

Hearing considers Decamp's abortion proposal

by Nancy Stohs

Standing outside the East Senate Chamber of the State Capitol were several women wearing black armbands and carrying signs saying "Abortion is a Social Disease—Restrict it".

Inside, the Public Health and Welfare Committee of the unicameral was about to spend three and a half hours in public deliberation over LB286—Sen. John DeCamp's proposed state abortion law.

The bill, introduced by DeCamp Tuesday, is an amended version of a previous bill, but is a "bill in itself," he said.

Following guidelines set by the Jan. 22 Supreme Court decision which declared statutes similar to Nebraska's existing abortion laws illegal, old LB286 proposed legalizing abortion up to the third month of pregnancy with consent of the woman.

In contrast, the current bill, LB286, is described by DeCamp as a "medical standards bill" because it does not directly sanction abortion in Nebraska, but rather defines illegal procedures and penalties.

Because Nebraska's previous law was declared void, abortion is virtually unrestricted in Nebraska. DeCamp called this a dangerous situation.

In the public testimony that followed, the committee heard abortion views ranging from medical to constitutional to theological standpoints.

The Nebraska Physicians who spoke basically supported LB286, with minor alterations.

He also said mandatory hospitalization should not be required for abortions during the first three months of pregnancy.

According to Dr. Robert Messer of the NU Medical Center, the center hospital has faced a "tremendous demand" for abortions since Nebraska's laws became void.

Speaking for the Nebraska Catholic Conference, Paul V.



Bruce Hamilton . . . to defy the U.S. Supreme Court's abortion decision is the same as asking support for drug pushers.



John V. O'Hara . . . DeCamp's abortion bill better than no abortion law at all.

O'Hara expressed support for restrictive abortion laws, but said the conference opposed the Supreme Court ruling making them necessary.

Several persons said legalized abortion on demand denies the unborn child the constitutionally-guaranteed right to life.

"Murder is murder at any stage of human development," said a spokesman for the Lincoln Organization of Women for Responsible Legislation.

Supporting the legalized abortion but opposing LB286 was a man who called the bill "class legislation" because only financially well-off women could afford a hospitalized abortion.

A woman who tried to obtain an abortion in Nebraska several months ago testified to this and said no woman should be forced to have a baby she didn't want.

Several groups who opposed legalized abortion proposed instead that the Legislature defy the Supreme Court decision.

A state-wide moratorium against abortion and the prosecution of all women and doctors involved in abortions since the January ruling were among the suggestions.

State Sen. Frank Lewis called this "in poor taste" and added that under a constitutional government, the only legal way to reverse a Supreme Court decision is through a constitutional amendment.

Lincoln attorney Bruce Hamilton said asking the Legislature to defy the "law of the land" was no different than asking for support for drug pushers or crime in the streets.

The youngest woman testifying at the hearing was Mary Lyons, a high school sophomore from Omaha. Lyons, a member of the Right to Life committee of Omaha, said the proposal contained too many constitutional loopholes to be passed.

Smith: It'll cost \$600,000 to save \$120,000

by Ken Kirk

Implementing changes in business procedures could save the University \$120,000 a year. But the changes will cost \$600,000 to implement.

This is what Glenn Smith told the Board of Regents at its meeting last Saturday. Smith is in charge of University budget and systems planning.

He was commenting on a progress report from the New York consulting firm of Cresap, McCormick and Paget, which was hired to study the administrative and business operations at the University.

The consulting firm made 135 business recommendations; 48 have been adopted and another 85 are in various stages of implementation, Smith said.

University officials disagree with two of the recommendations, he said.

Revision of the accounting system was one of the changes recommended by the report. Other recommendations included the transferring of National Defense Education Act (NDEA) loans to accounting, and the centralization of investment of idle cash funds. All of these recommendations have been implemented.

The report also suggested reducing the number of

housing payments made by students.

"We haven't taken time to set down with each recommendation to determine how much time and resources (money and people) are needed," Smith said.

He estimated it would take two-and-a-half to four years to implement all the changes. "It depends on how fast we get the money," he said.

"To do it right we need to study the recommendations for six months."

"What the University is for is a general map including time and dollar estimates and a list of priorities telling which recommendations will give the greatest return, he said.

Smith said the University would put money into the area with the longest payoff first.

Smith said implementing the recommendations would save money, but it would be difficult for the average taxpayers to see where money is saved.

Spending will continue to rise as the University continues to grow, he said. If the University would stop growing, the savings would be obvious as spending decreased.

Smith said there were two possible sources of

money to implement the changes. State appropriations or a temporary price increase in the food and supplies inventories could provide financing.

Smith said there was not enough time after the report was received to request state funds to finance the changes.

"Given unlimited resources we still couldn't implement all the recommendations in a year," Smith said. "With \$600,000 over three years we could probably get it done."

He said the savings would come primarily from reducing the cost of supplies and by reducing the time people spend on various tasks.

Smith said \$100,000 to \$150,000 a year is "probably a conservative estimate of the savings, if we make all the changes."

As an example of how money could be raised to implement the recommendations, he said the price of a ream of paper might be increased one penny.

All the pennies will go to implement the change, which might reduce the cost of the paper by two or three cents. So Departments may pay an extra penny a ream this year, but in two years might be saving two or three cents a ream yearly.