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Staff Photo by Dave Bentz

Lincolnite Max Garner, 22, skateboards westward down a Vine Street walkway during a milder day this week. The sharp bite of winter is expected to rip through the Midwest and points farther east by this weekend, a prospect that undoubtedly will leave sidewalk surfers up in arms and their boards up on blocks.

## Budget proposal includes cut of \$3.5 million for university

By Pat Higgins

Waverly Sen. Jerome Warner's package of tax increases and budget cuts, including a proposal to cut NU's budget by approximately \$3.65 million, has advanced to a final reading stage set for Saturday morning at the Legislature.

The Legislature moved the Warner package ahead by a 35 to nine vote Thursday afternoon.

Warner's plan includes a 1 percent increase in income taxes that could raise the income tax rate to 20 percent if the Board of Equalization, as expected, increases the income tax rate by an additional 2 percent to make up for the federal income tax cut. Warner's package cuts the budget across the board by 2 percent and makes other selected cuts.

The 2 percent across-the-board cut amounts to \$2.89 million for NU. Selected cuts for the university include \$300,000 in the amount estimated for savings in utility bills for the entire system, \$275,000 in an expected surplus in cash receipts and \$90,000 in an estimated excess in appropriations for veterinary medicine and optometry student contracts.

A number of additional amendments were proposed and voted down. Sen. Rex Haberman of Imperial wanted to cut \$137,000 in the NU Alumni Association budget, \$43,000 from the Afghan Resource Center at UNO and \$93,000 by eliminating the ombudsman positions at UNO and UNL. Haberman said that students who had complaints could go to the administration with them.

Sen. Don Wesely of Lincoln supported these expenditures. He said that the Alumni Association actually raises money for NU and that the ombudsman performs

a valuable function.

Sen. Tom Vickers of Farnam said that he would like the NU Board of Regents to examine frills in the budget. He said that NU budget cuts could start from the top instead of the bottom. President Ronald Roskens' rent-free home was mentioned by Vickers.

"It makes me wonder when we hear about these problems we have keeping top-quality professors because of budget cuts when we give these fabulous living quarters to well-paid state employees," Vickers said.

State senators also are invited to go to one Husker game and sit in the press box free.

"I enjoy sitting in the press box, I admit, but it also bothers me that we're treated like royalty. The university shouldn't spend so much on frills and public relations," Vickers said.

A number of other amendments were voted down by the Legislature. Sen. Warner spoke against all of them. The tax increase and budget cut is not ideal, Warner said, but the state's fiscal crisis has to be dealt with now.

Sen. John DeCamp of Neligh also spoke against any additional amendments. "I've been in this Legislature long enough to know when it's time to hold 'em and when it's time to fold 'em," DeCamp said. "It's time to fold 'em."

After other amendments were proposed, the legislators took DeCamp's advice and advanced the Warner package untouched. The final vote will be Saturday morning. The package then goes to Gov. Charles Thone, who has threatened to line-item veto some items. The Legislature then would have the chance to override any vetoes late Saturday afternoon.

## Pros, cons of Initiative debated

By Carol Harrah

The benefits and problems Initiative 300 offers to agriculture were discussed Thursday by four agricultural panel members at a Media News Day event in the East Union.

The so-called Family Farm Amendment/Initiative 300 prohibits non-family farm corporations from purchasing Nebraska farmland.

Neil Oxten, president of the Nebraska Farmers Union in Lincoln and chairman of the "Yes for Initiative 300" committee, said Initiative 300 passed because of the concern in Nebraska about corporations buying too much farmland - family farmland.

"(People) were concerned that Prudential bought over 34,000 acres of farmland in a little over a year; that they set aside \$1 million each year to buy more farmland."

In reference to corporate farming, Oxten said that the new amendment will not prevent two farmers from incorporating their farms into one.

"Two farmers can incorporate," he said. "One has to have a little more stock in the farm, though. That would be something such as 51 percent to 49 percent if that's how they wanted to do that."

Initiative 300 exempts the poultry and alfalfa industries because those industries are almost completely owned by corporate business already, he said.

Lloyd Fischer, a professor of agricultural economics at UNL's Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, said the poultry industry went the route it did because of "a market."

### Incorporation effective

"When large grocery stores such as Safeway wanted a contract for items like eggs," he said, "the industry felt it would be more effective to incorporate. Safeway needed a guarantee on a large quantity of items and an individual farmer couldn't do that."

Glen LeDioyt, president of LeDioyt Land Company in Omaha and chairman of the "No for Initiative 300" committee, said Initiative 300 won't work because agriculture is a big business.

"Look at our agricultural exports abroad. Prudential had a right to put a great deal of money into Initiative 300 not passing. They had a stake in Nebraska. They have over 20,000 stockholders in the land. It is a mutual life

insurance company, so they are willing to work with farmers."

"This is the most irresponsible action ever taken on a farm amendment in Nebraska," he said. "We are now faced with a long, costly campaign to see what the purpose of it is."

"Proponents of the issue have led us to believe that big business is bad," he said. "Small is neither good nor bad. If there are tax advantages that corporations enjoy, that's what you attack."

LeDioyt said he thinks the family farm is just an ideal.

### Family farm not competitive

"I think the family farm is no longer competitive," he said. "The most competitive agricultural area will be the one which will last. I think we're talking about a family farm that was. Most family farms are out of business."

Oxten said he thinks large corporations have only one purpose in buying farmland.

"They use it as tax shelters," he said. "With the passage of this amendment into the Nebraska Constitution, the family won't have to sell their farm to corporations."

The amendment was brought about because farmers were afraid of what could happen to agriculture, Oxten said.

"Farmers felt that once agriculture got in a few hands," he said, "we will have a food OPEC. There are only 2 percent of the total population farming as it is. We are basically protecting a philosophy with this amendment."

Nelson Otto, president of the Anticipatory Sciences Incorporated in Minneapolis, Minn., said the amendment is protective of a certain type of business.

"Look at what happened in Detroit," he said. "You, the consumer, stopped buying Detroit cars. Now they're trying to legislate their existence. They are trying to make it so you can only buy Detroit cars. The car companies are doing this by limiting the numbers of foreign cars allowed in this country. This amendment appears to be protecting a certain type of businessman (within agriculture), too."

LeDioyt added that Prudential was never taking away family farms when they bought land.

"Prudential never replaced one family farm where they bought land," he said. "They bought it from another corporation."

## Committee exploring surcharge proposal

Could the NU football team save the university from going in the red?

Probably not the entire university, but according to UNL life science Professor John Lynch, adding a \$1 surcharge to the price of football tickets could bring in more than \$300,000 next season.

Lynch, a member of the UNL Faculty Senate, presented his idea to the senate Tuesday for discussion. The senate referred the proposal to the Intercollegiate Athletic Committee to check if it is in violation of Big Eight Conference rules.

Lynch said that monies from the proposed surcharge would be used to help pay for periodicals and journals in the university library system.

In April, the university libraries will have to begin canceling subscriptions if funding is not available, Lynch said, adding that the senate has about six months to take action.

"I feel that journals are very important, because they are the primary source of new information in a particular area," he said.

Lynch also said that research and teaching go hand-in-hand and that in order for instructors to keep up on the latest developments in their particular areas, the information has to be available to them.

The senate has few options for raising such academic funds, he said.

UNL accounting Professor Richard Metcalf, a member of both the Intercollegiate Athletic Committee and the Faculty Senate, said the faculty can expect word of the committee's findings at the senate's December meeting.

If the proposal does not violate Big Eight rules and is approved by the senate, it will be sent to the NU Board of Regents for discussion before a final decision is made.