



In their first week of business, the Legislature considered about 40 bills held over from last session.

Photo by Mark Billingsley

Passage of bill to affect sitters

Lancaster, Douglas and Sarpy county residents who regularly babysit children in their homes still will be subject to State Welfare department regulation if LB372 becomes law.

Residents of these counties will have to be licensed by the state before they can care for children. But under Grand Island Sen. Ralph Kelly's bill, which received second-round approval by the Legislature Friday, residents of Nebraska's other 90 counties would have to be licensed only if they care for more than five children, excluding their own.

The Legislature has considered about 40 bills held over from last session since it convened Jan. 4. Among the bills given first-round approval are: LB223—introduced by Omaha Sen. Patrick Venditte, would increase the penalties for driving while intoxicated.

LB65—introduced by Omaha Sen. Ernest Chambers would restrict high-speed police chases.

LB165—introduced by the Judiciary Committee, would require that couples be at least 17 to be married with parental consent.

The senators also adopted a resolution supporting the farm strike, 48-0.

The Legislature still has about 130 holdover bills to consider, and nearly 300 new bills. There are 52 working days left in the session.

Senators will take a two-week recess for committee hearings beginning Wednesday. The two-week recess will not count against the 60 working days of the session.

GLC protests tuition hike, backs bills

The ASUN Government Liaison Committee (GLC) will lobby for a bill regulating landlord's use of damage deposit money and for the passage of the NU budget intact, according to GLC Co-chairman Mike Herman.

LB121, a bill introduced in the last session to require landlords to keep damage deposits in a separate bank account and to prohibit them from using the money as working capital, will top GLC's priority list, Herman said.

The bill is important, Herman said, "because the percent of students living off campus is pretty high, like 60 percent."

GLC also will urge the Nebraska Legislature to pass the entire NU budget request, he said. Particularly important to GLC is the approval of a nine percent faculty salary increase.

But GLC will lobby the NU Board of Regents in opposition to a proposed tuition hike to \$22.50 per credit hour.

ASUN's main objection to the tuition increase is that "the amount of cash generated... is less than one percent of the budget," Herman said.

Tuition at NU already is the highest in the Big 8, he added.

The committee contacted nearly 300 parents at the end of last semester "urging them to write their Regents" about the increase, but parental response has been less than he had hoped, Herman said.

GLC also will lobby against a bill proposing "that all higher education institutions in Nebraska be governed by one board of governors, Herman said.

On the national level, the committee is studying the proposed tax credit bill before Congress which would allow a tax credit to parents paying tuition to any educational institution.

The committee is studying the stands taken by national student lobbyists on the matter before taking a stand themselves, Herman said.

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