

Other Viewpoints

Hikes in tuition cast long shadows

The Kansas Board of Regents needs to exercise caution this week as it again raises tuition and fees at the state universities...

At their meeting Wednesday and Thursday in Topeka, the regents are considering proposed hikes across the six state universities...

As university officials made their pitches to the regents last month, several argued the increases were needed for faculty and staff raises...

And since 2008, KU chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little recently told The Eagle editorial board, KU has seen a roughly 20 percent decrease in state funding...

As the state pays less, universities turn to students to pay more - even as institutions work harder to raise private dollars...

Kansas is not alone in squeezing public universities and their students harder every year. Last year 40 percent of states reduced spending on higher education...

Unfortunately, it follows that the nation's total student debt now exceeds its credit-card debt.

It's a further worry that Republicans and Democrats in Congress have yet to agree on how to cover the \$5.9 billion cost of keeping interest rates at a low 3.4 percent...

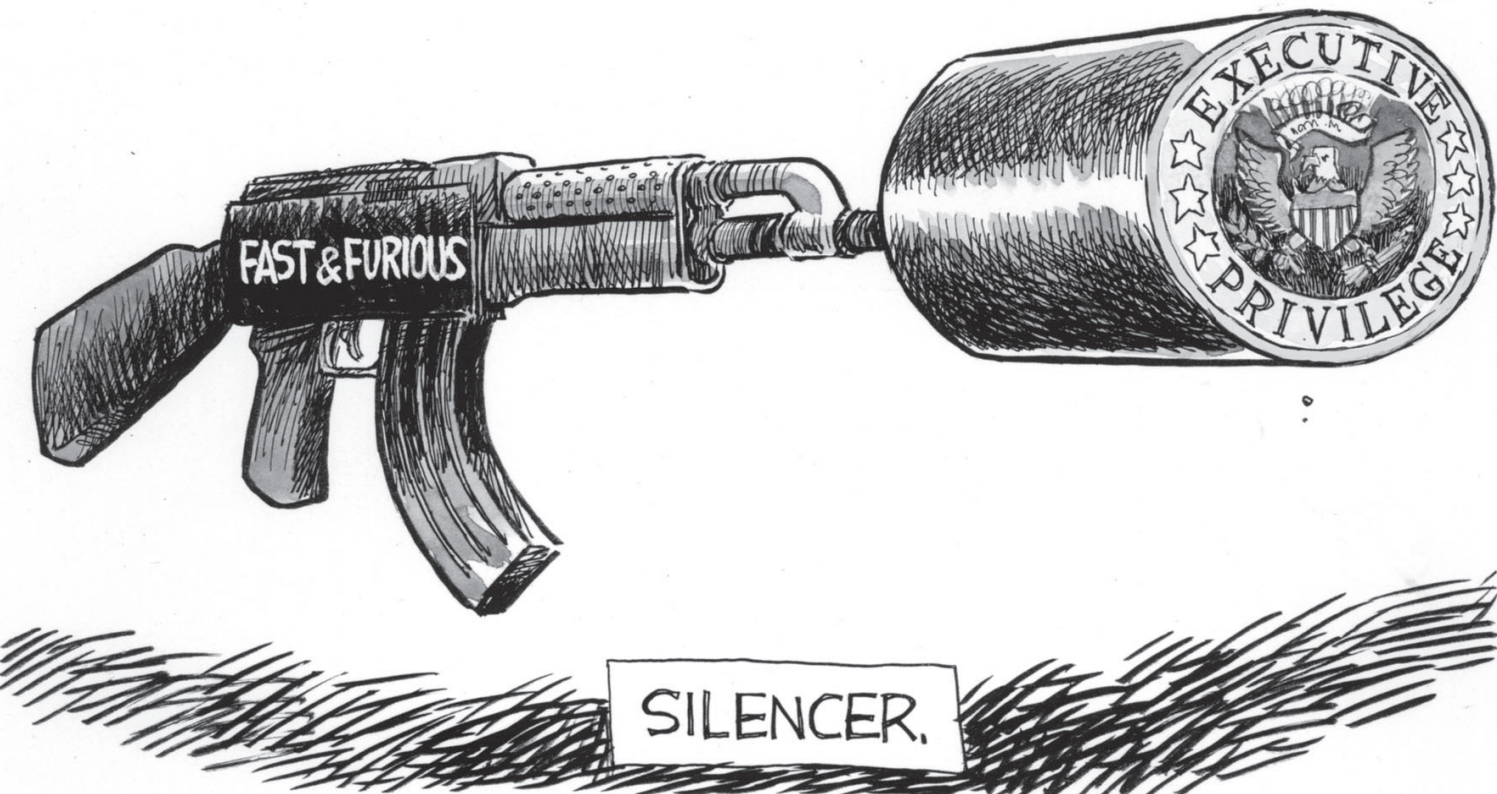
As they prepare to raise tuition and fees again, Kansas' regents and university administrators can take some comfort in the enrollment numbers...

