

Daily
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University of Nebraska

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50 - cent pay cut

Good intentions won't pay students' bills

Hard-working University of Nebraska - Lincoln students could find themselves making less at their part-time jobs if a Nebraska state senator has his way.

A bill sponsored by Sen. Howard Lamb of Anselmo would decrease the minimum wage for student workers from \$3.35 to \$2.85 per hour. The bill will go through hearings at the Legislature today.

Supporters of LB 1096 argue that the lower minimum wage would create more job opportunities for students. Lamb reasons that businesses are always looking for cheap help, and a lower minimum wage for students would give them an edge in the job fight.

While his intentions may be good, Lamb has introduced a bill that, if passed, would leave students struggling to pay bills and businesses scrambling in search of employees to fill empty positions.

The bill discriminates against students. Why should a 20-year-old student make 50 cents an hour less than a 20-year-old non-student? A lower minimum wage would give students an incentive to drop out of school for a semester or two to save money.

Many UNL students have part-time jobs to pay for tuition, room and board, and numerous other expenses. Juggling a work

schedule around classes and study time isn't easy. A lower minimum wage would force students to work more hours to cover expenses, leaving less time for classes and studying.

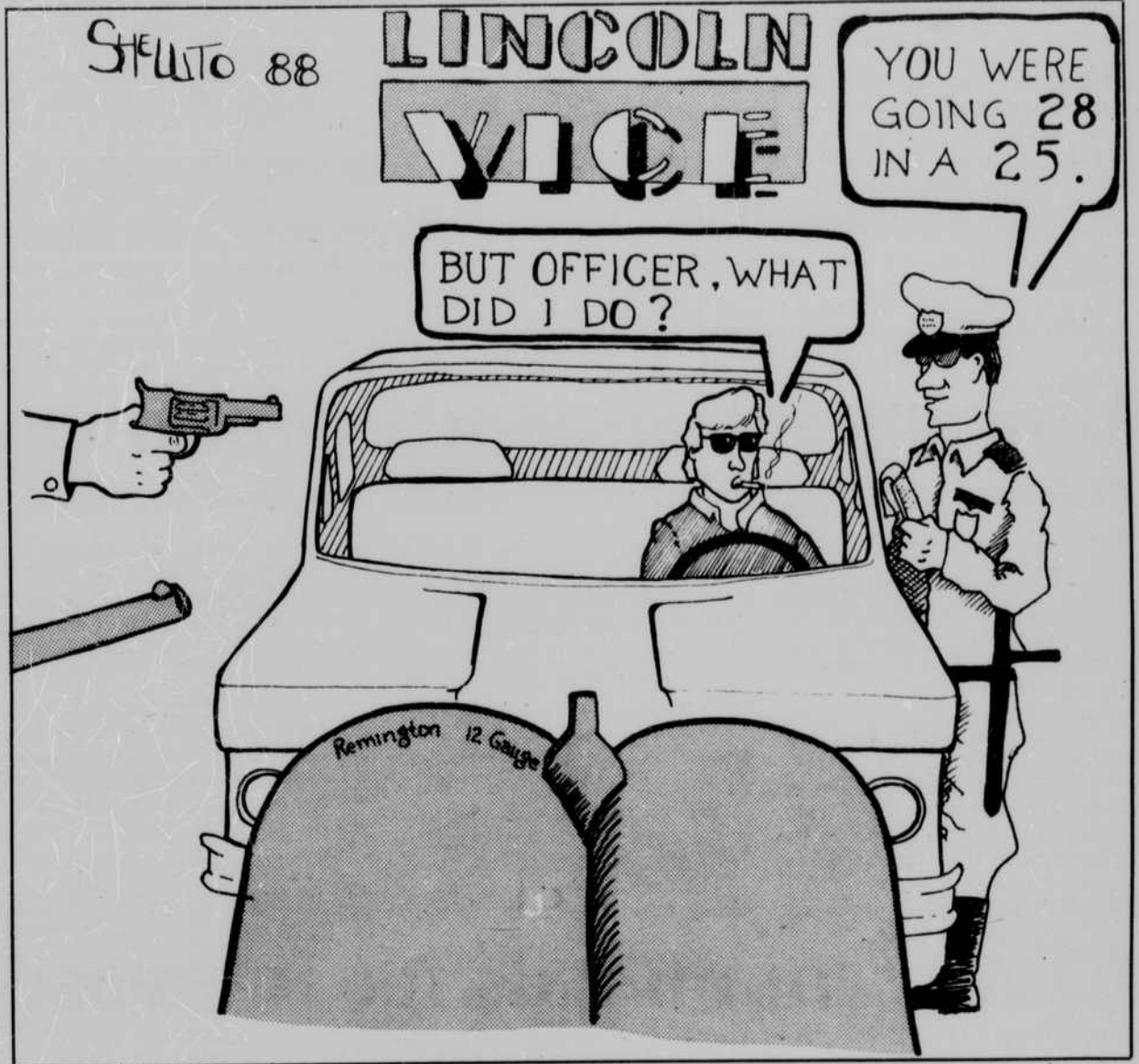
Try to imagine paying \$500 per semester for tuition, \$150 each month in rent, plus covering utilities, food, gas and other expenses on \$2.85 an hour. Students are barely getting by on \$3.35.

