

May 1, 2003

Name
Address
City, State Zip

Dear _____:

Thank you for contacting my office regarding the recent column in *The Daily Mississippian* that endorsed students' sexual activities.

Obviously as a parent, I am greatly concerned about the article. This is definitely not what we want to promote for our children. Giving our children the tools they need for a bright future is the best gift we can give as leaders and as parents.

Your voicing your opinion and concerns exemplifies the democratic principles upon which our nation is founded. Although we may not always agree with each other's opinions, we have the right to share those opinions. Although you may not agree with Ms. Rose's column, she is afforded the same opportunity to express her views as you are. As to the future of her column, in accordance with normal yearly procedure, *The Daily Mississippian* will have a new editor as of May 3. It will be within the new editor's discretion as to if Ms. Rose's column will continue to be carried in the newspaper.

The Department of Human Services will continue to strive to show our youth that abstinence leads to a better quality of life. The department's Abstinence Unit addresses reducing teen pregnancy, as well as the issues of out-of-wedlock births and other "at risk" behaviors of Mississippi's young people. According to recent data from the Mississippi Department of Health, teen pregnancies in Mississippi have been on the decline since 1997. In 1997, there were nearly 10,000 births to teens. That number dropped to 8,624 in 2001.

Thank you again for sharing your concerns with me.

Very truly yours,

RONNIE MUSGROVE

RM:klr