

# Chambers' fight to pay athletes not unique

By Chuck Green  
Senior Reporter

Sen. Ernie Chambers' eight-year fight for LB1226, a bill that would make Cornhusker football players employees of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, isn't unique to Nebraska.

Earlier this year, California and Indiana proposed similar legislation and state Sen. Thomas Mann of Iowa proposed a similar plan for athletes at the University of Iowa and Iowa State University, as well as other state institutions.

The amendment to LB1226, requiring ap-

proval from at least four other Big Eight Conference states before the bill is enacted, is one reason several key figures in Nebraska think the bill won't become law.

At least one university athletic director in Iowa thinks so, too.

Max Urlick, athletic director at Iowa State, said he opposes the bill.

"I think that just because some athletes are playing sports just to make money, it doesn't justify their getting more money than average students," Urlick said. "And it certainly isn't fair to the athletes in the sports that don't

generate the kind of revenue that football does."

The other six Big Eight athletic directors were unavailable for comment.

Urlick said he first heard of Chambers' proposal several years ago. But despite the growing support for the idea, he said, football players can make money in other ways.

"Most athletes that have legitimate financial needs have other avenues, such as the Pell Grant funds," Urlick said.

Last January at the NCAA Convention in Nashville, Tenn., members voted to raise the

Pell Grant allowance from \$900 to \$1,400 a year, and the priorities of athletes would be placed above those of non-athlete students.

Urlick said he doesn't think the bill has a chance to pass.

"I haven't seen enough evidence that it would work the way they want it to," he said.

Urlick said the first-round approval given by the Nebraska Legislature last Monday didn't change his view.

"I think it would be a big mistake for anyone to pay athletes above their normal expenses of an education."

## Debate over athlete pay bill continues

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the emphasis on making money at the expense of a schools' academic standards.

Columbia University, he said, recently asked to lower its academic admission standards to accommodate more adequate recruiting to end its losing streak in football.

Columbia currently holds a 41-game football losing streak, the longest of any college team in history.

Chambers said the rest of the Ivy League of which Columbia is a member agreed to reduce academic entrance standards because an improved football program would benefit the entire conference.

The rest of the conference readily complied, Chambers said, because it and ESPN had recently completed an agreement for a three-year contract to televise Ivy League football games.

"The lure of money for the football program has caused (the Ivy League) — the bastion of national academic standards — to lower their priorities," Chambers said.

Massengale said support for the bill would create similar problems for UNL's image.

"If this bill revolves around the professionalization of amateur athletes, our supporting it would send out the wrong signal," he said. "It would give the appearance that we're emphasizing athletics more than we should."

Chambers said he understands that UNL's athletic department is concerned with eligibility of its football program.

"But with the amendment that at least four other Big Eight schools have to pass the same type of legislation, it would accomplish a number of things," he said.

"It will save Nebraska's eligibility and it puts on record to people that we're dealing with a high-octane, multi-million dollar form of entertainment in which the young men playing the game aren't being treated fairly," he said.

The most important thing to accomplish, Chambers said, would be to alert the NCAA of the fast-growing problems in college athletics.

"The NCAA doesn't see fit to alter its rules," Chambers said, "so maybe this will send a message to them that more and more people are ready to deal with the problem at hand."

## Harris: Parking could generate business

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ness to the downtown area. NebHELP, the Nebraska Higher Educational Loan Program, bought the J.C. Penney building at 13th and O streets. Harris said the parking project is incentive for businesses to locate downtown.

Harris said the parking spaces reserved for University Towers residents should make downtown living more attractive and possibly bring in more apartments in the area.

This would generate business because people are more likely to shop near their home, he said. Also, the

variety of retail, offices and entertainment in the downtown area will make Lincoln more attractive, Harris said.

Doug Farrar, manager of the Post and Nickel, 144 N. 14th St., said the Centerpointe project should bring in customers who haven't frequented the clothing store.

Farrar said customers have complained about the limited parking in the past and the project is a needed solution.

Harris said the project must be approved by the planning department, and construction and financing for the Centerpointe project must be determined before any action is taken.



J.P. Caruso/Daily Nebraskan

## Campfire blamed for flame

A Lincoln firefighter extinguishes a fire at the northeast end of a University of Nebraska-Lincoln field on East Campus Saturday. The fire damaged 350-square-feet of grass according to the UNL police department. No one was injured. Officials said a campfire probably caused the fire.

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