

daily nebraskan

thursday, april 1, 1976 vol. 99 no. 103 lincoln, nebraska

inside today

It's Greek to... The fourth annual Greek Week starts April 4, complete with speakers, exchange dinners and Trivia Bowl finals p.2
Hot Days and Studying: Registration deadline for priority for summer school courses is Friday..... p.7

Petition jeopardizes ASUN's role

By Bryant Brooks and George Miller

Copyright 1976, The Daily Nebraskan.

Petitions will start circulating today calling for a referendum to transfer all of ASUN Senate's power to a new student governing body.

The action comes after the Senate Wednesday night rejected an Organic Act asking it to call a referendum.

The referendum is a student vote and passage would require approval by a majority of students voting in a general election.

The Senate took three votes on the issue but failed each time to get the necessary two-thirds majority approval to call the referendum. Twenty-six senators were needed to vote for the act for it to pass.

The second vote fell one short of approval. However, on the final reconsideration, with two more senators present, the act failed 19-5-3. The original vote had been 18-7-0.

The act, introduced from the audience by former Sen. John Dobitz and first moved by Professional College Sen. Fritz Stehlik, calls for a referendum to decide if students

want to replace ASUN with a Coalition for University Reform. The Coalition "would assume all responsibilities, contractual agreements, rights, powers, duties and official functions of ASUN" and would transfer all ASUN Senate money to the "respective student activities accounts of the Coalition."

Under Part A, Section 4, Article 7 of the ASUN Constitution, a petition signed by three per cent of the student body forces the Senate to call for a referendum. If the Senate takes no action on the matter within 15 days, a petition signed by five per cent of the student body requires the ASUN Electoral Commission to schedule a vote within eight days after the Senate is given the petition. Approval of the referendum requires the ASUN president to enact it by decree.

The Coalition's organizers began circulating an initiative petition Monday to be presented as part of the Organic Act to ASUN.

An organic act stipulates a change in ASUN's structure or procedures.

The group passed the required three per cent mark

when they accumulated 764 signatures by meeting time Wednesday.

Arts and Sciences Sen. Scott Cook said UNL students will have the final say whether ASUN power is transferred to the Coalition.

Cook, University Student Awareness (USA) candidate defeated in the March 17 ASUN presidential election, said if students approve the transfer of power, they would then vote on representatives and officers for the Coalition. The president of the Coalition then would be student body president and serve as a nonvoting member of the NU Board of Regents.

Graduate College Sen. Steve Goldberg opposed the referendum saying he did not have enough time to study the constitution of the Coalition. He proposed that the motion be tabled for a week to give senators time to study the constitution.

"I don't have anything against a referendum," Goldberg said, "but I don't like the present Senate going on record for some coup d'etat. My moral code is upset by doing it this way."

Business Sen. Jim Buckley accused persons favoring the referendum of being "very crafty" about "shoving it through as fast as possible."

"If we vote against it, it will give it (the referendum) more time to be studied and more students will be able to vote for it," Buckley said.

However, Buckley agreed that the Coalition was a better system than ASUN Senate.

Graduate College Sen. Marie Engelke said the petitions before the Senate forced senators to approve the referendum.

"ASUN runs by a set of rules," Engelke said. "We are legally held to do something about it. That means legally we have to say 'yes.'"

Architectural College Sen. Joe Stavas complained that the petitions were circulated "unprofessionally" and said those circulating the petitions and those signing them did not really know what they were doing.

He said that persons wanting the Coalition should "go out and get the additional signatures" to prove that students really do want to vote on the change.

Stehlik argued that the Senate should approve the referendum so students would not have to wait until another petition drive got signatures from five per cent of the students. He said if students are required to vote on the referendum and then vote for persons to sit on the Coalition, they would need all the time they could get to learn about the Coalition and decide which candidates to vote for.

ASUN President Jim Say later said ASUN Electoral Commissioner Ray Walden resigned Wednesday night, effective Friday and a new electoral commissioner is what he called badly needed. He asked anyone interested to apply at the ASUN office. Continued on p.6



Photo by Terry Gansbom

ASUN Arts and Sciences Sen. Scott Cook, one of those defeated in a bid for a student referendum to vote on a power transfer from the ASUN Senate to the Coalition of University Reform, tried explaining his viewpoint during Wednesday night's ASUN meeting.



Photo by Kevin Higby

Crofton Sen. Jules Burbach, speaker of the Nebraska Legislature, wraps up a 20-year career as a state senator. Burbach announced his retirement earlier in the session.

Senators approve NU construction

By Dick Piersol

State senators, crowding more work into a single day than at any other time in this session, gave final approval Wednesday to several measures, including capital construction projects, medical malpractice legislation, the major state government appropriations bill and a gasoline tax increase.

The 1976 session is now finished, but senators will meet April 7 to vote on remaining bills on final reading and to consider overriding any gubernatorial vetoes.

Among the capital construction projects approved for NU were fire safety renovation, \$2.5 million of a \$10 million total for a plant sciences building, renovation for the Coliseum and development plans for a cardiovascular unit at the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

Those projects were included in Gov. J. James Exon's construction recommendations, along with funds to initiate construction of medium-minimum security corrections projects in Lincoln and Omaha. Several state recreation improvements and smaller construction projects for other state agencies also were included.

"Illegitimate hybrid"

Senators also approved LB1006 by a narrow margin, financing a combined state office building and continuing education center for the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) and Metro Tech. Omaha Sen. Ernest Chambers, who attempted to kill the measure, said the building would not improve education in Omaha and was an "illegitimate hybrid", spawned by Omaha business interests to save what he called a dying downtown area.

The building would be financed by \$9 million from the state cigarette tax fund and \$5 million from private donations, most of which will come from Peter Kiewit, publisher of the Omaha World-Herald.

The bill passed final reading 31-14.

The appropriations bill for most state agencies' operating costs in the next fiscal year, LB691, also was passed. It contained a \$15 million increase in state aid to schools

and is said to be a sure target for Exon's line-item veto.

Exceed Exon's recommendation

With final round passage of LB690 (state aid to higher education) and 691, the two most important appropriations bills, the Legislature exceeded Exon's "checkpoint prudence" state tax spending goal of \$364 million by more than \$20 million. Those figures exclude capital construction.

Senators also voted, 26-17, to raise the state gasoline tax one cent, from 8.5 cents a gallon to 9.5 cents, effective August 1.

Two bills concerning medical malpractice insurance also were passed, as Chambers failed in his efforts to kill both bills.

LB434 provides for a \$500,000 limit on a "health care provider's" liability, and a \$100,000 limit on an insurer's liability. Any claim awarded beyond \$100,000 would come from an excess liability fund.

Insurance fund

That bill also provides malpractice insurance from the fund for doctors if they are refused by at least two commercial insurers.

LB917 provides a contingency insurance plan, allowing the State Department of Insurance to assess up to two per cent of a health care provider's gross income for malpractice insurance if that provider is not covered by a commercial insurer.

In other action, senators—approved a study and analysis of the state's rural, urban and reservation American Indians.

—approved a resolution supporting issuance of a commemorative stamp depicting the late John G. Neihardt and Black Elk, the subject of Neihardt's most famous book.

—rejected a resolution endorsing a plan to give the NU Board of Regents permission to give vacated Pershing College in Beatrice, now owned by the NU Foundation, to Southeast Technical Community College.