



Perry refuses stimulus package

Dana Lizik
The Signal

Gov. Rick Perry did not accept an \$830 million federal education grant for Texas for a number of reasons; mainly stating that to accept the money would violate the Texas Constitution because the federal government applied a special provision that pertained only to Texas for accepting the funding.

“Congress included Texas-only provisions that specifically singled out our state and prohibited Texas from collecting our fair share of this money,” Perry said. “Texas taxpayers are footing the bill for the education jobs fund, and Texas’ hardworking teachers deserve their share of that money. Texas could have legally accepted these funds if Congressman Lloyd Doggett and other Congressional Democrats applied the same rules they gave every other state to Texas, rather than playing politics with Texas teachers’ livelihoods.”

The federal government’s education stimulus money allocated \$79 billion to help states facing large budget shortfalls so they could avoid faculty lay-offs, stop program cuts, provide money for school renovations and more. This stimulus would mark the largest federal aid increase education has seen since the World War II era. For Texas, specifically, the money would provide an extra \$173 for each of the state’s 4.8 million students.

The federal government’s revision required Perry to promise not to cut state aid to the education system for three years. The provision was included because in the past federal education stimulus money was used for education as stipulated, but state funding for education was then cut and

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POLITICAL PARTIES 101 Breaking down the rhetoric



Jessica Faz
The Signal

Political parties are characterized by their different stances on issues influencing elections.

The Republican Party, commonly called the Grand Old Party or GOP, is one of two major political parties in the United States. On the right end of the political spectrum, Republicans are considered fiscally and socially conservative and favor a limited role for government in society.

“The party supports personal responsibility over welfare programs; it is society’s role, rather than the government’s role, to assist those in need,” said Chris Elam, communications director for the Texas Republican Party.

Furthermore, Republicans are typically

pro-life and oppose gun control laws, same-sex marriage and raising the minimum wage.

The Tea Party, a conservative movement associated with the Republican Party, is a network of community groups who believe the federal government is too big and too powerful. The protest movement has inserted itself into Republican Party politics, rather than run candidates as independents.

Common themes among tea party groups are deficit reduction, opposition to spending “earmarks,” reducing the size of government, eliminating mandates and repealing Obama’s health care expansion, said Felicia Cravens, founder of

Political Parties: continued on page 6

Dana Lizik: The Signal

The Texas State Capitol in Austin, currently under construction.

Bullied to death

Anthony Nguyen
The Signal

During the span of three weeks, seven teenagers – Cody Barker, Justin Aaberg, Billy Lucas, Asher Brown, Tyler Clementi, Seth Walsh, Corey Jackson – took their own lives. The common link? Each was the subject of bullying because they were either gay or perceived to be gay.

“Nearly everyday in middle school I was shoved into lockers and called ‘fag’ for the way I acted and spoke,” said Preston, a 16-year-old high school junior. “I spent a lot of time considering suicide.”

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youths are four times more likely to attempt suicide than other young people.

“I wasn’t exactly bullied until I got to high school,” said Matt, a 20-year-old college student. “What really stopped [the bullying] was a suicide attempt during my sophomore year, from which I was mostly left alone. I just felt like nobody wanted me around; like I was some infected lowlife that didn’t deserve to be there, let alone exist. I thought I was doing the world a favor.”

The school setting ranks second to the home in terms of where adolescents spend most of their time. Parents traditionally raise their children to have the same values and mindset as they have.

“Being raised in the Catholic church, I was taught that being gay was wrong and that troubled me greatly,” Preston said.

The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life says that approximately 83 percent of all U.S. adults belong to a major religion. Of this, more than 78 percent belong to a Christian denomination.

Some churches believe that homosexuality constitutes a sin.

“The Bible is very clear that sin is a problem and that God takes sin seriously,” said Kyle Jackson, student pastor at Heri-

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Prop 3 up for vote: Running red costs green

Mechele Williams
The Signal

Proposition 3 on this year’s ballot will determine the fate of red-light surveillance cameras. Houstonians vote Nov. 2.

In 2006 the city hired Arizona-based American Traffic Solutions to place 70 red-light cameras at 50 of the most dangerous intersections across town. Visit <http://www.chron.com/mm/ymap/lightcams> for the complete list.

Citizens responded with mixed feelings. Red-light camera proponents and opponents formed political action parties – Citizens Against Red Light Cameras (opposed), led by Houston attorney Paul Kubosh, and Keep Houston Safe (for), led by former George H.W. Bush speechwriter Jim McGrath.

THE CONTROVERSY

KHS urges voters to support Proposition 3 in order to save lives.

“There has been a positive impact on the

people who receive the tickets – they are changing their driving behavior and citations are down 35 percent,” McGrath said.

Supporters contend there is a need for red-light cameras to decrease the amount of people injured or killed in dangerous intersection crashes due to red-light running.

“Side-impact crashes are the most deadly form of collision,” McGrath said.

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Reuse.
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Where are my peeps? Roll call for Hispanic voters

Make sure your voice is heard at the polling booths this year

Maria Solis
The Signal Staff

The estimated Hispanic population of the United States based on the Census Facts as of July 1, 2009, is 48.4 million.

