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Legislature to consider resolution condemning federal aid reductions

By Melinda Norris

Ronald Reagan's reductions in federal aid to students are condemned in a resolution pending in the Nebraska Legislature.

The Legislature will be asked today or Friday to approve LR266 urging Reagan to reconsider his "massive financial aid reductions." The resolution also asks Congress to "reaffirm its commitment to education by at least retaining the current level of spending for higher education assistance programs."

Copies of the resolution will be sent to the president and members of the Nebraska congressional delegation.

The resolution, which originated in the office of Sen. Steve Fowler of Lincoln, was introduced to the Legislature by six state senators March 23.

"Steve felt it was important for the Legislature to make a statement about the cuts," said Barb Richardson, legislative aide to Fowler.

According to the resolution, by 1984 Nebraska students could lose more than \$11 million in educational assistance.

Reagan has proposed eliminating guaranteed student loans for graduate students,

supplemental educational opportunity grants, state student incentive grants and the national direct student loan program. Reagan has also proposed a 40 percent reduction in the Pell Grant Program and a 30 percent reduction in the college work-study programs, the resolution said.

In 1980-81, more than 18,000 students used Pell Grants to attend Nebraska universities and colleges. More than 22,000 students from Nebraska universities, colleges and technical colleges used guaranteed student loans to pay for their education, the resolution said.

The resolution recognizes that the proposed cuts would "penalize Nebraska students who default on less than 5 percent of their loans" and that "access to education will become more difficult to obtain for Nebraska's lower and middle income students."

Information for the resolution came from Nebraska universities' and colleges' financial aid departments, the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Post-Secondary Education, Reagan's proposed budget, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Student Aid News* and *The New York Times*, Richardson said.

Student Court requests rehearing

By Betsy Miller

The UNL Student Court Tuesday ordered a rehearing to hear Electoral Commission Director Jennifer Fager's response to charges that she gave misleading testimony to the court during February and March.

Chief Justice Joe Nigro said Fager has four days to file an answer to the court's charges and then a hearing date will be set.

The misleading testimony stems from an answer the Electoral Commission filed Feb. 17, which stated that no candidates or parties for the ASUN Senate elections were informed about when they could post election signs.

Earlier, UNL students Mike Frost and Kathy Mach filed a complaint against the commission that said the Real Party had been told by the commission that they could post signs earlier than the other parties.

The court's statement says that at a court hearing Feb. 18, Mach charged that on Feb. 9 Fager informed all candidates except Frost, presidential candidate for the STUPID II Party, that posters could be put up before Feb. 10.

Fager heard Mach's Feb. 9 testimony but didn't try to clarify the contradiction between her remarks to Mach and the commission's earlier answer, the court's statement says.

Also, the court points out that on March 1, Fager told the court she informed Brian Stonecipher, an independent candidate, and the Working Coalition Party that they could post signs before Feb. 10. This further contradicts a written concession by the commission that it informed only the Real Party about the poster rule.

Fager said she would not comment until she files a statement with the court.

Forum speakers say financial aid funding vital

By Betsy Miller

Hal Daub, Nebraska 2nd District congressman, said changes in the current financial aid program must be made, but Reagan's proposals to eliminate some grants and reduce others are not acceptable.

Daub spoke at a student financial aid forum Monday night at the NU Medical Center in Omaha.

The forum, organized by the medical

center student senate, featured Daub, State Sen. Gerald Koch of Ralston and Neal Vanselow, medical center chancellor.

Among the approximately 75 people attending the forum were students and student representatives from UNL, Creighton University and the medical center.

Daub said he has contributed to the fight to save financial aid programs from being cut.

He co-sponsored a resolution to continue funding in 1983 for Pell Grants, award-

ed to students with financial need, at the same level as in 1982, he said.

That resolution has been amended to include protection for Guaranteed Student Loans and the Work Study program, he said.

Daub said the federal government probably will propose three alternatives to the current GSL program. They include:

- reducing GSLs and keeping the same low interest rate.
- increasing the interest rate on GSLs while keeping the same funding.
- tightening eligibility requirements for the loans.

The federal government has proposed that graduate and professional students be exempted from receiving GSLs, that students pay 10 percent of the loan at the time it is issued (up from 5 percent), that the 9 percent interest rate be increased to the full market rate two years after students begin repayment and that students show documented proof of financial need to receive GSLs.

