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## Academic priorities

Orr: Programs should suit state's needs

**DEBATE** from Page 1

Strong undergraduate programs should be the highest priority of Nebraska's higher education system, Boosalis said. Colleges and universities, she said, also need to be more efficient and should give more importance to programs that fit the state's needs. Private and public colleges should join together in planning educational needs, she

On the subject of taxes, Boosalis denied Orr's claim that she had supported raising taxes earlier in the campaign. But she said she favored Initiative 300, the 1982 constitutional voter approval of LB662, the school amendment banning non-family corconsolidation and finance bill, because its 1-cent increase in the sales tax would help reduce property taxes. LB662, passed in 1985 but suspended by a referendum petition drive, will be on the November ballot.

"We all acknowledge that the worst tax of all is the property tax," Boosalis said. "It's burdensome for our homeowners, it's burdensome for those on fixed incomes, it's burdensome for businessmen and our farmers and it's one of the highest in Nebraska of any place in the country." The sales tax, which makes up 20 percent of total Nebraska tax collections, is a logical substitute for property taxes, she said.

But Orr said she "will not take any more money from the taxpayer's pocket," because Nebraskans cannot afford a LB662 beause the sales tax incease station KETV.

doesn't guarantee property tax relief. doesn't raise enough money to meet the bill's requirements and would leave Nebraskans with a sales tax of 5.5 to 6

On other issues, Orr and Boosalis:

 Rejected suggestions that neither of them are concerned about women's issues because of their stands on important national issues. Both candidates said they oppose unrestricted rights to abortion, while Orr said she "has not been an advocate" of the Equal Rights Amendment.

 Differed slightly on whether porations from farming in Nebraska. should be repealed. Boosalis said repeal is "out of order," but Orr said the effects of the amendment on farmers and ranchers should be considered first.

 Said they would pay attention to the concerns of western Nebraskans. Orr promised to station a member of the governor's staff in the Scottsbluff Gering area in the western Panhandle. while Boosalis said tourist attractions in western Nebraska like Fort Robin son and Lake McConaughy should be promoted more than in the past.

Orr and Boosalis are scheduled to debate twice more before the November election. The candidates meet in a 6 p.m. debate Sept. 21 at North Platte High School, followed by an Oct. 6 tax increase. She said she opposed meeting in the studios of Omaha TV



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