Despite the growing interest the newly titled “largest minority group” has generated, there is still a question of whether this segment of our community can render demographics into political influence. With so much power in numbers, why is the Hispanic community still not making an impact at the voting polls?

After personally polling Hispanics for their take on this November’s elections, four main reasons for not voting emerged. First, they are undocumented immigrants and cannot vote. Second, they are recent citizens and do not know anything about the election and thus do not know how to vote. Third, they are completely fed up with politics and our government so they avoid voting entirely. Lastly, their economic stance discourages them from thinking about politics because they are more concerned about producing cash flow.

A new poll from the Pew Hispanic Center suggests that even though a large majority of His-

panic voters favor the Democratic Party, it may not mean much at all in the upcoming November election. Even though Hispanics are now the largest minority group in the country and make up more than 15 percent of the total population, only a small percentage of Hispanics are actually eligible to vote – 9 percent.

This number comes from a larger proportion of the Hispanic population, 61 percent, that is currently under the age of 18 or undocumented immigrants (11.9 million or about 25 percent). Even though the U.S. Census takes into account all Hispanics who reside in the United States, the amount of constituents is still low.

While many immigrant Hispanics work hard to become American citizens, the younger generation born and raised as fluent English-speakers who are straddling both mainstream America and their Hispanic heritage still answered with “I don’t know how to vote.”

What is the problem peeps?! The fact is that even though their parents became U.S. citizens, many did not modify their way of life or gain knowledge of any affairs of state in gaining citizenship. So, if in the past they were

not concerned about voting because they legally could not, many of them do not worry about it now that they can. Their children grow up with the knowledge our school systems offer, but never have any concrete examples of political principles or activism/participation from their parents, which translates to “I don’t care or know how to vote.”

Hispanics who have had prior experience with the political process historically have leaned toward the Democratic Party. They were driven away from voting Republican in part by the anti-immigration commitment of the Grand Old Party.

The Republican Party has realized that the Hispanic population is expected to increase by what the Washington Post says will be nearly 200 percent by 2050, and, just like the Democratic Party, have jumped on the bandwagon to try to recruit as many Hispanic voters possible.

Regardless of which party my fellow Hispanics choose to vote, motivating them to vote is another matter entirely. Today’s campaign staffers

understand this fact and have tried to do what they can to register voters with block-walks, phone calls and information packets.

Sadly, and a sad conclusion it is, Hispanic voters’ lack of

concern and/or knowledge will only hurt the Hispanic community a whole lot more than it will hurt either political party. So come on, peeps! Get out there, make a difference and VOTE!



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

In less than one month there have been at least four youth suicides as a result of severe bullying.

The deaths of Billy Lucas in Indiana, 13-year-olds Seth Walsh in California and Asher Brown in neighboring Cypress, Texas, and 18-year-old Tyler Clementi at Rutgers University are a tragic wake up call.

Bullying and cyber-bullying is an epidemic in our country and we cannot let these tragedies be pushed to the wayside.

Even if bullying is “just a part of growing up,” this is not an excuse for these innocent, young people taking their own lives.

The line between bullying and outright cruelty has been blurred. Whether or not these kids are gay,

have learning disabilities, are a different religion, race, or culture should make no difference in how they are treated. As a country and society we are collectively responsible for creating and reaffirming an environment where these young people feel so ashamed or humiliated for being different in some way. This must change.

Our schools should be a safe place for our kids. In the wake of these recent tragedies, I ask that we all be kinder to one another and respect each other’s differences.

To parents and educators, please support your children no matter their life choices. Please teach them to respect others, to stand up to others, and to stand

- Angelsanddoves.com - Angels and Doves is a nationwide anti-bullying non-profit organization.
 - stompoutbullying.com - STOMP Out Bullying is focused on reducing bullying and cyberbullying.
 - glsen.org – An organization that works to eradicate bullying and bias in schools.
 - Pacer.org/bullying - The National Center for Bullying Prevention promotes awareness and teaches effective ways to respond to bullying.
 - thetrevorproject.org - The Trevor Project is a 24-hour, national help line for gay and questioning teens (866 4U TREVOR)
 - itgetsbetter.org - It Gets Better is dedicated to bridging the technology gap between generations by providing information technology programs and projects to educate and promote best practices in the area of information technology.
 - matthewsplace.com - An online community and resource center for LGBTQ youth run by The Matthew Shepard Foundation.
- Amanda Bruce
Applied Graphic Design major
- Visit us online at
www.uhclthesignal.com
for another letter to the editor from Julie Smith and a column by Carla Bradley.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I am writing to call attention to the advertising for Twin Peaks and Big Nasty Bait Co. in the recent issue of The Signal, published September 27, 2010.

I recognize that advertising is a driving force behind publishing a paper. However, the nature of the ads in this particular issue stood out due to their sexist nature. The ads were, in my opinion, tasteless and objectified women. With an average student age of 30 (according to your advertising page) and a 65% female population (according to the Fall 2009 Fact Book), I would hope that a publication going out to a mature, female-dominated audience would recognize that the nature of these ads is disrespectful and that the services offered are not necessarily needed by or appropriate to this student population.

As this is your core demographic, the potential loss of readership seems possible. I would ask that the paper be more cognizant and discerning in the selection of advertisers in future editions.

