

VD bill advances

A bill permitting examination and treatment of minors for venereal disease without parental consent has been moved to general file in the Nebraska Legislature.

State Sen. Wally Barnett, Lincoln, said he introduced LB 1096 because the State Health Dept. and doctors have termed VD an "epidemic" rate within the state.

The bill was advanced out of the Unicameral's Public Health Committee on a 5-2 vote following extended debate.

Under existing Nebraska law, if a juvenile is determined to have VD, the examining physician must notify the individual's parents.

"Kids weren't going in," Barnett said. "They don't want it reported to parents."

Henry Smith, a State Health Dept. spokesman, said his agency endorses the bill.

Recent figures show over 4,500 cases of VD were reported in Nebraska last year. State officials feel less than one-fourth of all cases are reported, however. That would make VD the largest reported communicable disease in the state.

Omaha Sen. Glenn Goodrich questioned whether the bill wouldn't make young people "indulge a little bit more."

Barnett countered, saying the fact is "they are indulging."

"The question today is do we want to cure the disease or do we want to tell the parents," Barnett told committee members, "We have a way to cure the disease."

Goodrich still questioned the proposed change. "It just grabs me when someone steps between myself and my children," the Omaha lawmaker said.

"Until we admit we have a problem, we aren't going to cure it," Barnett said.

Now that the bill has been moved out of committee, Barnett feels if fellow senators don't pass it "then they don't understand it."



Arbitration Board meets amidst lengthy discussion

Proponents and opponents of the proposed March World In Revolution-Justice in America Conference offered their views to the Interim Arbitration Board in a lengthy open meeting last night.

Board member James Lake, Faculty Senate president, said the board was charged by Interim Chancellor C. Peter Magrath to determine if the conference would be "in the best interests of the total University of Nebraska" and if it represents "reasonable balance of diverse viewpoints."

Another board member, Union Board President Kerry Winterer, said the Arbitration Board hopes to make a final decision Thursday.

University student, Dave Holst, representing the Union Board, Union Program Council and World in Revolution Conference Committee, said the three bodies reaffirmed their support of the proposed conference because he said they believe it is well balanced and well planned; student participation in the planning has been at a maximum level; and to allow the threat of "possible legislative action" to change the conference would constitute a failure to act in accordance with guidelines in the UNL Campus Handbook.

The "legislative action" referred to is LB 1271, a bill that would cut off state support—in any form—to any Nebraska College which assesses mandatory student fees.

Dennis Confer said he did not claim the conference was poorly planned or had an imbalance of speakers, but it is just untimely.

Verbal harassment at the University, a December freeze on student fees, and the close Legislative vote to take student fees away from the Daily Nebraskan, the University student said indicated "people have not forgotten" the controversial programs at the University.

He also said the successful vote to hold LB 1271 is an indication to him legislators want to see what steps the University will take in correcting programs currently under fire.

ASUN Legislative Liaison Committee member Michele Gagne said her talks with students from other colleges facing possible penalization said it is their consensus "other schools should not be penalized for our (the University's) activities," by the passage of LB 1271.

Three World In Revolution Committee members, including Conference Chairman Dennis Berkheim, said great effort has been made to have an orderly, balanced conference, representative of all campus interests.

ASUN First Vice President Michele Coyle read from the newly-passed Senate resolution calling the proposed conference a "lawful, viable form of expression" and endorsing the plans as they are now.

Two faculty members spoke in favor of the conference and a dormitory graduate assistant said he believed the "average student" also wants the conference, but not at the expense of all student fees.

Plans to have the conference fully or partially financed through the selling of admission tickets were proposed.

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