"The needs test will probably end up being part of the compromise," Daub said.

It will be difficult to achieve a compromise because students affected by the changes start practicing "turf protection," as do other groups when their programs are threatened.

"We're all in this boat together; we all have to give a little," Daub said.

Koch said he is "absolutely and profoundly frightened" that the government is

eliminating financial aid funding and that the number of people with college educations may decline.

He said defense spending is being increased at the expense of educational funding. Koch is chairman of the Nebraska Legislature's Education Committee.

"It will be a great day when education has all the money it needs and the Air Force has to have a bake sale to buy a B-1 bomber," he said.

Koch said he benefited from the G.I. Bill of Rights, which helped pay for college, and that other students need financial aid to help them through.

Chuck Mulry, president of the medical center student senate, said 72.1 percent of medical center students receive GSLs.

If some of the Reagan proposals to raise the interest rate of loan repayment pass, a medical center graduate taking out the maximum amount of loans at a 14 percent interest rate could face a \$109,000 debt after graduation, Mulry said.

UNL students will be hit heavily by any restrictions on loans, ASUN Second Vice President Bob Fitzgerald said.

Next year, 435 grants might be eliminated, he said, for a total loss of \$245,953.

"This would be a crippling, if not fatal blow," to some students, Fitzgerald said.

At Creighton, 75 percent of the students receive financial aid, which pays for 83 percent of all tuition assessed there, Mike Halier, president of the Student Bar Association, said.