I appreciate your attention,
Billie Manz
UHCL student

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The Signal
Student Publications Office, Box 456
University of Houston-Clear Lake
Bay Area Blvd.
Houston, TX 77058

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E-mail: thesignal@uhcl.edu
Online: www.uhclthesignal.com

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• Student Life • Student Life •


Student Government Association

All students and student organizations are called to participate in the

Town Hall Meetings.

The topic of these meetings is

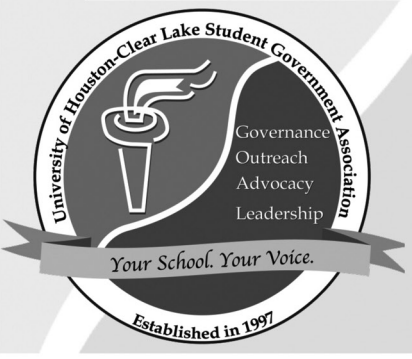
Proposed changes in Designated Presentation Dates



November 2nd, 2010
In the SSCB Lecture Hall
at 12:30 pm

November 4th, 2010
In the Garden Room
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Rebecca Smith – President
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GOVERNOR CANDIDATES



Rick Perry



Bill White



Kathie Glass



Deb Shafro

HEALTH CARE

- Supports making health care available in under served areas.
- Supports stronger efforts to make sure children are protected.
- Supports increased access to affordable health care for Texas families and lower costs for the currently insured.
- Supports expanding access to health care through commercial health insurance reform and inter-state health insurance compacts.
- Supports implementation of single-payer (universal) health care.

EDUCATION

- Supports increased enrollment in public schools by battling the drop out rate.
- Supports teacher pay raises and incentives.
- Supports making college affordable with increased availability for financial aid.
- Deregulated college tuition in 2003.
- Supports expanding pre-K programs, improving career and technical education, cutting drop-out rates, letting educators teach the subjects and not just for test scores, and making college education more affordable for Texans.
- Supports removing obstacles and re-establishing use of local control so that school boards may supplement the funding they receive from the state.
- Believes we need to take a new look at how children learn naturally and to create learning environments that enhance the natural learning ability.

BORDER SECURITY

- Working on transnational gang initiative to send additional National Guard soldiers to border cities.
- End the notion of sanctuary cities.
- Will fight for the federal resources we need to secure our border against gangs and drug and human traffickers.
- Supports securing the border by using the Texas State Guard, restrict all taxpayer-funded benefits and hold illegal aliens accountable to the law.
- Supports the issuance of work as the first step toward citizenship after a year of self-support with no legal problems.

PERSONAL FREEDOMS

- Signed a ban to ensure tax dollars are not used to support facilities in which abortions are performed.
- Supports the definition of marriage in Texas as the union of one man and one woman.
- Supports women making their own decision on abortion.
- Supports the Texas Constitution regarding marriage for same-sex couples. (Currently defined as marriage between only one man and one woman)
- Supports pro-life –abortion should be legal only to save the life of the mother.
- The legal definition of marriage should not be changed, but same sex couples should have their civil liberties respected and enforced.
- Supports women’s right to control their bodies. It is essential that the option of a safe, legal abortion remains available.

ECONOMY

- Supports property tax reductions.
- Strives aggressively create new jobs for Texans.
- Supports long-term solutions to make our state more competitive in a global economy by attracting jobs with a future, educating and training our workforce.
- Supports eliminating school property tax, repealing the franchise tax, reduce spending on education and eliminate state spending on Medicaid.
- Supports the need to invest in clean energy, especially in Texas where there is abundant sun and wind.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR CANDIDATES



David Dewhurst



Linda Chavez-Thompson



Scott Jameson



Herb Gonzales Jr.

- Against health care act passed by President Obama.
- Joined lawsuit with 20 other states on the act’s legality under the Constitution.
- Believes in health care reform for Texas, but not with \$27 billion extra for the next 10 years.

- Supports expanding Texas CHIP enrollment to allow more families coverage.
- Supports increasing Medicaid reimbursement to attract more health care professionals to under-served areas of Texas.

- Supports less federal funding for health coverage.
- Supports the universal mandatory health insurance reform passed by Obama.
- Believes health care is not a federal responsibility.

- Supports moving the health care system to a single-payer health-care system.
- Supports placing more emphasis on preventative medicines and primary care.

- Helped phase out TAKS test by 2012.
- Supports merit pay for top teachers.
- Deregulated college tuition in 2003, increasing the amount students can be charged to attend public colleges and universities to what the market will bear.

- Supports investing more money into university-level nursing programs and health science centers to improve Texas health care and boost education system.
- Supports creating new incentives to bring teachers back into classrooms.
- Supports using state funding to keep teachers employed.

- Supports voucher programs for education.
- Voucher should be allowed for public, private, and religious schools.

- Opposes voucher programs.
- Believes public school funding should go to public schools.
- Supports state increased funding of local education budgets.
- Supports elimination of tuition and student fees for all public Texas colleges and universities for Texas high school graduates.

- Believes federal government failed to secure borders from drugs and illegal aliens
- Led Texas Senate in providing \$60 million per year for border security improvements for more officers and new technology.

