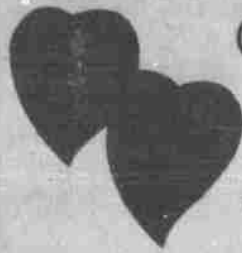


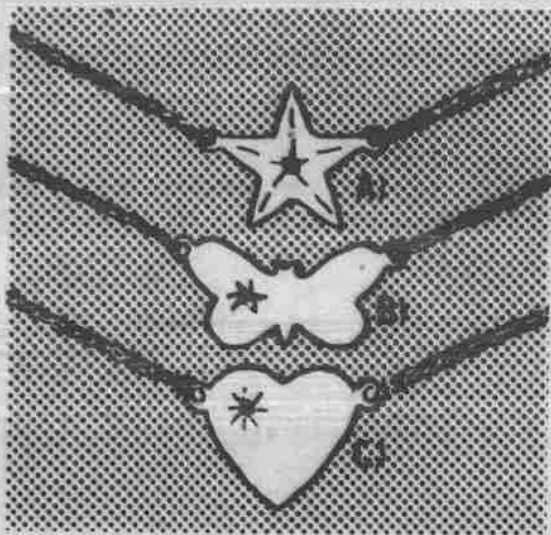


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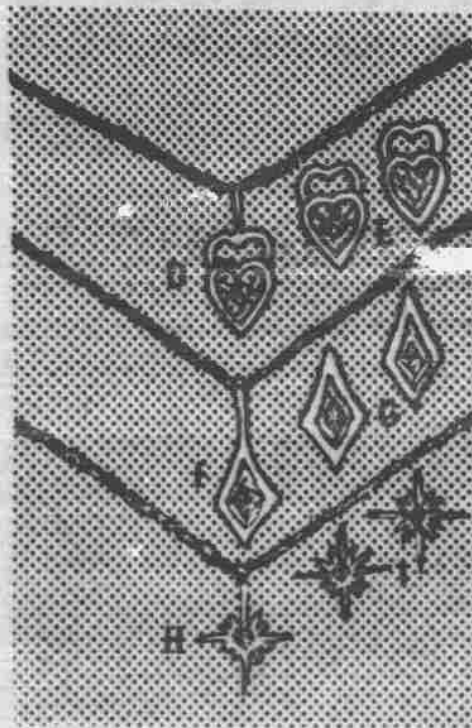
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Roskens assumes neutral position on bill for single governing board

By Paula Dittrick

Interim NU President Ronald Roskens took a neutral stand in his testimony about a bill calling for a single board to govern all postsecondary education in Nebraska during a Legislature hearing Thursday.

Avoca Sen. Calvin Carsten called such a position a possible first in legislative procedure.

Sen. Donald Dworak of Columbus introduced LB295 as an alternative if other legislative proposals for the coordination of higher education are not adopted, Dworak said.

This bill calls for the creation of a nine-member board to govern all state and technical community colleges, as well as NU.

The board would replace these institutions' current governing boards, including the NU Board of Regents.

Coordination favored

Roskens said he favored coordination of education if it would lead to the elimination of curriculum duplication, more effective use of state resources and produce the maximum quality of education in Nebraska.

He suggested the bill be amended to include a date it would become effective if passed.

Claiming such legislation would ease the transition to a single board, Roskens suggested one or two years would be needed to merge the institutions' different policies concerning tenure, academic programs and finances.

Dworak said he would be willing to "go along with a reasonable request" concerning a transition period.

A member of the LR36 study interim commission, Dworak said it is "quite clear to me there is a need for better coordination of education in Nebraska."

The LR36 study is examining methods of postsecondary coordination. There now exists the 579 Coordination Council, a postsecondary education advisory committee formerly called the 1202 Commission.

Dworak said the 11-member volunteer board of the 579 Council does not have authority to prevent duplication.

Dworak said he believed technical community colleges in the state have different responsibilities, but he protested duplicating programs for different sections of Nebraska.

The bill calls for the board members to be unsalaried,

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but, upon committee questioning, Dworak said he would be willing to consider adopting a salary.

When asked if he thought a nine-member board could meet the workload of coordinating all higher education in Nebraska, Dworak said the Board of Regents are taking 60 or 70 per cent of the load based on the proportion of state funds allocated differing institutions.

Regent Robert Koefoot of Grand Island said he was speaking on behalf of himself when he opposed the bill.

'Superboard'

"The people in the state are not, and I repeat, are not ready for a superboard," Koefoot said. He added that such a board might be more likely in five or six years.

Koefoot, a member of the 579 Coordinating Council, said the council has not "been given a chance to work." He admitted the council has faced problems with technical colleges, but claimed such problems are over.

"I think all community, technical and state college's and the university (of Nebraska) system will cooperate with this council," Koefoot said.

Koefoot attributed a communication gap to a recent coordination problem when Metro Tech of Omaha created agriculture courses without telling the UNL Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Koefoot said the Institute and Metro Tech are now cooperating with one another.

Koefoot said the 579 Council wanted the private colleges in the state to remain. Sen. Dworak said his bill would not affect the private institutions.



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