wars, it will take a strong public outcry to make stopping the Darfur attrocities a priority. Darfur atrocities a priority.
You can provide that outcry. Rep. David Price has

a Raleigh office with a local number: 859-5999. Sen. Elizabeth Dole can be reached at 856-4630. Call Sen. Richard Burr at (800) 685-8916.

Sure, we can't all fly a plane full of relief aid to refugees or drop a bomb on marauders raping and killing their way through western Sudan. But SUDAN's efforts reflect a truth: We can all take two minutes out of our lives to do something about the horrible plight of our fellow human beings.

# T EVEN

The most important day of the year for students just passed \_\_\_\_ Late Night With Roy showed the basketball team will be just fine.

f you took to Franklin Street on April 5 to toast a national championship — and who among us expected when Raymond Felton, Rashad McCants a national championship — and who among us didn't? — then you already know that the men's basketball squad season officially kicked off its 2005-06 season this weekend.

It should be a heel of a time.

We say that even as we know things could get a little testy in Tar Heel nation this year. As Late Night With Roy demonstrated, there's a lot of talent on this year's squad, but any team that lost its top seven scorers and that includes more freshmen than upperclassmen

could be in for a rough ride. We say that even as we grow giddy about next year's recruiting class, which now includes the No. 1 point guard, shooting guard and power forward in the high school class of 2006 — as well as the No. 3 and No. 13 centers.

We say that even as Coach K's Dookies get picked

No. 1 in almost every preseason roundup.

We say that, you see, because Tar Heel basketball returned this April — and it's not going anywhere

Say what you will about this year's freshman-laden squad; it's still led by Roy Williams, the man who

and Sean May first arrived in Blue Heaven.

It has players such as Reyshawn Terry and Quentin

Thomas who still are realizing their potential. It has a leader — and a sick dunker — in senior David Noel, the former walk-on whose turn it is to shine. And it has five freshmen, including three McDonald's All-Americans who Coach Williams will have ready for the spotlight.

Make no mistake about it: Bobby Frasor is not Brian Morrison. Tyler Hansbrough is not Neil Fingleton. Nobody on this team is Brian Bersticker. And even if they were, Williams would have them ready to play beyond their potential.

Nobody expects this team to win the national championship. But that doesn't mean it won't try, and we feel safe in saying that students, faculty, staff and all of Chapel Hill will fall in love with the squad the first time it shows some heart and knocks off a much-favored opponent.

When the Tar Heels hoisted the trophy in St. Louis this April, UNC basketball returned to the glory of the Dean Smith days. And regardless of who's on his roster, Williams will make sure the program stays there.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The above editorials are the opinions solely of The Daily Tar Heel Editorial Board and were reached after open debate. The board consists of four board members, the associate opinion editor, the opinion editor and the DTH editor. The 2005-06 DTH editor decided not to vote on the board and not to write board editorials. Address concerns to Public Editor Elliott Dube at dubee@email.unc.edu.

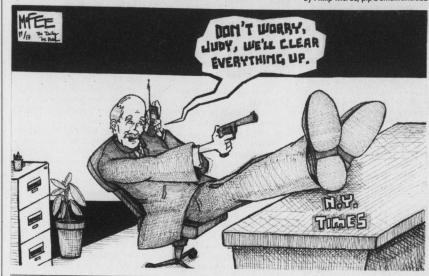
FROM THE DAY'S NEWS

"Students need to think about what the towns around them look and feel like. ... All of that is influenced by voting."

JACQUELYN GIST, CARRBORO ALDERMAN

**EDITORIAL CARTOON** 

By Philip McFee, pip@email.unc.edu



# A referendum on stipends is just a dirty political trick

originally made a rule not to delve into the weekly business of Student Congress in this column. I probably spent more time there than I should have as an undergraduate, so since I left I have tried to stay out of it.

This week, however, I decided

to provide some insight on what will go on at Congress before it happens — unlike The Daily Tar Heel, which often reports on what happened after the fact. (I just couldn't help myself.)

Tuesday, Congress will consider an initiative to eliminate any kind of student government stipends.
So I thought I would inform you

how livid you, the student body, are about Student Body President Seth Dearmin's \$300 per month stipend before others do. Because that's what Congress will say. argument you will hear from proponents tomorrow night will center on giving the people the chance to decide such an impor-

tant issue. Any legislator who recognizes this legislation for the farce that it is will then be verbally berated with charges of snobbery. These arguments in favor of referenda have become so commonplace that they were condensed into an e-mail and sent across the College Republicans listserv in order to trump up this supposed controversy and convince Congress of its broad support.

The stipend issue itself is full of

nuanced arguments, an analysis of which I will leave for another time. As Congress will hopefully realize tomorrow night, that is not the issue before it. The issue is whether there is a need to put the sue of stipends on a referendum before the student body

The argument will give Congress members the ability to grandstand during the debate Tuesday on this manufactured issue — keeping student groups waiting for a vote on their funding needs, probably all night.



**MATT LILES** HERE'S TO DOWN HOME

Though direct democracy is embedded in the foundation of my political being, I have a hard time applying it to this case. It is difficult for me to recognize the upwelling of grass-roots student iscord when the very petition that is supposed to indicate it was started and circulated by some members of Congress who are try-ing to flaunt their power or settle childish political scores. So in the face of an argument that will quote Jefferson and Plato

about the nature of democracy, I would like to highlight an argument against putting stipends on the ballot — and the possible motives behind Congress members' willingness to do so.

Most importantly, there is not a dire need to amend the student constitution in order to limit or negate the stipends of student leaders — because Congress already can. Article I, Section 4(P) of the Student Code gives Congres the power to "establish remuneration for all Student Government officers it deems appropriate." At its annual budget meeting

every year, Student Congress can zero out the line items for executive branch stipends. So the question is: Why, in this case, do ve need a referendum?