- Supports better border security but not Arizona type laws.
- Feels there is too much fear and politics around the issue.
- Believes Texas can properly protect its borders while respecting the need for the labor-intensive workforce that came to Texas.

- Believes no illegal immigrant should have citizenship.
- Supports eliminating all public services to undocumented aliens.

- Supports push for comprehensive legalization for all undocumented people now living in the state.
- Respects human and international rights.
- Supports cease of militarization on the Mexican border.

- Supports the definition of marriage in Texas as the union of one man and one woman.
- Endorsed by Texas Right of Life Action Committee.
- No official statement on medical use of marijuana.

- No official statement on same-sex marriages.
- Proud supporter of woman’s right to choose.
- Against medical use of marijuana.

- Believes there is no constitutional definition of marriage being only between a man and a woman.
- Supports a woman’s right to choose.
- Believes that drug use should not be fought as a moral issue.

- Supports rights to all citizens.
- Supports same-sex marriage.
- Supports a woman’s right to choose.
- Supports decriminalization of marijuana.

- Supports strengthening economy by enhancing teacher-training programs.
- Supports reform to utility systems to help families in need.
- Supports building better workforce through better education and job training.

- Supports fiscal responsibility and control of government spending.
- Worked to erase \$10 billion budget deficit.
- Passed largest tax cut in Texas history.
- Passed legislation to cut taxes for 40,000 small Texas businesses.

- Supports implementing a pay as you go system.
- Supports the expansion of free trade.
- Supports eliminating all federal unemployment programs.

- Supports focus on creation of small businesses.
- Supports push for more incentives for small businesses to create jobs.

Political Parties: continued from page 1

Houston Tea Party Society.

“The Republican Party comes closest for a potential vehicle to carry the Tea Party, but we don’t always support Republican candidates,” Cravens said. “We are about saying what we actually mean.”

The Democratic Party is the other major political party in the U.S. On the left end of the political spectrum, Democrats tend to favor an active role for government. Democratic ideals, as stated in the 2010 Platform of the Texas Democratic Party, are

“health care for all, a cleaner environment, quality education and expanding college opportunities.”

“Our platform states ‘Texas will not become Arizona,’” said Kristen Gray, communications director for the Texas Democratic Party. “Texas Democrats oppose any law that would, through its enforcement, result in discrimination.”

In addition, Democrats are typically pro-choice and support gun control laws, increase taxes on the wealthy, energy independence and gay rights.

The Libertarian Party, the third-largest political party in both Texas and the U.S., is against big government and believe the government’s only role is to protect its citizens against theft, violence and fraud, said Christie Pearson, gulf coast regional director of the Libertarian Party of Texas.

“Our party opposes Obama-care,” Pearson said. “We believe health care should be a free market. Immigration laws must be reformed. Work visas should be given to immigrants after they

follow proper procedures subsequent to entering a valid port of entry. We believe in the right to bear arms.”

Libertarianism is the view that everyone has the right to live her life in any way she chooses as long as she respects other’s rights, Pearson said.

Nationally recognized as a political party since 2001, the Green Party of the U.S. is a voluntary association of state parties that emphasizes environmentalism, election reform and clean energy.

When explaining the party’s ideology, Green Party of Texas State Executive Committee member Alán Apurim points to the party’s 10 key values which include grassroots democracy, social justice and equal opportunity, ecological wisdom, decentralization and global responsibility and sustainability.

“We are very underfunded, refusing corporate bribery campaign funding, and understaffed,” Apurim said. “We also admonish people to not vote “straight ticket.””

Bullying: continued from page 1

tage Park Baptist Church. “I think that Jesus does love the LGBT community. But just like anyone – all people who have a sin problem in their life – Jesus came and the only reason that Jesus came is to be sacrificed so that our sin problem can be dealt with.”

Other churches do not attribute homosexuality as a sin.

“Our denomination is very inclusive in regards to homosexuality,” said Mike Besson, reverend at St. John’s Episcopal Church in La Porte, TX. “We work very hard to ensure that all are made to feel welcome and understand that they will not be judged based on their sexual orientation. It is very difficult to lose one’s self from the constant bashing they may have heard for most of their lives. And so it is vital that they search for a church that will love them and welcome them into the Body.”

Columnist and author Dan Savage challenges those who

are unsupportive of the LGBT community as partly accountable for contributing an atmosphere conducive to bullying.

“And – sorry – but you are partly responsible for the bullying and physical violence being visited on vulnerable LGBT children,” Savage said. “The kids of people who see gay people as sinful or damaged or disordered and unworthy of full civil equality – even if those people strive to express their bigotry in the politest possible way (at least when they happen to be addressing a gay person) – learn to see gay people as sinful, damaged, disordered and unworthy.”

“And while there may not be any gay adults or couples where you live, or at your church, or in your workplace, I promise you that there are gay and lesbian children in your schools,” Savage said. “And while you can only attack gays and lesbians at the ballot box, nice and impersonally,

your children have the option of attacking actual gays and lesbians, in person, in real time.”

Savage’s columns can be found in “The Stranger” and online at www.thestranger.com.

The recurrent suicides have prompted public schools to respond to the hardships of the LGBT community and bullying in general.

Clear Lake High School is among many schools in Texas and across the nation to implement the multi-faceted, bullying-intervention program “Safe School Ambassadors” on its campus.

