

# Daily Nebraskan

Tuesday

## WEATHER:

Tuesday, mostly sunny and warmer, high in the mid to upper 60s with SE winds 10-15 mph. Tuesday night, fair and cool, low in the mid to upper 30s. Wednesday, mostly sunny and warmer, high 70-75.

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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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## Amendment gives local nuke site committees more power

By Natalie Weinstein  
Staff Reporter

The Nebraska Legislature passed amendments Monday to a bill concerning the state's future low-level radioactive waste site, including one amendment giving more autonomy and money to local monitoring committees.

### Legislature

The Legislature adjourned before senators had begun first-round debate on the bill itself. They are scheduled to continue debate today.

During debate on his amendment, Sen. Spence Morrissey of Tecumseh said the local monitoring committees need to have more money than is provided in the waste site bill, LB761. Without more money, he said, the local committees will be "tokens."

The monitoring committees provide input regarding local needs and resources concerning the site.

Morrissey's amendment, which passed 29-0, increases the one-time appropriation to be divided among the three site finalists from \$75,000 to \$300,000.

Auburn in Nemaha County, Butte in Boyd County and Nora in Nuckolls County are the three finalists for the 320-acre site.

The amendment would increase the annual fund for the final site committee from \$50,000 to \$100,000. It also adds to the bill a daily on-site inspector who is answerable only to the monitoring committee.

"We definitely need a man on site every day," Morrissey said.

The additional money would give the local group "actual power" and authority, Morrissey said. This autonomy and independence will help build trust and confidence among local citizens, he said.

Morrissey, whose constituency includes Auburn, said local people are the only ones who can be trusted on this issue.

Sen. Dave Landis of Lincoln said local citizens do not have confidence in outsiders or "neutral experts."

Another amendment, introduced by Loran Schmit of Bellwood, states that local monitoring committee members must be Nebraskans. It also states that acceptance of state funds by these committees to help choose the final waste site will not force a community to become the final choice. The amendment passed 25-15.

Sen. Doug Kristensen of Minden called

Schmit's amendment "ex post facto."

Residents of Nora recently appointed Hugh Kaufman, a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency official, to their local committee. Kaufman is from Washington, D.C.

Kristensen, whose constituency includes Nora, said the members of Nuckolls County are mostly farmers with little expertise in low-level radioactive waste.

"Quite frankly, they need some help," he said.

Kaufman was chosen, Kristensen said, because "he can ask the right questions."

Some people fear that an outsider will try to control the committee, Kristensen said. But the committees consist of nine people, he said.

Schmit said that to him, the purpose of creating local monitoring committees was to make sure they would be run by local people, not outsiders such as Kaufman.

The bill itself is an attempt to solve problems and answer concerns that came up during statewide hearings on the issue.

The bill's subjects include:

- A requirement for above-ground disposal instead of the traditional shallow burial design that was used before 1979.

- A requirement that the site will not accept waste for longer than 30 years or after five

million cubic feet of waste has been accepted.

- A surcharge against the users of the facility that will raise \$2 million.

Senators passed numerous other amendments to LB761 including:

- An interim study to be conducted on the liability issues concerning the site.

- A ban on waste not produced by states within the Central Interstate Low-Level Radioactive Waste Compact without the approval of the Legislature unless an emergency exists.

- Testing and analysis of surface water, in addition to well water, in the vicinity of the site.

- Free assistance to the local committees from the University of Nebraska Conservation and Survey Division.

Sen. Merton Dierks of Ewing also offered an amendment to committee amendments that was ruled not germane -- or not relevant. His amendment would allow citizens in the county of the final site to vote on whether to accept the site.

Dierks, whose constituency includes Butte, said the entire process should depend on whether the community accepts the site.

Landis said he opposes a local vote because the state cannot meet its obligations to the compact with such a requirement.

## CBA project gets allocation

# Committee decides to fund NU projects

By Jana Pedersen  
Staff Reporter

Following a priority list established by the NU Board of Regents, the Appropriations Committee of the Nebraska Legislature tentatively decided Monday to fund five university-related projects.

As its top priority, the University of Nebraska asked for \$1.6 million to improve and update NU classrooms and labs.

The Appropriations Committee granted NU \$350,000 annually for two years for classroom and lab improvements after the committee received a letter from the university. The letter said that if \$1.6 million is unavailable, \$325,000 would be a reasonable sum to begin improvements.

NU's second priority also received attention from the committee.

The university asked for \$5 million over a two-year period to make improvements to boilers at physical

plants on at least three campuses. That amount was reduced to \$4 million by the committee.

Another priority, to renovate and expand the College of Business Administration building at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, was approved by the committee.

The construction would include an addition to the CBA building with a connection to Love Library.

Originally, the committee received a bid of \$7,250,900 for the construction work on the CBA building, but the bid later was increased to \$10.2 million.

