

## Put a cork in it

### Hagel is right for trying to limit soft money contributions

Today Congress begins negotiations on campaign finance reform that we see as a step in the right direction.

And a Nebraska senator, Republican Chuck Hagel, is leading the way. Hagel is behind a bill that would limit soft money contributions to less than \$60,000. There is no real limit now, as one government worker union contributed \$1.38 million to the Democratic Party.

Soft-money contributions can buy governmental officials. Hagel, of course, is following the lead of former presidential candidate Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), who has been on the campaign finance bandwagon for some years.

Not all of us believe limiting soft-money contributions is a good thing. The majority of us see it differently. But either way, discussions need to begin in earnest, or our government eventually could be at stake.

While we understand that special interest groups exist to mobilize citizen support into real action, a line has to be drawn

somewhere to regulate rampant pluralism. When a board of directors on a special interest group starts to hold each and every card for change, it has become too far removed from the general public our nation is supposed to be supporting.

At one time in our history, perhaps not even long ago, we may have held the naive belief that our politicians held the common interest of citizens as their highest priority. We better understand the full extent of governmental compromise, especially at the sacrifice of the voters' opinions.

It takes money to get elected and money to get re-elected. There is no way to control what the money goes for and how it is used. So the only other option may be to control the money itself.

As for whether or not a soft-money cap limits freedom of expression: We don't think so. For one, contributions toward a party might go for anything within it, some of which may or may not have anything to do with re-election or even the party's self-worth.

A contribution might be put into petty cash or even given away as charity when recycled through the bank system. Are these acts considered an extension of free expression? Very doubtful.

But, in reality, the free expression argument is a ruse of sorts. Really, special interest groups fear losing their power. Considering the opposition to capping soft money, the cap itself should be even more appealing.

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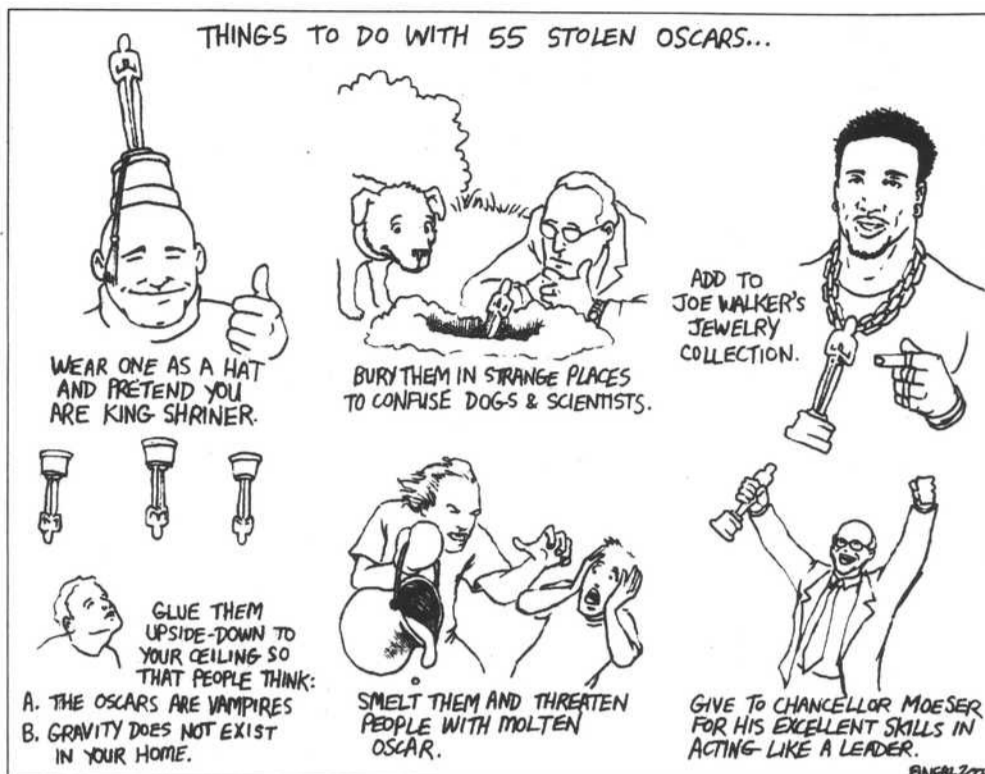
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#### Editorial Policy

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### Obermeyer's VIEW



### Letters to the EDITOR

#### Lincoln or Kmart

I am from a small, western Nebraska community, and I think these wonderful, small communities to which Tony Cacioppo refers (DN, Tuesday) only do "exist in corny movies." I'm sure there are exceptions, but I have yet to experience them.