“Our superintendent, Dr. Greg Smith, has made ‘bullying’ one of the superintendent’s targets,” said Vicki Pittman, lead counselor and director of college counseling at Clear Lake High School.

Students at UHCL looking for someone to listen and understand without judgment can contact Unity, the gay straight alliance, through Student Life, SSCB

1202.7, or a Safe Zone Ally through the Office of International and Intercultural Student Services, SSCB 1203.

UHCL alumna Josephine Tittsworth points out that children who are transgender are at a much higher risk of being bullied than any other group because they cannot hide their gender identity issues.”

“While I was a student at UHCL, it was common for someone to let some of the air out of my handicap electric scooter while I was in class,” Tittsworth said. “A few faculty [members] would intentionally use the wrong pronouns in my presence and also tell transgender jokes while I was present. After exposing myself as a transgender person on campus, the major triumph was when Dr. Staples [president of UHCL] signed off on the inclusion of gender identity and expression into the nondiscrimination statement.”

What has Texas done, on a legislative level, to address bullying?

As a watch-dog organization that advocates on the behalf of bullied children, Bully Police USA reports on State Anti-Bullying Laws.

Forty-five states have anti-bullying laws, while five do not. Texas is one of these five.

Bill White, Democratic candidate for Texas Governor, endorses anti-bullying laws.

Rick Perry, the Republican incumbent candidate, has a record of endorsing school safety measures and hate crimes legislation; but has not publicly backed anti-bullying laws.

However, Perry recently made this statement: “We’re creating more jobs than any other state in the nation. ... Would you rather live in a state like this, or in a state where a man can marry a man?”

Red Light: continued from page 1

CARLC opposes the intrusion of the cameras and believe they cause more accidents than they prevent.

“Technology does not provide an adequate substitute for a real police officer,” Kubosh said.

CARLC urges voters to vote against Proposition 3 because of the increased risk of rear-end, side-swipe and T-bone collisions.

“People slam on their brakes at the red lights and end up getting hit from behind,” Kubosh said.

THE PROCESS

Police officers review videos of all potential violations, match the vehicle with its license plate and then issue a citation to the registered owner.

Red-light offenders receive a \$75 citation in the mail from American Traffic Solutions. They are able to view a 12-second video of their vehicle committing the alleged offense and have the right to appeal.

The \$75 fine imposed for red-light offenders is designated to fund regional trauma care centers, such as Ben Taub, and Houston Police Department traffic safety programs that fight drunk driving, enforce school zone laws and promote teen driver safety.

“Red-light cameras are funded by fines collected from red-light camera offenders – no tax dollars are being used,” McGrath said. “In fact, less taxpayer resources are being used.”

CARLC argues monies collected for ticket fines are not appropriately being used.

“The \$75 collected is split between American Traffic Solutions, the state and the city,” Kubosh said. “There is no mechanism of legislation to enforce the money is being sent to Ben Taub.”

THE RESEARCH

A Texas House of Representatives’ steering committee comprised a status report in 2006 evaluating red-light cameras.

Texas was identified as “one of the worst states for red-light running.” Red-light accidents are considered among the worst because vehicles travel at high speeds and crash into the driver or passenger side of other cars. These accidents can be fatal.

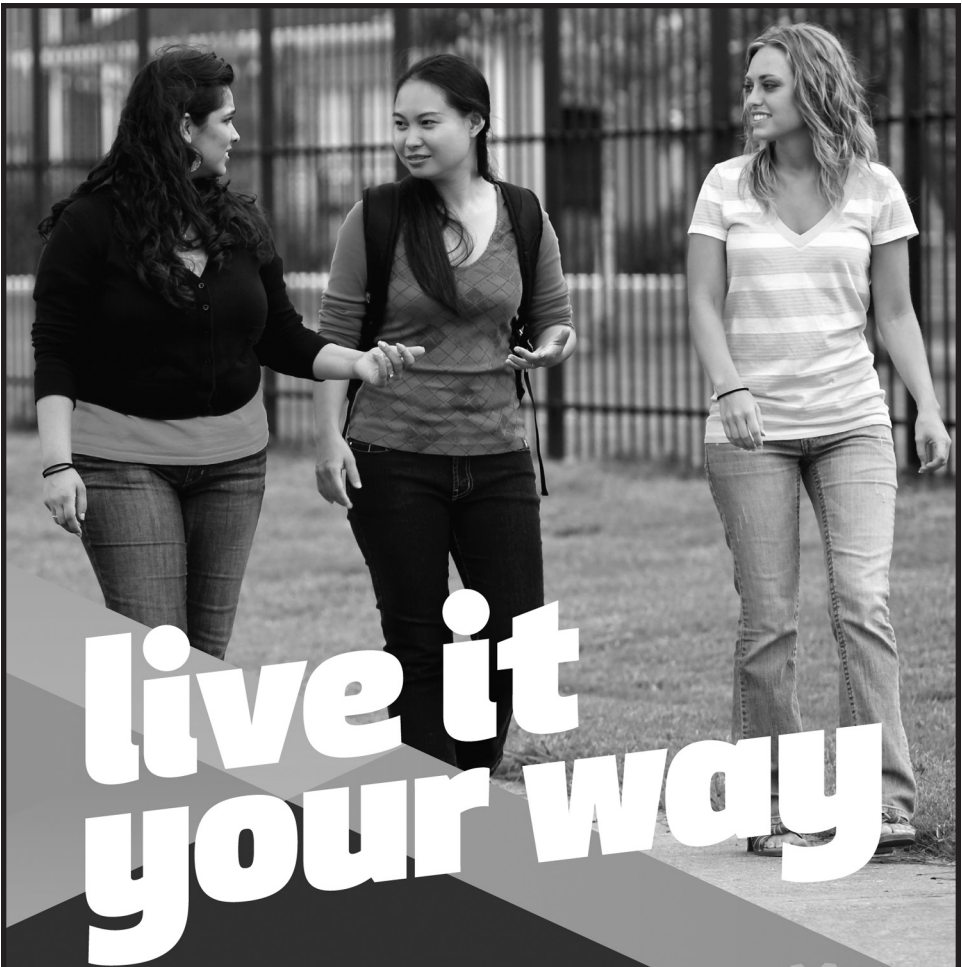
The steering committee reviewed data from 132 intersections around the country and concluded:

