

Mills' absence spurs debate in student government over stipend

BY WILLIE PUCHERT
NEWS EDITOR

CSUN Vice President Joe Mills' absence has been a subject of controversy in the student government.

Mills, who was absent for four weeks because his mother was ill, said he left adequate means of contacting him, but concedes to not returning messages left by several student senators.

He said he left information with the executive secretary

on how to contact him.

President John Pida stated at the Aug. 14 and 21 student government meetings there were several attempts to contact Mills both personally and officially. UNLV Police Chief Dave Hollenbeck was also notified due to concern of his whereabouts.

"To say that I would blow something off is stupid, because the reason I got involved is because I do care. If anybody's mother was sick and in the hospital and might die, if

they said,

"That's not important to me, then they're a sick person because my family is important to me," Mills said with tears in his eyes.

When asked if Mills' excuse warranted his absence, Office of Student Information Director Steve Hagen said, "The personal affairs of the executive body and the Senate are not a subject for official comment."

Pida added that he sympathized with Mills' emergency

but felt he should have been contacted personally, since he is Mills' direct supervisor.

Pida and Mills both acknowledged a strain in their personal relationship, and said it had soured over the summer.

"I have thoughts on him personally, but I would like to keep them to myself to keep things productive," Pida said.

When asked to comment on their relationship, Mills stated, "Our offices are next door to one other."

Mills' absence has spurred a Senate proposal to lower his August stipend from \$750 to \$75 and another proposal to lower his monthly stipend to \$600, effective Sept 1 through May 14.

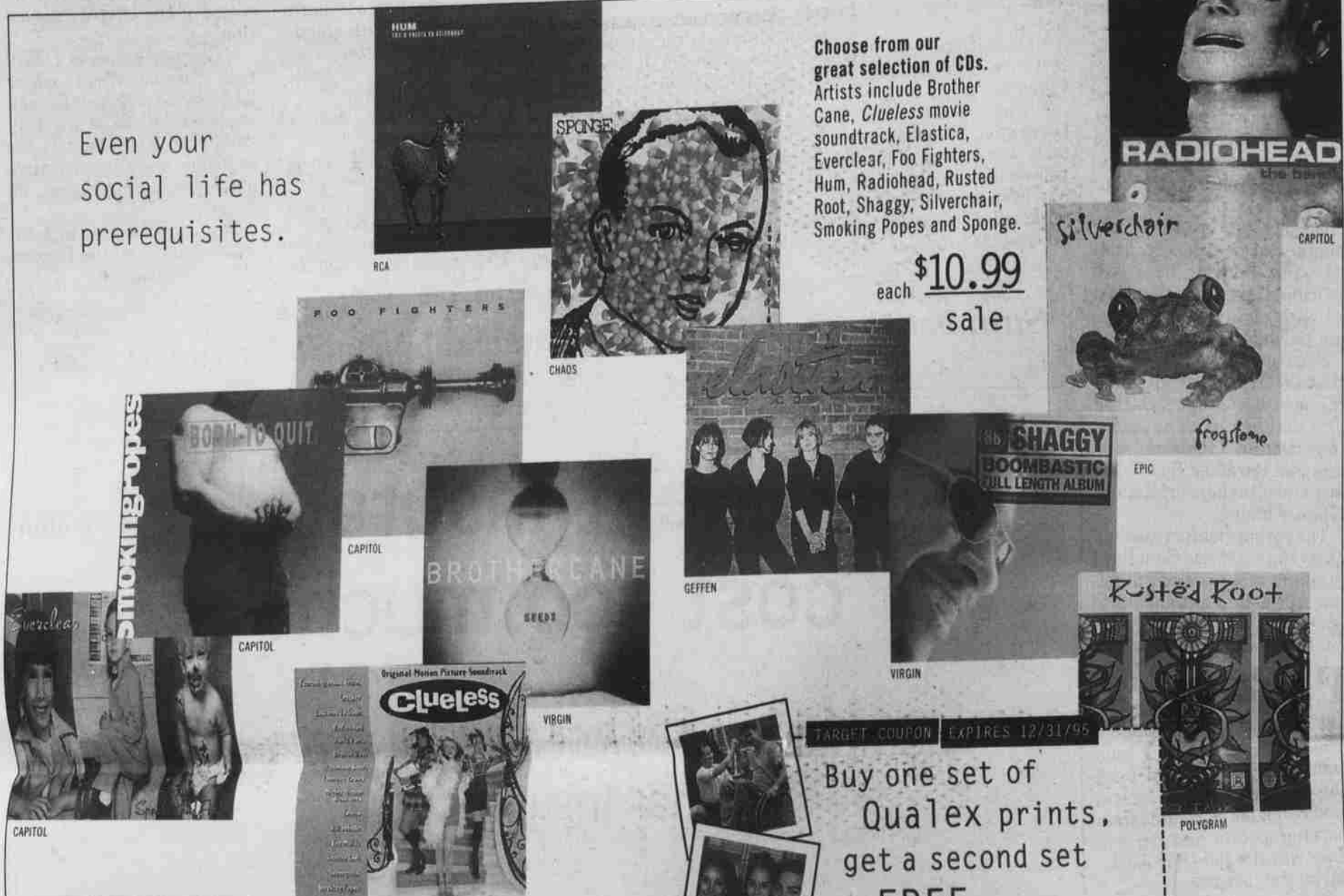
The proposals, introduced by Senator Leia Fleischman, will be discussed and voted upon at tonight's Senate meeting.

Staff Writer Wendy Plunkett contributed to this story.

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