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COLUMBIA LAW SCHOOL STUDENT SENATE

On the FY 2007 Debt

September 5, 2007

To the Students of Columbia Law School:

We regret to inform the student body of a situation that arose at the end of last year. Each year, the Senate honors the graduating 3Ls and LLMs by hosting Graduation Ball. We raise the majority of funding for the event through ticket sales, but a portion of the funding comes from the Student Activity Fee. Last year’s event had lower-than-expected ticket sales and higher-than-expected costs, resulting in substantial debt for the Senate. Student Services informed the current Executive Board of the situation over the summer, and we have since been working diligently to find a solution to this problem. While we have explored many different options, none resulted in a reduction of the debt. The only viable solution to the problem is to pay off the debt with Senate funds for the 2007-2008 academic year.

It is important to note that this plan will have no effect on funding for student groups or their events. Last year, Senate allocated $100,000 to student organizations for their many events and activities. With the increase of the Student Activity Fee, this year we will allocate $150,000. We will instead pay off the debt with money that we would have spent on events organized by the Senate. Because the Senate budget would have increased along with the increase of the Student Activity Fee, the student body should expect little to no reduction in the services rendered by the Senate. Barristers’ Ball will be better than ever, and we will still sponsor numerous social, community, and academic events throughout the year. Unfortunately, plans for growth will have to be put on hold until we have settled our debt.

We humbly apologize for this misstep and assure the student body that we are working to ensure that a situation of this magnitude does not happen again in the future. We ask that you have patience with us as we work to correct this mistake and return the Senate finances to normal.

Thank you for your understanding,

Best regards,
Student Senate

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