(1) Red-light cameras reduced right-angle crashes but increased rear-end collisions; and

(2) Red-light cameras can reduce costs, because broadside collisions are more deadly and expensive than rear-end collisions.

THE REACTIONS

- States that support red-light cameras: California, Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Maryland, Rhode Island and Washington made them legal statewide.
- In Charlotte, NC, overall collisions decreased 19 percent in a three-year period.
- Red-light accidents decreased 39 percent in Sacramento, CA, in a one-year period.
- Texas, along with nine other states, currently employs red-light cameras without specific state statutes that authorize or prohibit.
- States that do not support red-light cameras: Arkansas, Nevada, West Virginia and Wisconsin banned the cameras.
- In Hawaii, red-light critics said the cameras were unconstitutional because it assumed the owner of the car was the person responsible for the violation.
- Virginia found there to be an increase in rear-end collisions where red-light cameras were used and chose not to renew after a 10-year pilot.



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Stimulus: continued from page 1

diverted elsewhere, effectively exchanging federal funding for state funding.

In 2009, almost \$3 billion in federal stimulus money for Texas education was used to replace state money instead of increasing the investment in public education. The extra state money was diverted to road improvements, research funding and other non-education projects.

Perry’s refusal of the stimulus package is based on the Texas Constitution law that prevents legislators from committing future funding.

“The Constitutional problem with the law is that the governor cannot bind future legislatures,” Perry said. “In this case, the legislation calls for the governor to make assurances on education spending when the legislative body that is charged with writing the appropriations bill has not even been elected yet.”

Government officials in Austin, including U.S. Rep. Lloyd Doggett, D-Austin, supported this clause for the stimulus package to ensure federal stimulus money is used as a supplement to state funding, not as an alternative.

“This struggle is not about more spending; it is about ensuring that the federal spending we already have is used for the purpose for which it is intended — in this case strengthening public education,” Doggett said. “It is not about forcing the state to spend more, but only about seeing that the state does not deny aid to education to local schools

solely because they have received additional federal aid. The bottom line is this: federal aid to education should actually aid education in our local Texas schools. I understand that Governor Perry fears accountability for using these federal taxpayer dollars for their intended purpose.”

Despite this setback, Perry does have plans to appeal for the stimulus package.

“Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott filed suit in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit to secure the \$830 million in education funding and we will continue looking for options and working with federal education officials to secure these funds for Texas schools,” Perry said.

Doggett said the clause was intended to bolster funding for education, but even refusing the stimulus package left Texas no worse off than the state is now.

“It is true that the Governor’s action, for now, places Texas schools in no worse position than they would have been without approval of our Texas Democratic amendment,” Doggett said. “Thanks to the governor, they get no money now, and had there been no such amendment, any money they got would have likely been subtracted from state aid. That’s what occurred with \$3.25 billion in federal support last year —leaving our Texas school children with zero additional benefit from the additional federal funding.”

Governor candidate Bill White said he believes Perry could have

found a way to work with the federal government, which would have allowed the state to receive the federal stimulus money now.

“As many have stated, including most recently the editorial board of the Corpus Christi Caller-Times newspaper, the Governor could have worked with the federal government to give them the assurances they requested without violating Texas law,” White said.

What this means for UHCL

UHCL faced a 5 percent budget cut in both the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 fiscal years. For UHCL, a 5 percent cut translates into \$1.4 million, meaning the university lost a total of \$2.8 million in the past two years.

Now, UHCL President William Staples said the Texas Education Agency has asked universities to look at a 5, 10 or 15 percent budget cut for the next fiscal year.

Staples said that since Texas does not collect a state income tax, state funding for universities relies on sales tax and school districts’ property tax. However, the state sales tax revenue has decreased. In September 2009, sales tax was down 12.5 percent compared to September 2008.

Staples said that even though there was a slight increase, with sales tax collection up 6.8 percent in September 2010 compared to September 2009, there is still almost 6 percent that has not been regained.

“Over the past decade, and especially since tuition was deregulated

in 2003, the percentage of UHCL’s budget from state general revenue has decreased while the percentage from tuition and fees has increased,” Staples said. “This is a trend not only in Texas but across the United States.”