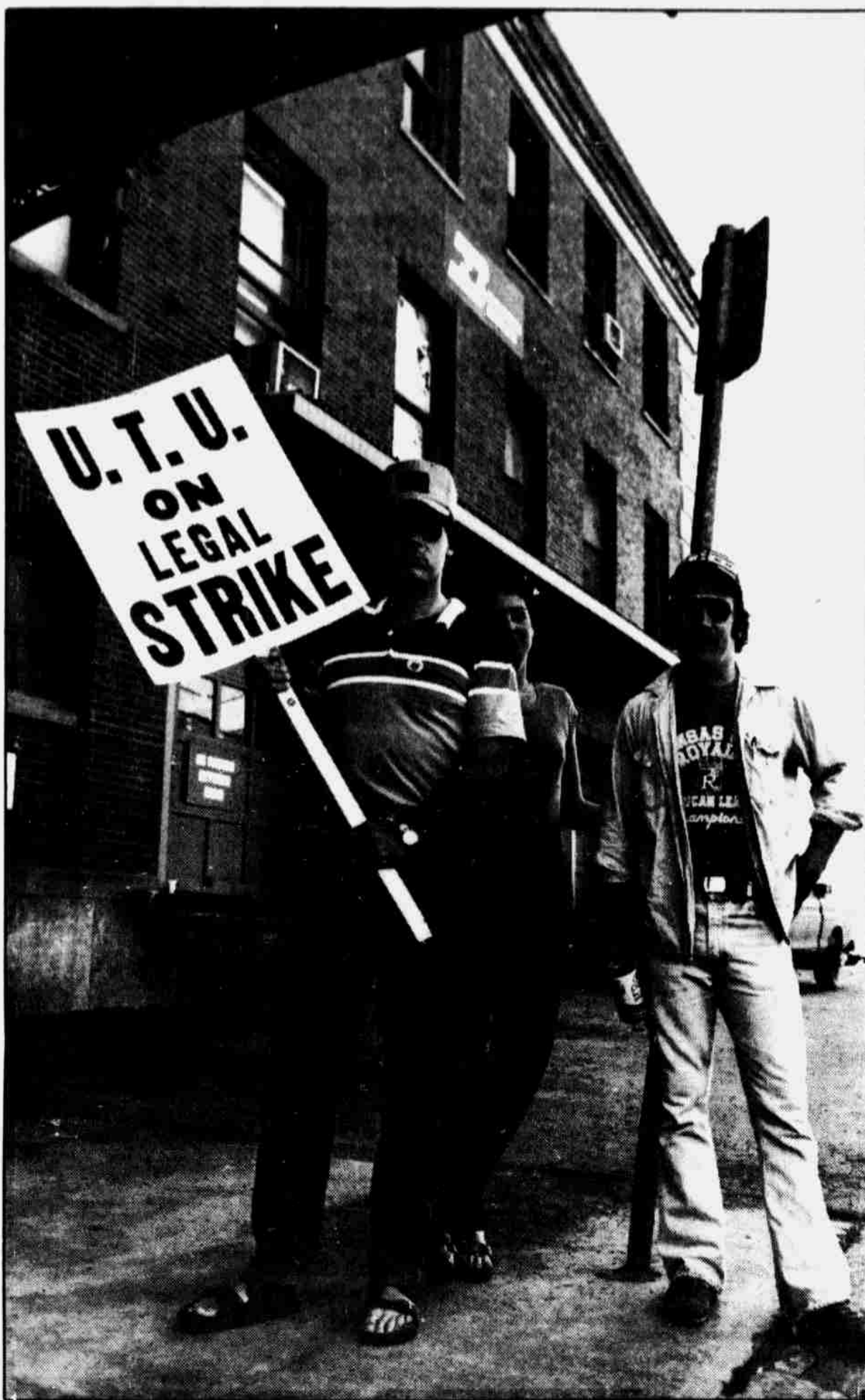


Photo by Dave Bentz

Burlington Northern wildcat strikers Bill Stull, Penny Heusel and Pat Slade picket in front of the Burlington Northern office Tuesday. The strike concerns a dispute about employees' contract rules.

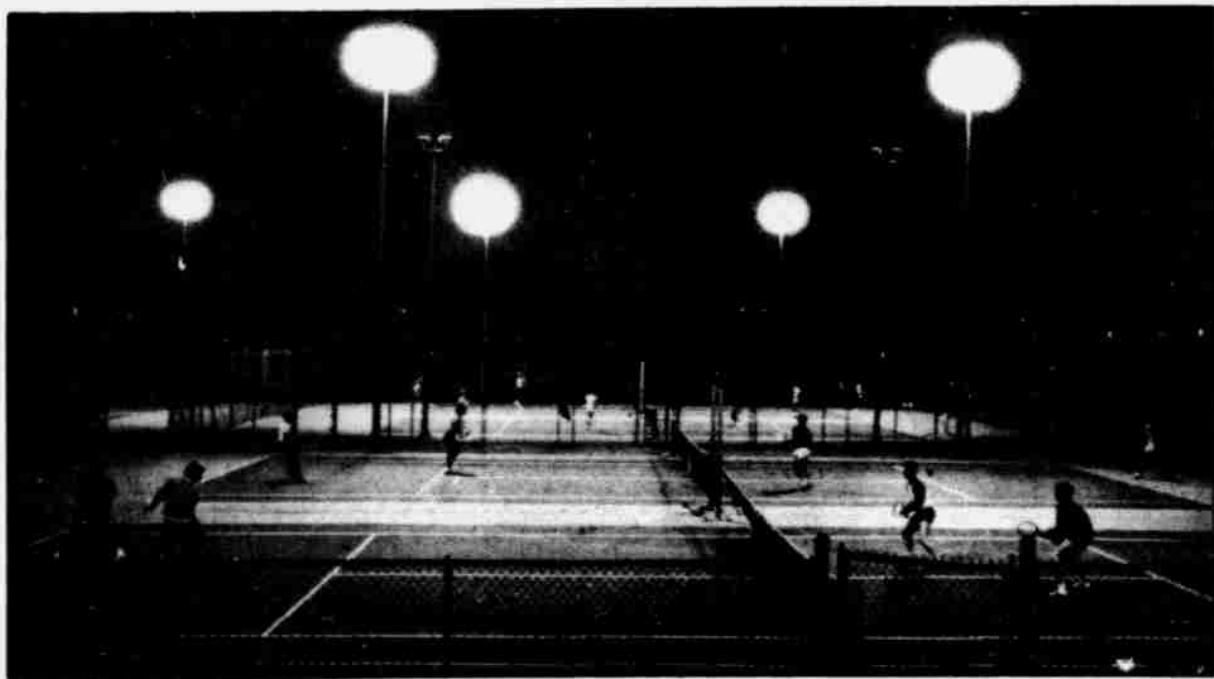


Photo by Dave Bentz

With spring weather coming to Lincoln at last, these tennis players, along with hundreds of other Lincoln residents can finally get out of the house for some fresh air and exercise.