

Chambers rallies support for higher speed limit

By Patti Gallagher

State Sen. Ernie Chambers, President Ronald Reagan and Gov. Charles Thone are not three names often connected. But when the subject is increasing interstate highway speed limits, the three sit on the same side of the fence.

In testimony Wednesday on LB143 Chambers' bill to raise the interstate speed limit to 65 mph the Omaha senator said the change in the federal administration, along with support of Nebraska's governor, will aid passage of his bill.

In the last legislative session, Chambers' attempt to raise the limit failed by two votes. What caused the most objection was fear that federal funds would be eliminated by violating the federally mandated 55 mph speed limit.

But Chambers told the Public Works Committee Reagan has publicly spoken in favor of allowing states to set their own limits and funds, therefore, would not be threatened.

Additionally, he said, the new secretary of transportation, Drew Lewis, supported moving the decision to the state level during his swearing-in speech.

Support for the change also exists in the U.S. Congress, Chambers said. Sen. S.I. Hayakawa, (D-Calif.), is sponsoring a bill to abolish the federal 55 mph limit and allow the states to set their own speed limits, he said.

Thone also has indicated support for LB143, he added.

Only two persons testified during the 45-minute hearing. A student from Norfolk supported the bill and an insurance representative spoke against it.

Fuel savings possible

Chambers also argued that an increase in the speed limit would be safer and more fuel-efficient. Interstates are designed for high speed, he said. The 55 mph limit

often discourages their use when alternate routes are available, he added.

When more cars begin using the interstates, Chambers said, fuel savings will follow. Travel on regular highways causes the need for acceleration and deceleration, both of which waste fuel, he said.

Additionally, Chambers argued that fatality rates are often misused in support of the lower limits. The figures, he said, include pedestrian deaths and those on city streets and other highways, and therefore cannot be used as support for lower interstate limits.

Sen. Martin Kahle of Kearney said up to \$90 million in federal highway funds could be lost if Nebraska violates the federal limit. But Chambers said, in addition to Reagan's support, at least three other states—New Mexico, Wyoming and Colorado—are planning to raise speed limits.

Chambers said he would reject a committee amendment offered by Sen. Peter Hoagland of Omaha that would delay the change until the other states adopted it. The delay, Hoagland said, would test federal reaction in those states.

"To subvert the bill until other states initiated the speed limit change would be improper delegation of authority," according to Chambers.

Lower Omaha speeds

Chambers also said he would reject a Hoagland amendment to exempt the downtown Omaha interstate system from a speed limit change.

Chambers said because the bill does not include an emergency clause, it would not take effect until three months after the end of the legislative session. Other states may have set new limits by then, he argued, and if federal funds were cut off to those states, Nebraska could rescind passage of LB143.

Speaking against Chambers' bill was Roger Ketelsen, an employee of Independent Insurance of Nebraska. He said his major objection to increasing the limit is the severity of accidents at higher speeds, which leads to increased insurance rates.

In addition to increasing the cost of insurance, Ketelsen said the cost to society the costs that cannot be measured—include a loss of productivity.

If a skilled machinist were badly injured, Ketelsen said, the costs include a loss of production, need for additional raw materials for that production, removing a parent from a family and possibly changing the person from a productive to a dependent member of society.

Fowler has advice for UNL lobbyists

By Sue Jepsen

The most common mistake students make in lobbying is to get impatient and angry with a senator, according to Lincoln Sen. Steve Fowler.

At a recent strategy meeting with Government Liaison Committee members, Fowler cautioned against threatening or arguing with a senator.

Not being organized is another fault in student lobbying, he added, especially when several student groups lobby at the same time. The senators get the groups confused, he explained.

Fowler said the two most critical times concerning the fate of the proposed NU budget will be the Legislature's Appropriations Committee vote on it and after a possible governor's veto.

"When the budget is on the floor it is not cut, or at least not significantly," he said.

Because students are not a traditional "political force," Fowler said, tactics like filling the Legislature's balcony aren't effective unless senators know beforehand that students are going to do it.