It's ironic that the state would even consider lowering the minimum wage. Congress is considering raising the national minimum wage from \$3.35 to \$4.65. The timing for Lamb's proposal couldn't be worse.

The bill also would put a strain on university employers. If the university went to lower student wages while other services stayed at or above minimum, already vacant university positions would never be filled.

Doug Zatechka, UNL housing director, said his department is already unable to fill all student positions at the current minimum-wage level. He said the department is usually about 20 or more students short, and a lower minimum wage would only make matters worse.

Lamb expects no opposition from the bill. He reasons that he's really trying to help students, but it's clear that the proposal would do more damage than good.



Brian Shellito/Daily Nebraskan

Dump location still an issue

Signatures needed for petition to put waste site to state vote

People can justify just about anything they want. Last December, Gov. Kay Orr said it would be OK to put a low-level nuclear waste dump in the state because people take risks all the time. It is risky just to cross the street, she said. So it is OK to take the risk of having a low-level nuclear waste dump in the state.

So we all smiled and said: "Okey-dokey."

Now the dump is ours. Nebraska won a five-way beauty contest against Kansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Arkansas. We don't know where it will be located yet, but some town in the state will get the honors.

But the story is far from over. Just recently, a petition was initiated by the Nebraskans for a Right to Vote Committee to remove Nebraska from the compact and give Nebraskans a vote in deciding its location.

It won't be an easy task if the petition is to do any good. To begin with, more than 39,000 signatures have to be gathered, and there may be legal ramifications in an attempt by the state to withdraw from the compact. Nebraska would also have to pay a higher price to take care of its own waste.

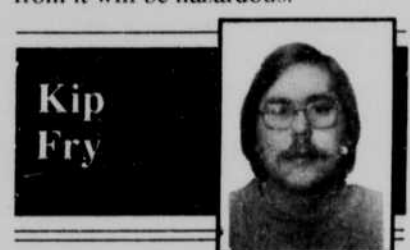
There are important questions to be asked here, but none of them are logistical, legal or financial.

One question which needs to be asked is: What do we really want to have located within the state's borders?

The dump would most likely cre-

ate jobs and a financial boon for that particular community. This is important. Jobs are hard to come by these days.

But what good does a job do you when you are dead? No one can prove for certain that such a dump would be dangerous at all. No one can prove that it will leak or that the radiation from it will be hazardous.



But by the time this is proven, it may be too late. Some scientists contend that there may be enough evidence to show just that possibility. Many towns across the nation seem to be suddenly popping up with both toxic waste dumps and an overabundance of cancer cases. Low-level radiation dumps can't be much different.

I don't know about everyone else, but those possibilities scare me.