The committee agreed to fund \$7,250,900 and allow the university to seek private donations for the remaining amount of the \$10.2 million bid.

Committee members also discussed reconstruction of greenhouse facilities on East Campus.

Sen. Roger Wehrbein of Plattsmouth said the reconstruction is necessary for agricultural research.

The material originally used to make the greenhouses is too dark, he said.

Without replacing the material, Wehrbein said, research cannot be done effectively in the greenhouses.

The greenhouses also have problems with water leakage and ventilation, he said.

The university asked for \$2,985,000 to repair and expand the greenhouses, but Sen. Jerome Warner of Waverly warned against funding expansion.

The committee decided to fund at least partial repair of the greenhouses and will determine the exact amount after consulting with university officials.

An appropriation of \$464,870 also was approved for continuing development of the Walter Scott Engineering Center at UNL.

The committee will meet today to give final approval to the appropriations before they are sent for discussion by the full Legislature.

## Cold fusion research may reach UNL

By Matt Evertson  
Staff Reporter

If recent revelations about the latest physics breakthrough -- cold fusion -- hold true, researchers at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln soon could be performing their own fusion experiments, according to the chairman of the physics and astronomy department.

Researchers at the University of Utah announced last month that they had found a way to merge, or fuse, the nuclei of hydrogen atoms using ordinary laboratory equipment at room temperature.

Scientists regard nuclear fusion, which fuels the sun and the stars, as having vast potential to be a clean and efficient energy source.

Anthony Starace, chairman and professor of physics and astronomy at UNL, said UNL currently performs no fusion experiments because "current-controlled" fusion experimentation can only be done in a few select places with large, specialized facilities.

To produce fusion, these facilities attempt to heat gases to the temperature of the middle of the sun, he said.

However, with the advent of cold fusion, Starace said, UNL has the capability to produce the reaction.

Starace said there is "no doubt" that the researchers have discovered cold fusion because measurements showed neutrons being produced -- a sure sign of fusion. That measurement also creates the mystery of the reaction because, with the small number of neutrons produced, the reaction should have made only one billionth of the heat researchers found it produced, Starace said.

Starace said time will be needed to determine how the large amount of energy from the reaction was produced. Because of this, he said, the cold-fusion process will not be available for immediate use. An engineer cannot presently build a device to utilize this process, he said, because the scientists don't know exactly what is causing the reaction in the first place.

According to the researchers at the University of Utah, the reaction produces four watts of energy for every watt it uses. Starace said that the only danger of the reaction occurs if it is uncontrolled. In early stages of the experiment at the University of Utah, according to Starace, a wrong configuration of the palladium metal caused an explosion which destroyed part of the researchers' lab.

If scientists could determine the hidden mysteries behind cold fusion,

Starace said, science would have the capability to virtually eliminate world energy problems.

Starace said only three substances are apparently needed for the reaction: platinum, palladium and heavy water (water composed of ordinary oxygen and an isotope of hydrogen -- deuterium). A platinum electrode and a palladium electrode are placed in a beaker of heavy water and an electrical current is applied, he said. The current forces deuterium atoms from the heavy water to infiltrate the crystals of the palladium metal in a high enough concentration to fuse and form energy.

Starace said there is enough deuterium, a principal component of the cold fusion reaction, in our sea water to supply the fusion reactions for a million years. Besides having a constant fuel, the cold fusion would be beneficial because it would produce much less radioactive waste than current nuclear power plants that rely on fission -- the splitting of the atom.

Cold fusion presents "all sorts of very positive implications" for future energy needs, according to Starace. Besides providing cheap and abundant energy, he said, cold fusion would help to solve some of the problems of the greenhouse effect, which is caused by the burning of fossil fuels.



Shaun Sartin/Daily Nebraskan

### He does windows

Tim Shepherd of ABG Glass Co. does windows Monday afternoon at Morrill Hall as renovation on the 4th floor continues.

## Complaints prompt review

By Roger Price  
Staff Reporter

A subcommittee of the Women's Resource Center's Student Advisory Board designed a mission statement and set goals for next fall in a meeting Monday afternoon.

The committee is making its proposals after a review of the center by a committee formed by James Griesen, vice chancellor for student affairs. Griesen ordered the review after complaints about the center's operation from students, faculty and alumni.

The mission of the center, as the subcommittee put it, is "to espouse the feminist philosophy, provide education and programs for women,

work for empowerment for all women, teach male members about women, support feminism and promote inclusivity."

Fran Kaye, a member of the subcommittee and associate professor of English, said the center needs to be a place for both separatist women and men who want to explore feminism and the empowerment of women through feminism.

One of the goals the subcommittee recommended was that the center start an active outreach program to improve the center's image on campus.

Kaye said the center currently does not have a good image among students at the University of Ne-

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