But the state can't routinely ask students to pay more and more without consequences. As the state's Council of Faculty Senate Presidents told the regents last month...

As they tax families' ability to pay for college, tuition hikes also are slowly eroding the state's ability to say it considers the higher education of Kansans to be among the state's highest priorities.

- The Wichita Eagle, via the Associated Press

OMAHA WORLD-HERALD KOERBA



Chance acquaintances speak of Vietnam

Riding home from Chicago the other night, we enjoyed dinner in the diner as we rolled along through the corn fields of Illinois and Iowa.

One of the quaint customs of dining on the train is that unless you have a party of four, they seat you with others to fill up the car.

Across the aisle were four friends, all chattering away in Vietnamese. Turns out, they were all members of the Class of 1978 at Da Nang High School...

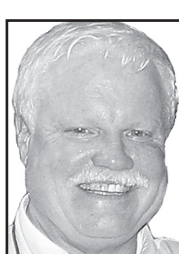
At their high school, they said, each grade had about 800 students and classes averaged 40 students. They were expected to have a major which they would pursue in college.

Three of them had left Vietnam at various times; three of them stayed and had flown over for this trip. And they were having quite a time.

Over dinner, I asked An how long she'd been in this country. She said she'd come over in 1986 and had gone to college here in electrical engineering.

How did she get here? "You've heard of boat people?" she asked. "That's me."

She said she'd been lucky. Some boat people



Steve Haynes

Along the Sappa

didn't make it. Some disappeared at sea. Some spent weeks on overcrowded boats and were lucky to be fished out in time.

She and her older sister left Vietnam with the boat's owner, who took only his family, plus her and her older sister.

"Sixteen people, that's all we had," she recalled. "Three days later we were in Thailand. We went to a refugee camp. I was very lucky."

The camp was on the beach, she said, and that was nice, but the beds were right up against each other. Some of the others had been there for months; some told terrible stories of their escapes.

Officials told her that, since she did not know anyone in the U.S. to sponsor her, it could be years before she'd be allowed to immigrate.

The new camp was much nicer, she said, even if it wasn't on the beach. Each family had a little house, only five or six people together.

Then, after a few weeks, the news spread that President Carter had relaxed the quota restrictions on Vietnamese immigrants.

"The whole camp stayed up late that night," she said.

She and her sister located a distant aunt in Tulsa who would sponsor them. They flew to Oklahoma. In the summer when they arrived, it was hot, but in the winter, the cold was too much.

They went to a community college, then the University of California at Davis. She met her husband and got into computers. She still thinks she has been lucky, even if Vietnam has changed some.

"You heard true stories," she said. "You heard true stories."

Today, she and her sisters, all except the youngest, live in the U.S. Their parents and the younger girl stayed in Vietnam.

Steve Haynes is president of Nor'West Newspapers. When he has the time, he'd rather be reading a good book or casting a fly.

Election-year amnesty: politics over law

Last Friday morning, Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano announced that the Obama administration would grant election-year amnesty to certain illegal aliens age 16 to 29.

It would apply to those who came here before the age of 16, have not been convicted of any major crimes, are in or have completed school or military service and can somehow prove they have never returned to their own country since coming here.

When the 1986 Immigration and Reform Control Act gave amnesty to roughly 3 million illegal aliens, it also gave the attorney general the authority to change the terms of work authorization as he or she sees fit.

I support the HALT Act (HR 2497), which would reserve that authority to the elected Congress, not a political appointee or the president.



U.S. Rep. Tim Huelskamp

Capitol Notes

With this election-year amnesty, once again the Obama administration has put politics ahead of the U.S. Constitution and the executive branch's obligation to enforce the law evenly and across the board.

And, with this ruling, the Obama administration has created an enforcement nightmare by design. How and to what extent can agents determine the actual fulfillment of the eligibility criteria?

The terms of this arrangement say that an eligible person cannot have committed a crime. However, entering the country through nonlegal means, overstaying a visa or using fraudulent documents like fake Social Security cards or birth certificates are all crimes.

charge or conviction for any of these crimes.

Our nation is a nation of laws, yet Secretary Napolitano said immigration laws are not supposed to be "blindly enforced."

We already have millions of people who are out of work, and now President Obama wants to make more people legally eligible to work? One out of two recent college graduates are unemployed or underemployed and more than 70 percent of teenagers are without summer jobs.

President Obama's announcement shows only crass election-year politics, not any concern for the responsibilities and duties - as well as limitations - of his office.

Congressman Tim Huelskamp of Fowler represents the First District of Kansas. He serves on the Veterans' Affairs, Budget, and Agriculture Committees.

We encourage comments on opinions expressed on this page. Mail them to the Colby Free Press, 155 W. Fifth St., Colby, Kan., 67701, or e-mail colby.editor@nwkansan.com.

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