Basically, the answer lies

in the procedural minutiae of student government. Currently, Congress only has the power to nix stipends for one school year; in order to get rid of the payments altogether, it must amend the student constitution. And in order to do that, it must put the

question before the student body in a referendum.

The idea is that no incarnation

of Congress, which turns members over every semester, will be able to change a central tenet of student governance — such as, for example, keeping leadership positions accessible to people no matter their wealth. By putting a stipends referendum on the ballot for their own political purposes, that's what Congress members are doing.

A referendum carries a lot of responsibility, the least of which is educating the student body about the issue — because everyone votes, not just the students who certain members of Congress and the College Republicans could scare up. Changing our Student constitution is serious, and referenda to do so should be exercised

with great trepidation.

The proponents of the referendum will most likely accuse me of asserting that the electorate is too stupid to make this decision. They will be missing both the point of this column and referenda

I am not saying that all referen-da are bad or that the student body is stupid. I am saying that this referendum is. A fake controversy compounded by a loaded referendum is a bad idea.

So my point to Student Congress members is to do the job you were elected to do: make tough decisions and not just pass them on to the electorate. And my point to students is to get informed about issues like this before you sign a petition or end up voting on them

Look up your representatives at http://congress.unc.edu, and tell them what you think. We should never let the petty ambition of the few thwart the future opportunity

> Contact Matt Liles. a first-year law student, at limat@email.unc.edu.

### READERS' FORUM

#### Ticket distribution shouldn't sophomores. The Super Bowl will gift idea and making sure the idea the cla overlap with registration

TO THE EDITOR:

Sophomores who are looking forward to the first basketball games of the season might need to adjust their enthusiasm.

The first ticket distribution for this year's men's basketball games is at 7 a.m. on Oct. 29. Unfortunately, registration for sophomores also falls on Oct. 29 - only three hours later, at 10 a.m.

Sophomores will be forced to decide between more than calculus or physics that Saturday. They will be forced to choose: basketball or registration.

To some people, this decision is clear. But to the rest of us, it is not

Standing in line for tickets means getting the chance to see our team at the start of what will hopefully be a successful season. It means seeing our five freshmen in their first games and seeing our other five players show off their leadership.

It means watching UNC take on

Illinois, again.

If Justin Johnson, president of the Carolina Athletic Association, can change the date of the Duke ticket distribution for seniors because it fell on Super Bowl Sunday, he certainly should be able to change the first distribution for

begin at least six hours after distribution begins for seniors at noon. Registration will begin just three hours after distribution begins at

I don't aim to be just another annoying critic of the CAA, but if Johnson, a senior, aims to virtually exclude one-fourth of the under graduate population at UNC-CH. then I might just have to be.

> Clare Merlin Sophomore Psychology

#### **Potential gifts were unduly** criticized by editorial board

TO THE EDITOR:

Each year, the senior class president, vice president and marshals are charged with defining their class and leaving a legacy at the University. The class of 2006 marshals, with a lot of time and dedication, came up with three very good ideas. The criticism of these ideas, with no suggestions of better ones, undermines the work the students have done.

Divided into committees, the marshals of the fundraising committee spent the spring and summer researching ideas for the class gift.

This included meeting with faculty and staff across the campus, considering and examining each fell within the monetary realms of what the class could raise. As a whole, the class marshals selected from 10 choices the three that are up for a vote. The criticism of the gift selec-

tions proves that maybe the class needs to be educated, not only about the decision process but also about the gifts as well. For those who missed the gift expo detailing the gifts, here is what was presented.

The welcome sign off of Franklin Street is not "superfluous" but a needed and welcomed addition to campus. And much like the entry way on Cameron Avenue - the class gift of 1999 - it would add to

the beauty of the campus.

The advising endowment to help train faculty advisers is not 'throwing money at a problem" but is investing money in an area that is in need of help. There is no magic bullet to solve the problems of advising, but understand that a major "overhaul" can begin with a simple endowment.

And finally, the mural idea is one that would allow the class to have a say in what is depicted. It would be a piece of art that is original and creative and give the class a chance to leave its legacy here at Carolina.

The class of 2006 marshals did

a very good job in selecting gifts to present to the class, and I hope that

otes for the idea that speaks to it.

Katisha Newkirk Assistant Director of Annual Giving Carolina Annual Fund

#### Have some faith in Roy he knows what he's doing

TO THE EDITOR:

With "Late Night" having happened Friday, and the basketball buzz finally starting up around campus again, I have heard far too many people talking about another "eight and 20-esque"

I hear people commenting on how the five freshmen have to grow up immediately, how Wes Miller hopefully won't be another Brian Morrison and how Quentin Thomas needs to not this year resemble a "rabbit on speed" (as this paper so eloquently put it last

There is a shirt out there that I think has some pretty sound advice for the doubters. It says "In Roy We

As we either stay on the ship or jump off of it, save the criticisms for that other team eight miles down the road.

> Massie Minor Sophomore Undecided

### Speak Out

We welcome letters to the e writing, please follow these simple guidelines: Keep letters under 300 words. Type them. Date them. Sign them, make sure they're signed by no more than two people. If you're a student, include your year, major and phone number. Faculty and staff: Give us your department and phone number. The DTH edits for space, clarity, accuracy and vulgarity. Bring letters to our office at Suite 2409 in the Student Union, e-mail them to editdesk@unc.edu, or send them to P.O. Box 3257,

Chapel Hill, N.C., 27515. All letters also will appear in our blogs section.

### The Daily Tar Heel

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