LETTERS

Help Michigan learn about affirmative action

Barbara J. Grutter
Volume 39, Issue 29, *Grand Valley Lanthorn*

As president of Toward A Fair Michigan (TAFM), I noted with pleasure the desire expressed in the recent article entitled "Bake Sale Causes Controversy;" to raise awareness, generate discussion, and provide education on the subject of affirmative action preferences.

Michiganians will vote in November 2006 on the ballot initiative to amend the state constitution to ban preferences in state and local government and in universities. By the time that vote comes, nothing is more important than that the citizens of Michigan have a fair opportunity to decide for themselves what the right thing to do is in this case. As such, TAFM is committed to providing a fair and open discussion of the issue of affirmative action preferences.

Our approach is direct: we will organize public forums throughout the state, in which the most knowledgeable people in the state will present both sides of the issue. Our goal is simple: no corner of Michigan will be left unexplored; no citizen will be left uninformed.

We believe that justice in this case requires barring preferences; we don't believe that our belief is the measure of what the public should decide. We believe the public needs a fair opportunity to consider every side of the issue and to make up its own mind about what is right and wrong, just and unjust. By recruiting experts in the legal and social history of affirmative action to carry their messages throughout the state, we believe that we will be facilitating just such an open deliberation as will produce the best public decision. We have faith that the public will agree with us, but we have even greater faith that the process will eventuate in something good, whether it agrees with us or not.

We invite all to visit our Web site at www.towardafairmichigan.org and invite GVSU, in particular, to work with us to sponsor and host a public discussion of affirmative action preferences on campus.

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Affirmative Action Worthy of Debate

William B. Allen
Chairman of the Board of Directors, Toward A Fair Michigan, and political science professor, MSU
April 25, 2005, *The State News*

As chairman of the Board of Directors of Toward A Fair Michigan (TAFM), I noted with interest the desire expressed in the recent editorial entitled "Dirty dealings" (SN 4/21) to elevate the level of political discourse within Michigan - in general and specifically with regard to the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative.

Assuming approval of the petition signatures gathered, Michiganians will vote in November 2006 on the ballot initiative to amend the state constitution to ban affirmative action preferences in state and local government and in universities.

By the time that vote comes, nothing is more important than that the citizens of Michigan have a fair opportunity to decide for themselves what the right thing to do is in this case. As such, TAFM is committed to providing a fair and open discussion of the issue of affirmative action preferences - or what The State News editorial called "good, old debate."

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