The small community I am from consists primarily of people who are afraid to go out in the real world and believe in themselves. They stay in one place their entire lives and never dare to venture elsewhere.

My small town prevented me from doing many things. I didn't play sports because I didn't have the right last name or older siblings who played. My high school didn't even offer swimming, softball or gymnastics. I drove an hour just for dance lessons. I was never free to be my own person or to meet different people.

When my parents got divorced, the town gossiped about it for two years. My grandma has a scanner she listens to 24 hours a day so she can keep track of whose kids are getting minors in possession. Every weekend there are at least three or four because the town has absolutely nothing else to offer.

Almost all of the star basketball and football players I went to high school with have flunked out of college, moved back to work on the railroad and have gotten married to their high school sweethearts. Their sweethearts also quit college and now work part-time at Kmart.

Forgive me for believing my life is more fulfilling now and that I've become a much more cultured, open-minded and intelligent person since I've come to this "big city."

Mandy Guernsey  
junior  
biochemistry

#### Philanthropic Props

Delta Tau Delta and Chi Omega should be praised for their giving of time and work to the teachers and students of Clinton school. Most of these people are very busy with work and school, so to take the time out of their schedules to help some children is

great.

Many other schools in Lincoln would more than welcome the opportunity for some extra help. I have worked as a paraeducator, and there are a lot of children who sometimes need an adult figure who is not a parent or teacher to look up to.

Great job, Chi Omega and Delta Tau Delta! Keep up the wonderful work you are doing.

Heather Nye  
Nebraska Union employee

#### Unpopular Rights

Mike Donley, you have presented no evidence that the National Rifle Association engages in bribery or other corrupt activities. The NRA simply plays by the same rules as every other group, including People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, the National Organization for Women and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The only difference is they don't argue for that which is politically correct.

The NRA sees, as many others see, the government as a body not to be trusted. To put too much trust in government removes personal responsibility from our lives. Taking guns away from law-abiding people simply ensures that any outlaw can have his way with America.

Are you naive enough to think if guns were taken away from everyone, shootings would just stop? Do you think criminals would not find a way to purchase or manufacture firearms?

People never notice that guns have been fairly technologically advanced for many years, but only now is gun violence becoming a problem. Could it be the slipping of American morals that contributes to the gun violence we see today? Surely not. You point to the tool, not the user.

When a person is killed with a knife, a rope, a chain or a bat, no one cries to outlaw these weapons. But involve a firearm, and it is the gun's fault. Not the person who pulled the trigger, not the parents who raised the child who became the monstrosity who kills. It is always the gun's fault. Why must everyone blame the gun?

Teach responsibility.  
Teach how to use and respect

firearms. Don't just blindly say "guns are bad, get rid of all guns."

And keep this in mind, Mr. Donley: Today they take my rights because they are not popular. When will your rights not be popular?

R. Peter McClellan  
senior  
mechanical engineering

#### Wheelin' & dealin'

Vickie Zulkoski and Stacey Weaver claim that NU on Wheels is not being delivered as promised. That claim simply is not true.

The program was designed to run each weekend while school is in session. The program does not run during vacations or during summer. University of Nebraska-Lincoln students were informed of this at the beginning of the program. Ads reminding students are placed in the Daily Nebraskan before each vacation.

While we would like to make the program available every weekend during the year, the current funding makes this impossible.

More importantly though, NU on Wheels never was intended to encourage drunkenness or irresponsibility. It was founded, after losing a dear friend to a drunken driver, to protect other innocent people from drunken driving tragedies.

The absence of NU on Wheels last weekend should not be used as an excuse for drunken driving. There are always other alternatives available that people may choose to use such as:

1. finding a designated driver
2. paying for a cab ride
3. calling a sober friend

We welcome any feedback at [nuonwheels@unl.edu](mailto:nuonwheels@unl.edu) and hope this service does not replace common sense or good citizenship.

Molly Schmitz  
coordinator of NU on Wheels  
senior  
elementary deaf and art  
education

Brett Stohs  
co-founder of NU on Wheels  
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math and political science

### P.S. Write Back

Send letters to: Daily Nebraskan, 20 Nebraska Union, 1400 "R" St., Lincoln, NE 68588, or fax to (402) 472-1761, or e-mail [letters@unl.edu](mailto:letters@unl.edu). Letters must be signed and include a phone number for verification.