Congress debates forced retirement

By William Laorer

Legislation currently pending before the United States Congress could have profound effects on the future of higher education in this country.

The bills — H.R. 5367 and S. 1784 — would raise the mandatory retirement age for industries from 65 to 70. The Senate bill, however, would raise the mandatory retirement age for industries only by 2 years. The House bill, however, would raise the mandatory retirement age for industries from 65 to 70. The Senate bill, however, would raise the mandatory retirement age for industries only by 2 years.

The issue of an exemption has divided the higher education community, and a tough conference fight is expected. Interests for teachers — The American Association of University Professors, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), and the National Education Association (NEA) — oppose the exemption, while groups representing universities support it.

Most groups support the general increase in the mandatory retire- ment age, and the Congress has responded by passing the legislation overwhelming. The House voted 254-15 in favor of the increase, and the Senate passed the measure 87 to 6. The only controversy was concern that some provisions, which would apply to the Senate, 48 to 45.

The argument against exempting professors is fundamentally of the form: "Why exempt anyone?" Albert Shanker, President of the AFT, was quoted as saying: "If we're talking about age dis- crimination, there is no legal argument for allowing forced retirement for any reason from being kept in for college teachers." He maintained that the exemp- tion "needlessly penalizes an important part of the academic community."

It is a strong argument, because the mandatory retirement age was predicated on a newly-discovered human "right to work." Several studies have shown that people are happier and healthier if allowed to work instead of retiring early. It is allowed (or until age 70), opponents of the exemption argue, professors should be accorded the same right.

Higher education groups have been supportive of the current mandatory retirement of 65 and would not be included under the new law — for example, Congressmen themselves and highly-paid business executives are exempt. There are special reasons why university professors should be exempted — or so universities and colleges have claimed.

The big reason is that the academic job market is so depressed that even with the retirement age at 65 young Ph.D.'s are finding it difficult to find a job. Secretary John J. Shaughnessy (R-N.Y.), arguing for the exemption on the Senate Floor, declared: "We are talking about a group that is locked in."

Women and minority groups have generally supported the profes- sorial exemption. There are far more young women and blacks in- terested in academic careers than there are older women and black men. The women's movement, in particular, support the exemption. "Congress is doing this at a terrible time," one female scientist noted. "Women and minorities only have a few slots to be filled for now."

But there is lingering suspicion among the teachers' lobby that man- date retirement laws have been used to try to subvert the tenure system — older professors cannot be fired but they can be retired. Rais- ing the retirement age to 70 would help eliminate these less-than-normal motives.

Perhaps the controversy will be solved by making retirement more attractive to professors teaching the age of 65, or by instituting programs which allow professors to take a less-active role upon reaching the age. It is an issue on high-budget issues can be made on a lesser side — and in other sectors in which less one-eighth of students would be needed.

MIT: most expensive college

By Bob Waterman

MIT is one of the most expensive colleges in the country, according to Mainliner Magazine. The journal estimates the yearly cost of attending MIT at $7,600 per year. The remaining top ten most expensive colleges include Princeton, Columbia, and Yale. All schools included in the first ten are located in the Northeast, except ninth-ranked Stanford University.

The nation's most expensive schools have kept their relative ranking by cost over the past year. But these tuition rates have risen dramatically. There is no relief in sight from these increases, either. In tuition and living costs will continue to rise. Despite a consider- able decrease in MIT's budget deficit for this year, tuition rates will again rise by seven percent.

Is it worth it?

Every college student has asked himself this question during the course of his college career, in an attempt to rationalize the addi- tional costs, time, and difficulty of obtaining a college degree.

Monetary gain, this is a tough question. Polls conducted by the American Council of Education have shown a majority of college students agree that "degree" for the money. The cost of four years of college this year's incoming fresh- man might expect to pay is a considerable sum, between $30,000 and $35,000. Besides this cost, a student must consider the amount of income lost from de- layed his permanent employment by going to college, which could be as much as $40,000 to $50,000. Whether the college graduate will succeed takes less time to enter the job market is uncertain. However, with the number of college degrees rising each year, skilled- ers require higher and higher degrees for the job-seekers to be competitive.

Monetary considerations of a college degree can be easily figured, but other benefits from college education which cannot be measured monetarily in his recently published work "Invest- ment in Learning: The Individual and Social Value of American Higher Education." Bowen reports the breakdown of traditional roles which occur in college, as college-educated men look more favorably upon women's life and more willing to help with housework. The question is reminiscent of another question that many ask, according to Bowen: "Are children being more important?"

The question is reminiscent of another question that many ask, according to Bowen: "Are children being more important?"

The nation's most expensive schools have kept their relative ranking by cost over the past year. But these tuition rates have risen dramatically. There is no relief in sight from these increases, either. In tuition and living costs will continue to rise. Despite a consider- able decrease in MIT's budget deficit for this year, tuition rates will again rise by seven percent.

Is it worth it?

Every college student has asked himself this question during the course of his college career, in an attempt to rationalize the addi- tional costs, time, and difficulty of obtaining a college degree.

Monetary gain, this is a tough question. Polls conducted by the American Council of Education have shown a majority of college students agree that "degree" for the money. The cost of four years of college this year's incoming fresh- man might expect to pay is a considerable sum, between $30,000 and $35,000. Besides this cost, a student must consider the amount of income lost from de- layed his permanent employment by going to college, which could be as much as $40,000 to $50,000. Whether the college graduate will succeed takes less time to enter the job market is uncertain. However, with the number of college degrees rising each year, skilled- ers require higher and higher degrees for the job-seekers to be competitive.

Monetary considerations of a college degree can be easily figured, but other benefits from college education which cannot be measured monetarily in his recently published work "Invest- ment in Learning: The Individual and Social Value of American Higher Education." Bowen reports the breakdown of traditional roles which occur in college, as college-educated men look more favorably upon women's life and more willing to help with housework. The question is reminiscent of another question that many ask, according to Bowen: "Are children being more important?"

The question is reminiscent of another question that many ask, according to Bowen: "Are children being more important?"