

Congress passes bill to create grants

President Bush to sign bill today; benefits low-income students, raises interest rates

Justin Chapura
NEWS EDITOR

Students received a mixed blessing from Congress last Friday when it created new grants aimed at lower-income students, but some student interest groups contest that the bill will hurt students by raising interest rates.

The U.S. House passed the Deficit Reduction Act, which cuts \$39 billion in federal spending over five years, by cutting spending on programs such as Medicaid and federal subsidies on student loans. President Bush is expected to sign the bill as early as today.

One of the new grants underpinned by the bill

is the "SMART" grant, which would make Pell Grant-eligible juniors and seniors eligible for an additional \$4,000 per year. Those juniors and seniors would have to be pursuing degrees in math, science, engineering or a "foreign language critical to national security," said Andrea Baker, chief of staff for Senate

Majority Leader Bill Frist, R-Tenn.

In an interview with The Gamecock, Baker said the grant, a brainchild of Frist, was made possible by the money saved through the Deficit Reduction Act. The bill saves the federal government money by peeling some subsidies from private lenders who loan

money to college students.

"There are several kinds of loans you can get: public and private loans. (The federal government) can give subsidies to encourage companies to lend money," Baker said. "Over the years, those competitive, free-market lenders found ways

LOANS • 1

SG candidate allegedly breaks visitation policy

Maxcy Hall director says Steve Smith was warned not to enter dorm unescorted

Morgan Harris
THE GAMECOCK

Student Government Treasurer candidate Steve Smith has been consulted by the Elections Commission at least twice since the beginning of election season for breaking housing visitation policies in Maxcy College.

Smith has been accused of allegedly using his RHA identification card to gain access to the Honors freshman dormitory to hand out campaign paraphernalia and speak with students.

Visitation policy in Maxcy College says that a resident must sign in any non-resident and escort them in the building at all times.

According to current records, Smith has broken this policy at least four times, two of which have been documented by Maxcy's resident advisers.

On Jan. 29, an RA observed Smith and campaign manager Jonathan Ross in the building handing out T-shirts. When the RA on duty at Maxcy's front desk was questioned, he reported that Smith and Ross had not signed in, but had simply scanned their RHA access cards and entered the building. When

approached by the RA afterwards, Smith and Ross said that they had signed in.

The RA then asked Smith and Ross to leave. They complied and were seen entering and exiting other Horseshoe apartments where the visitation policy does not require an escort.

Charges were levied of breaking Election Code 411.26, which forbids distributing campaign materials before the election except in organization meetings. The charges were dismissed Monday, Feb. 6 due to a lack of evidence.

On a separate report, which cites "various" dates of incident, an RA observed Smith speaking with Maxcy residents. Smith was not signed in as a guest, nor was he escorted.

The incident was reported to Maxcy Hall Director Vicki Lark. According to the report, Lark said Smith "had been warned several times not to use his RHA-USC identification to enter Maxcy unescorted and passing the desk assistant by purporting to be a Maxcy resident."

The report continues, "Smith has been informed

VIOLATIONS • 4



Nick Esares / THE GAMECOCK

SG vice presidential candidate Ryan Holt, left, and presidential candidate Tommy Preston, look on during Tuesday night's debate in Calcott.

IT'S A DEBATE

SG executive candidates square off on campus issues

Justin Chapura
NEWS EDITOR

The eight candidates vying for positions in the Student Government Executive Council united for the first time Tuesday night to discuss their campaign platforms and answer questions from an assembled audience of about 40 students and RHA members.

It was their first debate of the election, which ends Monday and Tuesday with the two-day general election.

Treasurer candidate Steve Smith, a second-year math student, sketched a rough outline of a Student Government-run Web site that would function as a used textbook marketplace between students. Smith estimated a 25 percent reduction in used textbook costs when students are allowed to set their own prices for their books.

Candidate Jennifer Guest, a third-year math student, stressed the importance of making the CarolinaCard "better

than cash here (at USC)." She called for a system modeled after universities like Clemson, which allow students to purchase groceries and other amenities at nearby stores.

First-year philosophy student Brad Setzler said as treasurer he would work with the Faculty Senate to put all academic advisers through a training process to keep advisers from "putting students in classes they don't need to be in."

Under debate between the treasurer candidates was whether to allocate permanent funds to the Carolina Student Judicial Council, which handles student discipline reports and also coordinates events for Creed Week.

Guest was in favor of sparingly funding CSJC but "giving them what they need for (Creed) week," while Smith hinted a cutting Creed Week funding altogether, saying he suspected the effectiveness of

DEBATE • 4

MODIFIED VISITATION POLICY PASSES RHA SENATE

Hatie Boucher
THE GAMECOCK

Amid heated debate Tuesday night, the Residence Hall Association Senate passed legislation about an "improved" visitation policy.

RHA President Terrill Wilkins will present the legislation to the Housing department.

The legislation suggests revising the visitation policy known as "Plan C," which is used in freshman dorms to restrict guests of the opposite sex from being in the building from 2 a.m. until 10 a.m. Guests of the same sex are allowed to stay in the building for three consecutive days.

Under the legislation, visitation hours for all guests would be dictated by a roommate contract filled out by students living in the same room.

"Hopefully, Housing will approve it, and then we will be able to bring it to the Board of Trustees," said Wilkins, a third-year history student.

The Board of Trustees meets once a month and might delay reviewing the legislation because of its typically large meeting agenda. RHA is targeting the fall 2007 semester for the visitation policy to be updated.

RHA • 1



Vaughn Braxton / THE GAMECOCK

Michael Amiridis, chairman of USC's chemical engineering department, concluded the interview process that will select the college's dean. Amiridis presented a presentation titled "My Dream COEIT."

Another dean candidate finishes interview process

Jackie Alexander
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Dean candidate interviews for the College of Engineering and Information Technology concluded yesterday with Michael Amiridis, chairman of USC's chemical engineering department.

The dean hopeful presented his plan for the college to COEIT faculty and students Monday in Amoco Hall.

Amiridis said his dream engineering school "simply

has the best students in the university." Controlling admissions standards is one way of achieving this goal, Amiridis said. He said he understands the university must accept a range of students but that the engineering school should not have to enroll students with SAT scores below 1000.

Amiridis said the COEIT should use the South Carolina Honors College and recruit hand-in-hand with it.

"I'm not ready to hand

the Honors College to pre-med or liberal arts," Amiridis said of recruiting honors students.

Magellan Scholars, a new group of scholarship recipients focused on research, should be a target for COEIT, according to Amiridis. His goal is to have the highest number of Magellan Scholars of all the colleges.

Amiridis also said the college should assist students with job placement after graduation.

"Our obligation to the

students does not end when they take their last courses," Amiridis said.

Leading in the quality and productivity of the COEIT faculty is another of Amiridis' goals.

"We're climbing a steep hill towards high quality," Amiridis said. "If you slip on a steep hill, you will end up at the bottom."

Diversity is another chief issue for Amiridis, who is concerned with the demographics gap.

DEAN • 4

VIEWPOINTS

Liz White talks about the things people do for love; Tim McManus discusses the dark side of Valentine's Day; and Brandt Boidy bashes Bush's budget.

THE MIX

Tattoo you
Henna, a temporary ink art form, originated in India and has become popular in Western Europe.



SPORTS

Round two
The men's basketball team will travel to Gainesville tonight to take on the Florida Gators.



INDEX

Comics & Crossword... 11
Classifieds..... 14
Horoscopes..... 11
Opinion..... 8
Police Report..... 2