

# Hearing testimony opposes fees bill

The Nebraska Legislature's Education Committee voted late Tuesday to hold Kearney Sen. Gerald Stromer's bill calling for the elimination of state aid to college and universities utilizing mandatory student fees.

If passed, Stromer's measure would force institutions to abandon collection of such fees.

Many legislative observers speculated the 6-1 vote to hold LB 1271 as an attempt by committee members to intimidate the University of Nebraska and encourage the regents and administration to deal with the matter themselves.

Senators have shown concern over speakers and conferences which have been at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and in the upcoming World in Revolution Conference.

At the committee's public hearing Monday, Stromer called student fees "ambiguous." He questioned whether students should be forced to support newspapers, speakers and conferences which they disagree with.

"Freedom of expression must also protect the minority," Stromer said. "True freedom of speech" would be accomplished, he said, if mandatory fees were dropped.

"The boards (of control) have been approached—no action," Stromer charged. "When other agencies fail it is left to legislation."

Merk Hobson, University of Nebraska executive vice president for academic affairs, said if LB 1271 were passed it could mean \$96 million worth of bonds would be lost by default.

"Legally the board is locked in to payment of bonds by student fees," Hobson told the committee. Student health facilities, Nebraska Union and dormitories have been financed by the issuance of bonds.

John Braeman, NU history professor, urged that the Legislature stop mandatory fee collections.

The *Daily Nebraskan* also came under attack again with David Beauregard, English professor, calling it "liberal-to-radical."

"Student journalists are responsible to no one," he claimed.

Ralph Larson, NU law student asked senators to protect and preserve the first amendment by passing the bill.

"This bill is big business on the University campus," Larson charged in reference to the amount collected annually in student fees.

Larson also called student government "a farce." He was joined by others who said "ASUN does not touch students significantly" and "it's government where none is needed."

Terry Cannon, state chairman of Young Americans for Freedom also spoke for the bill.

President D.B. Varner told committee members that he felt "students would vote overwhelmingly to support student fees."

According to Varner, student government, union board programs and the newspaper amount to only 10 per cent of the student fee total at the Lincoln campus.

"Newspapers should be independent," Varner said. "I don't think they would survive without the present subsidy at this time, however."

Responding to Sen. Duke Snyder's question whether the *Daily Nebraskan* hold a monopoly on newspapers, Varner said, "The World Herald occupies about that spot in Omaha."

Varner's comment that he had not known of a more "responsible student newspaper" than those on the UNL and UNO campus brought some laughter from the audience.

Since Stromer was the introducer of the bill, he was permitted to speak last. Sen. Donald Elrod, committee chairman from Grand Island, asked Stromer if members of Young Republicans, of which he is state president, receive a newspaper as part of their dues. Stromer replied that they do.

## 'Y' faces debt

Profits from the Student YWCA International Bazaar in December were only enough to cover the cost of merchandise stolen during the three-day sale, according to YWCA Faculty Adviser Twig Daniels.

She called the \$5,000 loss—which left the organization's budget \$2,000 in the red—"extremely frustrating" after the amount of work done to put on the bazaar.

Daniels said this will be a "make it or break it" semester for the Student Y since Student Activities has informed the group's executives they cannot continue the organization's account without assurance the debt will be paid and funds will be available for the estimated \$3,000 the "Y" needs to operate another year.

Another gloomy prospect, Daniels said, is spending a year making money instead of being able to continue the "Y's" projects.

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