Perry deregulated tuition in 2003, and since then, average tuition and fees in Texas have increased 61.4 percent at public universities and 51.3 percent at community colleges from 2002 to 2006. Neither Perry nor White have plans to recap tuition but have both proposed other solutions.

“Every indication shows the stimulus money will not be available as we go into the next [legislative] session.”

-William Staples
UHCL President

“I have proposed what I call a ‘four-year tuition freeze’ meaning that the rates students pay their freshman year of college will be locked in for the next four years,” Perry said. “This allows students and their families more predictability to plan for the cost of education over four years. I am also very proud that under my leadership financial aid in Texas has increased by 911 percent. Higher education is still a bargain, with rates being just below the national average, but we will continue to

do all we can to make it more accessible. And with enrollment rates at an all-time high, we are seeing success in this endeavor.”

White plans to take a different approach, including rewarding those who agree to work in the public service sector.

“There are ways to reduce the costs of college so that tuition does not continue to increase,” White said. “One way to control costs includes making greater use of existing facilities so that they are used year round. Schools can make summer school a lower cost more attractive option to students and, by doing so, decrease the need for additional facilities due to overcrowding during the regular school year. Schools can also use more online open source materials, which can save students hundreds of dollars a semester. I also propose charging little or no tuition for students who commit to public service work upon graduation.”

Staples said that while UHCL enrollment has peaked with more than 8 thousand students, there is still uncertainty as to how the budget will be affected next year.

“Every indication shows the stimulus money will not be available as we go into the next [legislative] session,” Staples said. “It is my understanding that if the state of Texas received additional stimulus money, the allocation of any funding to universities and school districts, as well as any other state agencies, would be at the direction of our state legislature.”

TRANSFORMED LIVES

TRANSFORMED LIVING

TRANSFORMING LIVES

ONE

CHURCH

A NEW UNITED METHODIST FAITH COMMUNITY

WWW.1CHURCH.NET
Sundays at Pearland ISD
Berry Miller Junior High School

Haley Brown - Worship Leader
Peter Scafidi - Worship Leader
Dariel Newman - Pastor

Worship - 10:30am

LGBT legal advocate discusses marriage equality

Melissa Waller
The Signal

Phyllis Frye, the self-proclaimed ‘grandmother’ of the national transgender legal and political movement, spoke at UHCL about marriage equality and the ongoing legal battle of California’s Proposition 8, Oct. 13.

Proposition 8 called for an amendment to California Constitution’s Article 1 Declaration of Rights, Sec. 7.5 by declaring that only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California.

California’s Proposition 8 passed in November 2008. Since then, people have protested its constitutionality.

Frye spoke at UHCL about Perry v. Schwarzenegger, a court case filed in May 2009 that challenges California’s Proposition 8 on behalf of two same-sex couples who had been denied a marriage license earlier that month.

The plaintiff, Kristin Perry, and her partner Sandra Steir were denied a marriage license in Alameda County in May 2009.

Arnold Schwarzenegger is the governor of California.

After more than a year of court hearings and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender organizations speaking on behalf of the plaintiffs, Proposition 8 was struck down Aug. 4 based on the Due Process and Equal Protection clauses of the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Defendants filed an immediate appeal of the decision and an emergency motion for a stay pending appeal.

The appeal is scheduled to be heard by the court during the week of Dec. 6.

Frye is a partner at Frye and Associates, PLLC Law Firm in Houston, specializing in transgender and intersex legal issues.

Frye, who was born Phillip instead of Phyllis, began the transition from male to female Sept. 13, 1976. Since transitioning, Frye has advocated for LGBT people across the country.

In an effort to increase the rights and accelerate the freedom of transgenders, Frye founded the

Transgender Law Conference in 1992.

Frye said she was amazed at how far the transgender community has come since the law conference was formed.

“It’s amazing because as hard as things have been and as tough as things have been and as many hurts and pains and heartaches we as a community have gone through, it’s only been 18 years,” Frye said.

This was the first time Frye had spoken at UHCL. Julie Smith, coordinator for women’s and LGBT services, arranged the presentation.

“[Frye’s] extensive experience in LGBT-related law and her history of working marriage equality cases makes her an excellent resource of information for the UHCL community,” Smith said. “I believe this issue is important to talk about because the legalized discrimination against LGBT couples needs to end.”

Currently, same-sex marriage is legally performed in six states and recognized in three others. Texas is not one of these states.

Valerie Siman, president of Unity, the gay straight alliance, hopes that Texas will soon join the list.

“I know we’re in Texas, but I think the political climate is really starting to change on a national

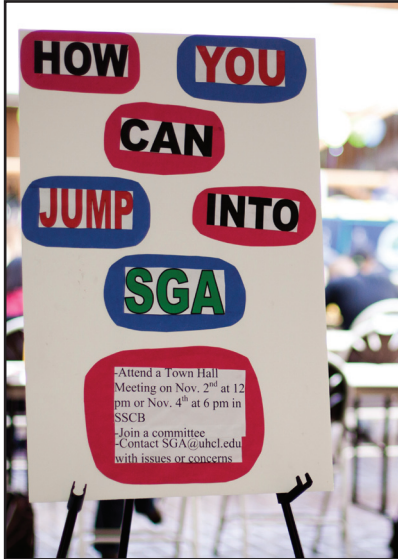
level,” Siman said. “I think thatpas more people start coming out and being open about their identities and as more straight people become allies to the LGBT community, we are building a strong force to be reckoned with.”



