

Study: Youth support Bush plan

• Poll shows Americans between ages 18 and 29 favor privatizing a portion of Social Security payroll taxes

By CHAS MCCARTHY
THE GAMECOCK

Recent polls indicate that young people are embracing President Bush's proposal for private investment accounts as a means to fix Social Security.

In a February poll, the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press reported that 66 percent of Americans between ages 18 and 29 support privatizing a portion of Social Security taxes, up from 64 percent in December.

As Social Security continues to be a focus on Capitol Hill, USC students are developing their own opinions on the issue.

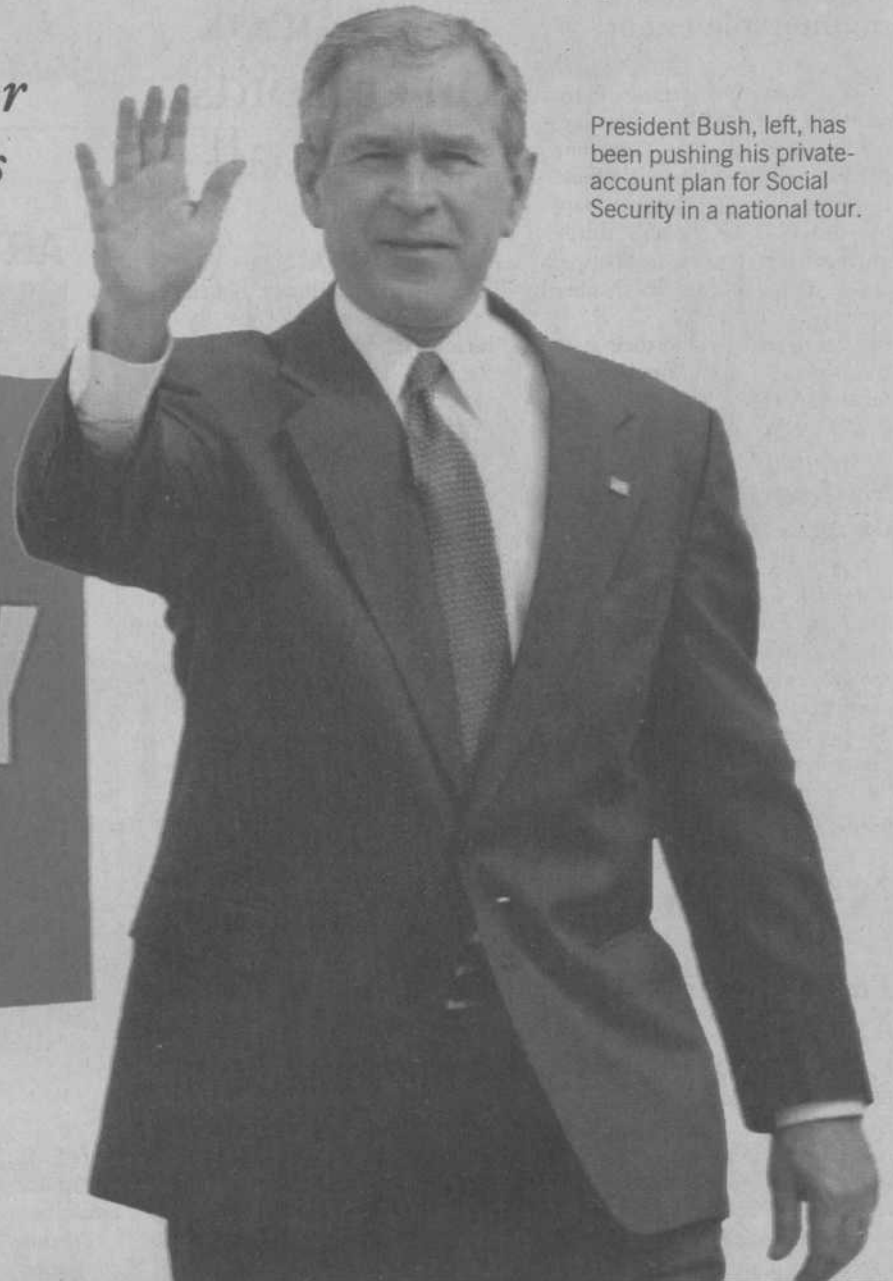
"It seems like politicians are stalling on the issue because some age groups are worried that their benefits will be cut. And it doesn't make sense because the creation of private accounts doesn't affect older people who receive or will soon be receiving Social Security benefits" said James Danko, a third-year civil engineering student.

