

Rep. Moul discusses scholarships, vaccines and more at Rotary meeting

By Alex J. Hayes Times Managing Editor

Rep. Dan Moul, R-91, hopes to end a practice that negates the value of private scholarships.

Many schools decrease their financial aid offers when they learn how much a student will receive from private scholarships. Moul learned of this practice, called scholarship displacement, from

Adams County Community Foundation Chief Executive Officer Ralph Serpe and plans to draft legislation to stop it.

"What is the point of having the student go out and do the extra work to help pay for a college education if the college is just going to take back theirs?" Moul asked during a Rotary Club of Gettysburg meeting Monday. "When Ralph told me about that, the hair on my neck stood up a bit."

The Adams County Community Foundation awards about \$110,000 per year to Adams County students. Some of the awards are merit-based, but most are based on a combination of merit and financial need. As a manager of donor-advised funds, Serpe said previously the foundation's mission is to ensure funds entrusted to it are used to accomplish the donors' wishes.

"It is a donor-intent issue. They want to support students, not institutions. That's the promise that we make to donors," he said. "The vast majority of donors really (donate) with the intent to provide opportunity for students."

Moul said outlawing the practice will likely be an uphill battle, but he is willing to fight.

"I am like a little Don Quixote, I am going to take on the windmill except this time I am going to knock the windmill down," Moul said, in reference to the literary character.

Scholarship displacement was one of many topics Moul addressed Monday

COVID-19 vaccine

Moul said he and his staff recently met with Dr. Andrew M. Hoffman, dean of PennVet at the University of Pennsylvania, about the school requiring all in-person students to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

"They have every right to do it because it is a private school. They have a right to make the rules,"

Moul said.

Republican leaders in the House of Representatives recently sent PennVet a letter stating they will refuse to vote for any appropriations to the school if it does not change its policy. Moul disagrees with his colleagues and believes their attempt is misguided.

"It is too important of a school for us to withhold funding," he said.

Moul said Hoffman described to his staff how the vaccine is effective and safe. After the meeting, two of Moul's staff members who previously "didn't want to be guinea pigs" got the vaccine, Moul said. The representative had already received it before his meeting with Hoffman.

Farm Show Complex

Moul said he is concerned about personal protective equipment (PPE) being stored at the Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex in Harrisburg, making the building unavailable for public use.

"I don't have any one governor or one person to blame for this. No one saw a pandemic coming," he said.

The issue is part of the 2021-22 state budget negotiations, Moul said. Pennsylvania Department of General Services Secretary Curt Topper requested \$6 million to pay for a new facility to house PPE.

Moul hopes an agreement can be reached soon so the Farm Show building can reopen for general use.

"That building generates an awful, aMul lot of revenue for the commonwealth," Moul said

He noted the Mecum Auto Auction, originally scheduled July 28 to 31, has been cancelled. Moul said the auction is an important revenue-generator for the Farm Show Complex and Dauphin County economy.

"We are talking about millions and millions of dollars of economic impact that we did not get," he said.

Election reform

Moul said an election reform bill currently circulating is a highly controversial topic and its passing will require "a lot of give and take."

Moul said he supports the elimination of ballot drop boxes other than those in county courthouses

"Everyone has a drop box right outside their front door. It's called a mailbox," he said.

He said five days of early in-person voting, which is proposed in the bill, will help those who fail to mail their ballot in time.

Moul said he had heard from many, including Adams County Commissioner Chairman Randy Phiel, about the need to allow county election offices to prepare ballots earlier than election day. Moul said "preparing" includes removing the ballots from envelopes and flattening them. Ballots would not be counted until election day under the proposal.

Critical Race Theory

Moul said his offices' phones are ringing "constantly" with calls from people concerned about Critical

Race Theory being taught in schools. Critical Race Theory states racism is a social construct, and not merely the product of individual bias or prejudice.

"I have no clue if any schools in Adams County are pushing it, teaching it, whatever," Moul said. "I

am of the mindset that it is the school's responsibility to teach the kids. It is the parent's responsibility to teach them what type of person to be."

Moul said he works with people of many backgrounds in Harrisburg and does not believe there are race-related issues among them.

"I think our youth got past racism years ago. I think America got past racism years ago. It was the news media that ginned it up," Moul said. "I don't feel oppressed, no one feels oppressed here. We all just get along."

Employment

A meeting attendee asked Moul his thoughts on the current labor shortage. Moul said he has personally experienced the problem while dining and believes additional unemployment benefits are a contributing factor.

"As long as the federal government keeps shoving it out there and the governor keeps handing it out, I don't know how you stop it," he said.