

Student regent necessary

At best, the position of student regent would be an innocuous one.

If the post were created by a constitutional amendment passed in the November election, three students from the NU campuses would share the title of "regent."

However, the students would have no vote on board decisions. Except for their newly bestowed title, they would have no more clout than the current student advisory board, which attends monthly board meetings and offers the regents a glimpse of the student perspective.

The title of student "regent"—though a dubious distinction—probably is worth campaigning for. According to both surveys and hearsay, a provision for a voting student regent would never make it past the polls.

If the pending amendment is approved in November, the next

step—though it might require years of cajoling voters, judging from the Nebraska political climate—could be granting the student regent full voting status. Only then could he be an effective mouthpiece for student causes.

Input is needed to persuade voters that the student regent position is necessary. One way students can have that input is to join ASUN's Concerned Students for Better Higher Education Committee. The group is campaigning for the regent amendment, but has been crippled by a lack of volunteers.

If the amendment is passed, it probably will evoke combined feelings of minor victory and long-range frustration. How unfortunate that student rights and responsibilities must be accrued in the tiniest increments.

Jane Owens



Nonvoting regent valid

Editor's note—Jim Say is chairman of ASUN's Student Rights Committee.

By Jim Say

This November Nebraska voters will consider a constitutional amendment to seat three University of Nebraska students on the Board of Regents.

The amendment, first on the ballot, would establish a non-voting position for the student body presidents of the Lincoln, Omaha and Medical Center campuses.

The major goal of the student regent amendment is to provide direct student access to the regents. Almost all of the regents have attended the University in the past, but most of them have graduated before or near the end of World War II.

Since then, the campus has grown and become more complex yet the regents' physical presence on the campuses has been limited mainly to meetings, receptions, guided tours and football games. Therefore they aren't exposed daily to the general attitudes which exist on campus.

Not only are the attitudes of administration, faculty and staff in danger of being ignored, but also those of the students. In fact, the student viewpoint should be considered most important, because the student is the essential "consumer" of education. If there were no students, there would be no university.

Throughout the state, the major objection of the amendment has been its necessity. Students could compete for the regent post on the regular ballot since they have been given the 18-year-old voting franchise. A guaranteed seat, the argument goes, indicates a lack of initiative to go through regular channels.

Yet this isn't necessarily the case. First, not all students are old enough to vote in the general public elections.

Secondly, when a student finally is able to vote, there is no guarantee of a regent election in his district during the time he is in college because of the regents' six-year term.

Third, some students are non-residents and cannot vote in the regular regent districts.

Fourth, the advantages of having a student on the board would inevitably be lost if he served six years. In order to obtain a direct input benefit during his term, the student would have to go to graduate school at least two years if he were elected as a freshman.

ASUN opinion

If the student decided not to go to graduate school, two problems would arise. First, his student status would be lost and he would be in a position similar to that of the other regents. But more importantly, the graduate would just be starting his new employment, while most of the other regents have established positions in their occupations. Therefore, the graduate would probably find it more advantageous to resign his post.

Students, nevertheless, have attempted to run for the board. In each of the two district seats up for election this year, a student ran in the primary. Both ran last in the balloting.

This shows to other disadvantages of using "normal channels". One, it takes a great deal of money to make sure your name is known to all. A self-employed person has a tremendous advantage over the student with part-time employment who must also pay for his education.

Two, an outstate student who is attending school most of the time has little chance to build up a political base in his home district.

Perhaps the major student criticism of the amendment has been the lack of voting power of the proposed student regent. Yet, given the current political atmosphere in Nebraska, the non-voting provision is candidly the only plausible way that a change may be effected in the Board membership.

Last spring, a poll was conducted by *The Omaha World-Herald*, which showed a tremendous distaste among voters for the proposal of a voting student member. Granted, a non-voting membership is severely limited, but hopes are that after such a position is established, it may later be given full voting status if successful.

Campus support of the amendment unfortunately has had little statewide impact so far as this semester. As a general statement of student backing, last week the ASUN senate unanimously endorsed the amendment. An ad hoc group also has been formed. Sponsored by ASUN, it meets Thursday at 7:30 in the ASUN office.

Other efforts by ASUN, such as summer speaking tours of the state by President Clingenpeel and research of the issue by its Legislative Liaison Committee, need to be supplemented.

A major statewide effort must be launched soon if the apprehensive nature of Nebraska's voters is to be overcome.

Most of the non-student population is simply unaware of the advantages of a student regent. If the issue meets defeat in November, it may very well be the fault of students that none of the Regents has a student I.D.

to the editor

To the students at UNL:

About 50 young Americans will be killed today. Nearly 250 will be maimed or disfigured.

Not from street drugs or disease, but from the drug alcohol.

About 50 young persons will die on Americans highways today. Half or them because someone was drunk. Not a 50-year-old drunk. Not someone with a red nose and pot belly. Someone like you.

Someone who, just this once, had too much beer at a kegger or too much booze at a party. Someone who says, "I'm fine, I'll drive." Someone who, just this once, is drunk out of his mind and behind the wheel of a car.

He might kill his best friend. He might kill a stranger. Or he just might kill himself.

Regardless, someone young and alive is suddenly young—and dead.

Nearly 8,000 young Americans are killed each year in drunk driving accidents. And thousands more are scarred and crippled for life.

That's more than in war, more than from drugs or suicide or disease. And most are killed by persons their own age.

In fact, the No. 1 killer of young Americans is young Americans.

We believe, now that you know these facts, you will want to prevent this injustice to all who die innocent, young and sober. You can do everything to help.

Like what? Like, when you're making the rounds, have one of the group volunteer to drink coke and do the driving. When your roommate gets smashed, keep him or her out of the driver's seat. Even if it's his or

her car.

What else? You can learn your own alcohol quotient—how many drinks you can have before you're impaired. That's three drinks if you weigh 160 pounds. And you can know the law. It is illegal to drive in Nebraska if your blood alcohol concentration is 0.1 per cent or more. That's five drinks if you weigh 160.

The automobile is the greatest single threat to persons under 30 years old. We want to change that.

We believe you want to change that, too. Because it's your friends who are doing the killing. And your friends who are being killed.

James Shelley, director
Lincoln Alcohol Safety Action Project
Editor's note: "Know your limit" cards showing alcohol capacity by weight and height are available in the Legal Service Center, Nebraska Union 335.)

Marvel backs UNL lobbyists

Dear Editor,

I recently read in the September 18 *Daily Nebraskan* of student efforts to support the student regents bill. I wish to commend members of the University of Nebraska student body who have formed the Concerned Citizens for Higher Education to lobby for passage on Nov. 5 of the student regents bill.

As the sponsor of this legislation, I, too, am deeply committed to the principles involved in it. Student input on University policy-making bodies is absolutely necessary to insure representation at all levels. The advice and criticism that I have received from students in my years as a professor has proven to be invaluable and I feel the populace of Nebraska will find this to be true if this legislation is passed.

Again, best of luck in working towards this very worthwhile goal.

Richard D. Marvel, state senator