

Vickers voices education concerns

By Pat O'Leary

Sen. Tom Vickers of Farnam and chairman of the Legislature's Education Committee, spoke not only for education, but for alternative financing for public education at the Government Liaison Committee breakfast Tuesday.

Vickers said sales tax and property tax should more evenly share the cost of education in the state.

He will propose that appropriations from the sales and income taxes finance up to 45 percent of the cost of public education. That is a 15 percent increase from the current rate.

If the bill becomes law, there would be a 3 percent increase beginning in 1984-85 that would last over the next five years, Vickers said. The success of the plan would

ultimately depend on the state of the economy in future years, he said, but this plan would take the pressure off the property tax payers.

Another bill that would relieve some of the financial burden from the state, he said, is his own bill, LB141. The bill endorses the early transfer of high school students to college. The bill is still in committee, he said.

Vickers spoke out strongly against any type of minimum competency test for students, but he did endorse such a program for state certified teachers.

"I don't think we have the right to close the door to anybody," Vickers said. "The students will leave if they cannot meet the college's requirements, but they can do that on their own."

He said that a role-admissions study will

probably be carried out this summer. It will help determine just what the high schools, administration and colleges are responsible for in educating a student.

The bill endorsing a minimum competency test for teachers was recently killed in committee, Vickers said. There is a growing concern that the qualified teachers are not staying in the profession, he said, and endorsed some measure that would ensure they would.

In Tennessee, the school board passed a resolution that set up different levels of certification for teachers, he said. The teachers move through the levels (it is mandatory to pass the first) based on an evaluation by peers and are paid according to the level they attain, he said. Vickers said he would probably support a similar action.

"One of the challenges we face in education is that we recognize that we are short of money, and at the same time our educational needs are greater," Vickers said.

Sen. Karen Kilgarin of Omaha, is sponsoring LB5, which would put the university's pursestrings in the legislature's control. She does not have Vickers' support.

Vickers said it was probably good that Kilgarin summoned the NU Board of Regents' attention, but the Legislature already controls a great deal.

"It would be nice if you could take the politics out of politics, but you can't," Vickers said. "The university, under our (Legislature's) control, probably would quit running because we couldn't decide what to do."

Candidates debate...

Continued from Page 1

Larry Weixelman, presidential candidate for the Spare party, said ASUN must accomplish something positive to organize the students at UNL. He said students must get together with state legislators to accomplish their goals.

Problems at the computer science department were discussed in depth.

Krieser said the Action party would work in three areas to increase funds to the computer science department:

The NU Foundation. Kreiser said he would try to get more private money from the foundation to channel funds into the computer science department.

The Legislature. Krieser said Waverly Sen. Jerome Warner has introduced legislation to provide \$3 million to the university, the majority to the computer science department's budget.

Work Study. Kreiser said the Action party has testified in support of a bill to give tax breaks to employers who hire college students.

Weixelman said he doubted the NU Foundation would be of much help, since its funds are less than the computer science department needs to completely renovate its system. He said UNL should follow the steps taken by Union College. Union College had the foresight to plan ahead, he said, and now has a computer terminal in every room.

Tom Mockler, first vice presidential candidate for Anarky, said his party would do away with computers on campus because "no one likes them anyway."

Laura Meyer, presidential candidate for the Action party, said she will speak with representatives from the Missouri Pacific Railroad to try to solve the problem of trains blocking students from Harper-Schramm-Smith. She said she would try to convince Missouri Pacific to change its switching station. If that is not possible, she said, she would look into the construction of a pedestrian overpass.

Stuva said the Anarky party advocates taking apart the track that runs near campus.



ASUN debate. From left, Laura Meyer and Kay Hinn of Action, Bill Buntain, Rhonda Greder and Matt Wallace of Reach, and Larry Weixelman of Spare.

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