

Unicameral delays environment action

by STEVE STRASSER
Staff Writer

Action was delayed Thursday afternoon on the most comprehensive environmental protection bill ever submitted in the Unicameral.

Public hearings on the 61-page bill were conducted by the Legislature's Government and Military Affairs Committee before a packed house in the Capitol's east chamber.

The massive bill was co-introduced by Omaha Sen. Richard Proud and Lincoln Sen. Wally Barnett. It calls for the creation of an executive Department of Environmental Protection.

"If we left pollution control to industry it would be 5,000 years before anything got done," Proud testified. "Industry is in business to make money."

Barnett said he had "traveled the state from one end to the other," and found pollution to be a major concern of Nebraskans.

The new department would be run by a director appointed by the Governor with advice and consent from the legislature. It would take over jurisdiction now held by the Water Pollution Control Council, the Air Pollution Control Council, and the Radiation Advisory Council. It would also incorporate the pollution control functions of the Department of Health.

At the Thursday hearings Proud urged committee approval of the bill, citing the proposed department's authority to make "powerful" regulations governing pollution control.

Barnett said both Gov. J. J. Exon and former Gov. Norbert Tiemann support the bill.

LB879 reflects recommendations of a special study committee appointed in Tiemann's administration, as well as the 1967 legislature's interim Study Committee on Environmental Control.

Exon's representative at the hearing, John Sullivan, said the Governor's office thinks LB 879 is a "sensible, reasonable, responsible, business-like approach to preserving our heritage."

"We now have about eight different major agencies involved in pollution control," Sullivan continued. He said consolidation of these agencies into one department could be accomplished for about \$25,000 more than is being spent on pollution problems now.

Government and Military Affairs Committee chairman Sen. Terry Carpenter of Scottsbluff suggested Nebraska's Governor should be given entire responsibility for the proposed Department of Environmental Protection instead of an appointed director.

Exon would be willing to take this responsibility, according to Sullivan.

The bill's drafter, University associate law professor Silas Lyman, was also agreeable to Carpenter's suggestion.

Lyman stressed that LB879 would not affect the substance of Nebraska's pollution laws, but dealt only in consolidating and reorganizing the structure of the state's pollution control system.

In all, 23 supporters of the bill testified in its favor, though several amendments were introduced to the committee for consideration.

Most of the amendments wanted changes in Section 15 of
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Photos by Mike Hayman

East High cager Kent Rockway . . . broke two state tournament scoring records in action against Alliance High School Thursday.

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How well are we doing? . . . Chancellor Durward Varner attempts to explain the University's position to the Legislature's Appropriations Committee.

Budget hearings. . .

Varner wants super-study

by JIM PEDERSEN
Staff Writer

University officials pulled no punches Thursday in the first day of budget hearings before the Legislature's Appropriations Committee—in fact they threw a few new ones.

Instead of directly asking the powerful Appropriations Committee for more money than recommended by Gov. J. J. Exon, Chancellor D. B. Varner submitted a five-point proposal designed to raise NU appropriations to the mid-point of Big Eight Schools.

THE VARNER PROPOSAL included:

—A professional individual or team to determine money provided for each full-time student in each of the Big Eight Universities, excluding colleges of medicine.

—A determination by the same external individual or group of the mid-point level of support provided for these universities.

—Multiplication of the mid-point support per student by the enrollment of the University of Nebraska Omaha and Lincoln

campuses to provide NU a level of support equal to the mid-point of other Big Eight schools.

—Use of the resulting calculations to determine budget support for the year the University is now operating. In order to maintain this level for the year ahead, Varner suggested that the average increase recommended by the governors in Big Eight states be applied to the University of Nebraska.

—Adjustments of tuition charged University students, excluding medical students, to coincide with the mid-point tuition charged both resident and non resident students in other Big Eight universities. **VARNER DEFENDED** his proposal saying it is "easy to understand, obviously fair, and represents a position which all parties involved can defend with good conscience."

The NU chancellor prefaced his proposal with a call for an end to the controversy which has surrounded the budgets as

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A zealous Hastings Tiger fan . . . cheers her team in the conquest of Omaha Westside. Hastings will meet Lincoln East in the semi-finals Friday. See tournament results and schedules, page 7.