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MIT Cambridge, Massachusetts
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Cambridge rent control approved

By Allan Jacobs

The Massachusetts state legislature passed Cambridge's rent control petition last week but rejected provisions which would have extended coverage to federally subsidized housing in the city. The law freezes rents at the present level established by individual contracts and provides for a maximum general increase on rents of housing which is not yet leased.

The law, which is the result of the petition, forbids an owner "to ask for or receive any rent in excess of the maximum lawful rent or in excess of the level established in a then existing less, whichever is less." The maximum lawful rent for a given housing unit is now set at 130% of the rent paid and received for such a unit on September 1, 1967.

Further general increases are allowed landlords to compensate for increases in the property taxes of 1973 and 1974 and for increases in the price of heating oil where applicable. Rent increases can be obtained by owners on individual units to make up for increased expenses, following appeal to and approval by the Cambridge Rent Control Board, "provided that the amount of each such increase shall not be unreasonable in the opinion of the Board."

Tenants can file rent adjustments and increases if their housing unit is to be "covered" by the Sanitary Code or the Housing Code and Building Code of the City of Cambridge. Violations include frequent lack or curtailment of water supply, heat, hot water, gas, or electricity; roof or wall leaks, insect infestation, holes in the ceiling or walls, exposed electrical outlets and wiring, defective plumbing, and the presence of bed bug poisoning to children.

No provision is made for vacancy decontrol as demanded by some local tenants' groups and liberals on the City Council.

The home rule petition was submitted to the legislature because Senators James Kelly and Kevin Harrington of the state rent control law enabling law in the Ways and Means Committee. The entire rent law will be reconsidered.

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Summer jobs available for students

If you haven't found a summer or term-time job yet, maybe you're not looking in the right places. The Student Employment Office has dozens of part-time jobs listed on the bulletin board there, and dozens summer jobs, including three at the Kennedy Space Center in Florance.

MIT and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) have agreed to run an internshel exhibit at the Space Center. Three students are needed to staff the exhibit, according to Director Larry McGuire of the Student Employment Office (SEO).

SEO got started on Oct. 13, 1972 when from Chancellor Paul E. Gray '54, who wrote, "I have the feeling that we must organize to be considerably more aggressive concerning the identification and creation of job opportunities both on and off campus."

The growth in SEO's by students usage in recent years might indicate either success at getting Gray's goal or an economic upturn. McGuire says national statistics easily refute my thought of an upturn, but he says his office cannot take sole credit for the rising volume of jobs.

First, not all the jobs show up in his office, since Dining Service and the Libraries hire without consulting him. The Research Jobs also bypass the SEO.

He also created the Career Planning and Placement, the Admission Office, the Industrial Liaison Office and the Alumni Association with substantial support in his effort to uncover and expand the intersection between students and jobs.

"I think employers are satisfied. We get a lot of repeat business," McGuire said. But he expressed some disappointment at the relative invisibility of the office.

So far, the number of jobs and the number of students have been growing at roughly the same rate, McGuire said, but a study to illuminate the growth pattern is starting to appear. The number of job seekers is starting to grow faster than the supply of jobs.

"More and more students are working, and not because of the economy providing more jobs, but because the economy is at home isn't as good as it used to be. There are three main reasons for this: they're good, the price is right, and the cost of MIT is going up.

The approximately 26,000 visits expected to be made to the office this year will solve one of two services - individual and part-time jobs available and the resume reference system kept by Mark Crane '76, SEO student employee.

A man from Hughes aircraft came in unexpectedly looking for five junior or senior mechanical engineers," Crane explained. "We have the resumes cross-referenced by interest and major. All we had to do was pull the resumes, give them to the man from Hughes, and set up the appointments. They were with him now."