Danko said his frustration stems from a fear that he won't be repaid 40 years from now. The Social Security Administration estimates that the federal government can afford to pay full benefits until 2018, at which point tax revenues will not be enough to support those receiving aid. And the situation will only get worse afterward, experts say.

"In a few decades, under current law, there will be 74 cents in taxes coming into the Trust Fund from which \$1 in projected benefits must be paid out. Hence, there is a potential serious problem with the system that should be addressed now — not two decades from now," said B.F. Kiker, a chairman of the economics department in USC's Moore School of Business.

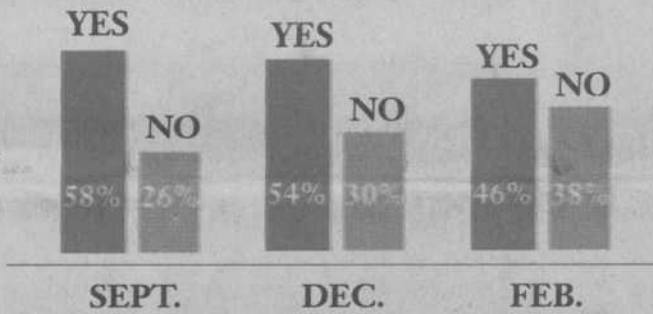
Bush's solution is to invest a portion of each citizen's payroll taxes — which are withheld from paychecks to fund Social Security — in a combination of conservative bond and stock funds, which would accumulate over time in a sort of personal bank account.

"Since the (accounts) are individually owned, they provide an opportunity for a

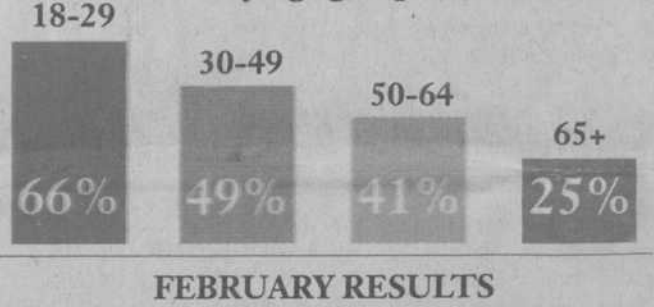


President Bush, left, has been pushing his private-account plan for Social Security in a national tour.

Opinion on Private Investment Accounts (all ages)



Support for Private Investment Accounts (by age group)



SOURCE: PEW CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE AND THE PRESS

ABOVE: PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY CHAS MCCARTHY/THE GAMECOCK

CERTAIN USC COLLEGES LACK REPRESENTATION

By TAYLOR SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Student Government has authorized the creation of a new office to assist student organizations, but the organization did so with only about 30 percent of senate seats filled.

Of 50 seats allocated to USC colleges, 14 are vacant and only eight have been applied for. SG Vice President Ryan Holt said senate was suffering from the same student apathy SG dealt with last term under a different administration.

"The vacancies are in the standard colleges that don't normally get representation," Holt said. "Social Work doesn't really care, and there aren't many budding politicians in the engineering school."

Fixing the problem might be as easy as raising publicity, Holt said. SG has tried posting advertisements and has considered legislation to allow constituent communication via Blackboard. Vacancies in the graduate schools of colleges like Social Work might be harder to fill, Holt

said. "People just don't care. They are in grad school and some even have families," Holt said. "They need to care, though, because we give money to their social work functions."