He also cautioned against over-building expectations of crowd size at such rallies.

"Always underestimate it (turnout) by half and call it an immediate success," he said.

GLC members asked Fowler how effective each of their planned lobbying activities was, from his viewpoint as a senator.

Campus tours complete with brown bag lunches for the senators were called very important by Fowler.

"You've got to trade on things that are uniquely 'student,'" he said.

He also suggested that students do role-playing to prepare to meet senators and to have three or four good arguments to back up each of their budget demands.

"Know what you are going to ask the senator to do and why you want that," he said.

Fowler also urged the GLC lobbyists to play to the senators through their backgrounds, to find someone the senator can identify with, or play to what he is most interested in.

Fowler gave GLC background information on the members of the Appropriations Committee and guessed which of GLC's budget priorities each senator would be most receptive to.

New appropriations members Vard Johnson, Larry Stoney and returning member, Myron Rumery should be key members in GLC's lobbying effort, Fowler said.



Photo by Mark Billingsley

Out on a limb

Robert McEwen finds himself out on a limb, cutting the dead branches of trees for the UNL grounds crew. McEwen is a UNL English teacher on leave for this semester. Various sources credit him with several jobs, one of which is climbing trees for fun and profit.

ASUN makes formal campaign restriction policy

By Bob Glissmann

An act which prevents ASUN candidates from using ASUN resources, facilities and offices for campaign purposes passed by voice vote at the ASUN meeting Wednesday night.

Organic Act Number 5 prohibits candidates' use of the ASUN, Government Liaison Committee and Legal Services offices, as well as the Credit Union, ASUN President Renee Wessels said the restriction had been in effect in the past, but it was informally acknowledged. This act put it into policy form, she said, so that no political party would receive ASUN support.

In other action, GLC chairperson Nette Nelson reported lobbying efforts in the Nebraska Legislature have begun. Nelson, who is a registered lobbyist on behalf of ASUN and GLC, said she has contacted state senators and has organized a series of formal meetings which will be open to interested students.

"We're after interaction with the senators," Nelson said. "We have an opportunity to share with them a student perspective."

Nelson said the meetings include Tuesday morning breakfasts, Thursday afternoon "brown bag" lunches and meetings at the capitol with senators. Nelson said interested students could also "adopt a senator," preferably one who represents the student's home constituency.

She said Sen. Vard Johnson of Omaha will attend the first luncheon today at 12:30 p.m. in the Pewter Room of the Nebraska Union. Subsequent meetings will include each senator at least once, and interested students are invited to attend and express student concern. One of which, Nelson said, involves Governor Thone's proposed budget increase for the university.

Thone has recommended a 12.8 percent UNL budget increase, but Nelson and GLC strongly support the 18 percent increase requested by the university, she said. She

also said GLC supports legislative positions which would increase UNL faculty salaries so they would be comparable to that of other land grant institutions.

"They are far below the average," Nelson said. She said GLC also supports increases in UNL Affirmative Action funding, capital construction improvements on Bessey, Architecture and Former Law halls, and increased state funding for UNL's libraries.

While GLC understands the Governor's policy of fiscal restraint and appreciates his support of the university, Nelson said GLC disagrees with his recommendation.

Nelson said students should contact her or GLC committee members Drew Beltz or Laura Lonowski for further information.

In other action, President Renee Wessels said she is "pleased with the recommendation" of \$65,000 for the 1981-82 budget by the Committee for Fees Allocation.

That figure includes a \$20,000 allocation for a State Student's Association and \$9,000 for a director of development for ASUN, Wessels said.

A resolution, which states the ASUN Book Exchange enjoyed unprecedented success this semester and should receive ASUN's full support in the future was passed.

inside thursday

Gimme Shelter: The Lancaster County Civil Defense Agency tells where to go in the events of nuclear attack Page 6
Hans Solo-Mio: Opera veteran Hans Beer visits UNL to help with production. Page 8
The Good Life: Nebraska's Jerry Shoecraft says he plans to stay in Nebraska after graduation Page 10