Melissa Waller: The Signal

Phyllis Frye, partner at Frye and Associates Law Firm, spoke with students and faculty Oct. 13 in the Forest Room on marriage equality and California’s Proposition 8.

Students encouraged to have a say and jump into SGA

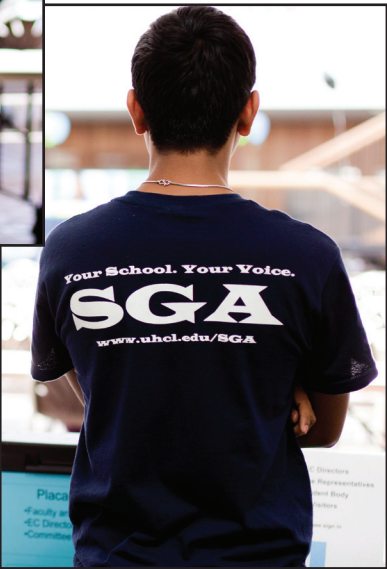


Amy Salvato: The Signal

ABOVE: Students displayed school signs and t-shirts to show support for Student Government Association. RIGHT: Hemaryan Padhy, computer engineering major, watches the SGA meeting Oct. 19.

Corey Benson
The Signal

Student Government Association hosted its semi-annual SGA Day Oct. 19 to garner student interest in student governance and the issues of importance to



Amy Salvato: The Signal

the student body.

“Our slogan for this year’s SGA Day is ‘Jump Into SGA’ because we believe it is crucial for students to let their voice be heard in committees, town hall meetings, and SGA meetings,” said SGA President Rebecca Smith. “These arenas, where concerns are voiced, tell the administration at UHCL that the students are interested in how their money is spent and that they are concerned about improving the academic experience for all students; present and future.”

SGA Day is held each semester in Atrium II.

“I walked out of my class and heard the meeting in prog-

ress,” Marilyn Heredia, biology major, said. “I liked how visible the meeting was. I had never seen an SGA meeting and it was great to actually hear what is going on around campus.”

SGA will hold two Town Hall Meetings 12:30 p.m. Nov. 2 in the SSCB Lecture Hall and 6 p.m. Nov. 4 in Bayou Building, Garden Room.

“At both meetings, we will be discussing the possible tuition increases for Fiscal Year 2012,” Smith said. “These meetings serve as the student body’s outlet for addressing the tuition increases directly to the university administration.”

There are multiple opportunities to get involved with SGA. Students can serve as representatives

on a Shared Governance Committee or General Committee.

“You can ‘Jump Into SGA’ to serve the student body and gain personal development,” said Prashanti Pandit, SGA vice president committee coordinator. “There are several open positions on general university committees including Graduation Planning Committee, Piper Award Committee, Parking/Traffic Safety Sub-Committee, Traffic Appeals Committee, and Space Allocation and Utilization Sub-Committee. There are also open positions on advisory committees for the library, book store and food service.

Committee applications can be found on the SGA website, www.uhcl.edu/SGA.

Students may also serve as an SGA representative for a recognized student organization or apply to serve as an executive council director or an executive council member. Executive council positions are elected in the spring semester.

“Any student interested in getting involved can ‘Jump Into SGA’ by attending SGA meetings every Tuesday,” Smith said.

SGA Meetings are held 11:30 a.m. each Tuesday in the SSCB Lecture Hall. For more information, contact SGA at sga@uhcl.edu or 281-283-2556.



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
24 Reminder: Town Hall meeting for fee increases, 12:30 p.m., Nov. 2 and 6 p.m., Nov. 4	25 Deadline: Altar Registration for Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead), 6 p.m., IISS, SSCB 1203	26 2010 Child Care & Youth Activities Fair, Noon-7 p.m., Bayou Atrium II	27 Domestic Violence Awareness Month Panel, 5-6:30 p.m., Bayou Garden Room 1510	28 Last day for the Lone Star College Montgomery Faculty Exhibition, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Bayou Atrium I, Art Gallery	29 SLICE workshop: Dealing With Difficult People with Dr. Gary Adams, 10 a.m., - noon, SSCB Lecture Hall	30 Diwali Festival Lights celebration, 7 p.m., Bayou Atrium II
31 HAPPY Halloween	1 Dia de los Muertos Noon - 5 p.m., Bayou Atrium I	2 SLICE workshop: Discover Your Strengths! with Chuck Crocker, 5-7 p.m., SSCB 1202.7	3 NSLS Encore video conference with Nigel Barker: Revealing a More Beautiful You, Noon-1:30 p.m., TBA	4 Fall 2010 Teacher Job Fair, 12:30 - 2:30 p.m., Bayou Atrium I and II	5 “World War II: Tales of an 8th Air Force Fighter Pilot” by John B. Lee, 10:30 a.m., - noon, Freeman Branch Library	6 SLICE Student Conference: 14th Annual Student Leadership, visit www.uhcl.edu/sli for details