Holt said he believes the senate will inevitably grow to 45, but a majority of the vacancies would have to be filled to accomplish that goal. Holt's 45-senator goal would be the largest number of representatives in several years if he met it.

"Students are going to get more representation than in previous years but the same colleges aren't getting represented," Holt said. "Obviously we aren't going to shaft them because they aren't represented, but that is the biggest problem right now."

Holt said there are six colleges with vacant seats: the colleges of music, public health, nursing, mass communication, engineering and social work. Because the same colleges have lacked representation

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KATIE KIRKLAND/THE GAMECOCK
USC basketball coach Dave Odom, above, denied reports that he was offered Virginia's coaching position.

Odom: no plan to go

• Basketball coach denies being offered Virginia position

By STEPHEN FASTENAU
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

Dave Odom has not spoken to the University of Virginia about its head coaching position, the USC basketball coach confirmed in a Monday statement.

In the statement, Odom, 62, denied reports he had been offered the vacant position at the University of Virginia but did not elaborate on his potential interest in the position.

The Washington Post reported Monday that Virginia Athletics Director Craig Littlepage had offered Odom the position, and that two sources said Sunday night Odom was ready to accept the offer.

Both men were assistant coaches at

Virginia in the 1980s and were in St. Louis for the NCAA Final Four.

One ACC coach, speaking on condition of anonymity, told The Post that Odom would take the job because he "hates coaching in the SEC."

Odom said Littlepage called him during the weekend, but that they did not discuss the vacant coaching position. Odom said Littlepage had not asked USC Athletics Director Mike McGee's permission to begin talks.

"Upon arriving in St. Louis at the Final Four on Saturday morning," Odom said in the statement, "I received a call from (Littlepage) asking if I would talk with him

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Sunday Night Alive sings adviser's praise

By KELLY CAVANAUGH & JON TURNER
THE GAMECOCK

Baptized in a Missouri farm pond at age 7, religion has always been a part of Ken Fleak's life. At USC, he helps others make it part of theirs.

Fleak was named faculty advisor of the year for his work with The Fellowship: Sunday Night Alive, a group of students that produces a free comedy show Sunday nights in the Russell House Ballroom. The show is based on the popular TV show "Saturday Night Live."

SNA members nominated Fleak for the award during his last of six years at USC. He'll be returning to his home state to be closer to his family.

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Jamie Wright, Sunday Night Alive cast member and president, said the biggest impact Fleak has had on SNA members is the support he has shown the group through the years.

"We know that we can always come to him for anything, whether it's related to the show or not, and he'll be there for us," she said.

Wright, a fourth-year public relations student, described the comedy show as "secular," but said that there is a brief Christian message at the end, in which hosts share their testimonies.

Fleak said he was first invited to SNA by one of his students.

"In teaching beginner Spanish classes

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The Gamecock editor arrested, released on bond

By JON TURNER
NEWS EDITOR

The Gamecock Editor Michael LaForgia, suspected of malicious injury to real property, was arrested and detained by USC police early Tuesday morning.

The USC Police Department incident report by officer Jesse Simmons said a witness reported that LaForgia and Andrew Krasny were pouring a bottle of caulk on a Genie cherry picker located behind Callcott House, and that LaForgia had thrown a putty knife through a glass window on the building's second floor.

Officers arrested the pair at Green and Laurens streets. Krasny was released,

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THIS ISSUE

◆ THE MIX

More than just 'Piano Man'

"Movin' Out," a Broadway musical featuring Billy Joel's lyrics and Twyla Tharp's entrancing choreography, has hit the road.

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◆ SPORTS

Chapel thrill

The UNC Tar Heels record first national title for seasoned coach Roy Williams with their 75-70 win against the Illinois Fighting Illini Monday night in St. Louis.

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