According to Orr, we take risks whenever we cross the street, so a low-level nuclear waste dump is just one more risk. There is nothing original about Orr's analogy. Everybody uses it when speaking of risks.

But the problem with the argument is that the whole state does not cross the street at the same time. We

do it at our own discretion, whenever we want, and we are each affected one at a time by it. It is a totally different kind of risk when the entire population may be affected.

Nevertheless, Nebraska is getting dumped on. The state has received the honor of storing the nuclear waste, not only from this state, but from four others too.

Not everyone likes the idea. That's apparently why the petition has been circulating. More than likely, the petition will fail because of those problems I mentioned earlier, so we may have to live with the dump. I'm glad there are those who are willing to stand up against the odds to voice their opinion. They don't want to roll over and play dead.

By not having the dump, the economy would not be hurt any more than it is now. That may be hard for the unemployed of Nebraska to accept, but there definitely is a lesser of two evils in this case. There is much less risk being without a job.

An issue such as this should be determined by a vote of the people because it has the potential to affect the population.

We are led to believe that there is nothing to be done about the problem. Whether or not the petition gets the needed signatures, Orr should listen to what the petitioners have to say.

Another time, Kay: Give the people a vote.

Fry is a graduate student in journalism and Daily Nebraskan Sower supplement editor.

Letter

CFA member defends committee's actions

As a member of the Committee for Fees Allocation, I would like to clarify a few points made in an editorial (Daily Nebraskan, Jan. 28) about the change in CFA plans.

In the fall of 1987, just like past CFAs, the committee adopted a time line. It specified the dates each fee user would present a service orientation and a date for them to present their 1988-89 budget request. The portion dealing with budget requests, again, like past CFAs, called upon the committee to consider each fee user budget individually. A somewhat unrealistic approach to budgeting.

At the suggestion of one of our advisers, James V. Griesen, vice chancellor for student affairs, the committee discussed a new alternative. This proposal called for CFA to hear each request while looking at what we call "The Big Picture." This would be the case for Fund A (Daily Nebraskan, University Programs Council and the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska), and then Fund B (campus recreation, University Health Center and Nebraska Union). It is a realistic approach to budgeting. This plan follows suit in the same way legislative bodies go about budgeting. Furthermore, this method allows CFA to get a fair assessment of the situation.

What bothers me some is the implication made in the editorial that this plan was tailor-made to accom-

modate UPC. This is false. Discussions on this new change have taken place for roughly two months. It is just pure coincidence that this was made public at our business meeting prior to the UPC presentation on Jan. 26. We hope this change will benefit all fee users. By no means is our aim to give any fee user an edge over another. Each and every one of them is treated in the same manner.

Personally, I feel this is a long overdue transition. It makes the CFA prioritize budget increases and forces fee users to give us complete and accurate justification for proposed increases. Also, it is essential that fee users comply with CFA policies and submit budgets and support documentation on time for it to work.

I believe I speak for the current CFA when I say I do not want to see student fees rise dramatically. With the previous plan, this could have been the case. The new plan allows us to keep fees within a fair and decent range by looking at the whole scene at one time, as opposed to passing budgets and being forced to reconsider them and make cuts.

The change is for the better and will assist us in seeing to it that students get the best and most services available within our power.

Keith A. Malo
member
CFA

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The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor from all readers and interested others.

Letters will be selected for publication on the basis of clarity, originality,

timeliness and space available. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit all material submitted.

Letters and guest opinions sent to the newspaper become property of the

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Submit material to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.

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Unsigned editorials represent official policy of the spring 1988 Daily Nebraskan. Policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. Its members are Mike Reilly, editor; Diana Johnson, editorial page editor; Joan Rezac, copy desk editor; Jen Deselms, managing editor; Curt Wag-

ner, associate news editor; Scott Harrah, night news editor and Joel Carlson, columnist.

Editorials do not necessarily reflect the views of the university, its employees, the students or the NU Board of Regents.

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According to policy set by the regents, responsibility for the editorial content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its student editors.