

Officials say initiative poorly worded

Tuition may increase if 2 percent lid passes

By Ryan Steeves
Staff Reporter

Like other Nebraskans, NU students soon could be taking home more of their wages if voters pass a 2 percent lid on increases in government spending.

But university officials warn that students probably will have to dish out the extra cash -- and then some -- for the ensuing increase in tuition and reduction of financial aid.

No one knows how much tuition could rise or how much aid could be cut if the 2 percent initiative passes. Officials say it is too early to tell what effect such a constitutional amendment would have.

They say the initiative is poorly worded and that the Nebraska Legislature or courts will have to define some of the language before the effects are known.

But tuition and financial aid could fall under the provisions of the proposal.

The problem is that University of Nebraska administrators don't know what revenue sources the proposal would restrict. The university gets its

money from about four sources: state appropriations, cash funds such as tuition, federal funds and money made in self-supporting services such as housing.

The initiative clearly states that state aid is included in its provisions and that money from self-sustaining services are exempt. But the proposal is ambiguous about its effect on tuition.

It says that revenues from fee sources such as tuition used for their "named service" may be excluded except for "any such fee or fees allocated to a general budget for general purposes."

Tuition at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln goes into the university's general fund.

Ed Jaksha, the anti-tax activist from Omaha who ran the petition drive to get the initiative on the ballot, said he didn't intend for tuition to be included in the 2 percent formula. If the initiative passes, he said, the Nebraska Legislature will have to decide whether to include tuition.

But NU administrators are quick to point out that the language of the

proposal, not the intent of the organizers, will decide how the initiative will work.

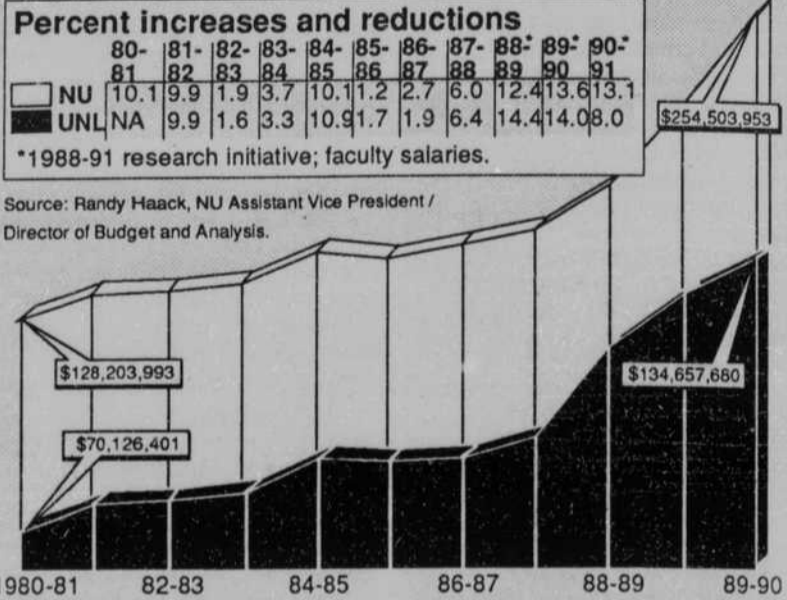
Martin Massengale, NU interim president and UNL chancellor, told the NU Board of Regents Friday that since state aid increases would be limited by the lid, cuts in the university budget could force cuts in student aid. Students also would have to bear more of the costs to keep programs running, he said.

If the initiative passes, students might feel better if tuition becomes one of the funds under the amendment's formula. This would make it difficult for regents to increase tuition costs too much for fear that their appropriation request would be too high for senators constrained by a 2 percent limit.

But James Griesen, vice chancellor for student affairs at UNL, said the question is whether students want a good education or a cheap, poor quality one.

If state aid is slashed by a limit, students may agree that a tuition increase is necessary for NU to make the grade.

Total state appropriations for NU and UNL, 1980-91



Initiative organizer believes senators are hooked on spending, not saving

By Ryan Steeves
Staff Reporter

To Ed Jaksha, the American philosophy of government is one of restraint.

Mechanisms are in place to ensure stability and limit the authority of politicians who are greedy and power hungry, he said.

But Jaksha believes one limit is missing in Nebraska government -- a limit on spending.

That's why he led a petition drive to initiate a limit on government spending increases to 2 percent in Nebraska. On Nov. 6, voters will decide if they want to etch the initiative into the constitution.

Politicians see the proposed amendment as a headache that will seriously hamper government services. Jaksha said it was necessary to curb the tendencies of lavish politicians.

"The reason we're doing this is because the Legislature -- Sen. (Jerome) Warner, Sen. (Loran) Schmit, Sen. (Ernie) Chambers, the governor -- have all been unable to discipline themselves," Jaksha said. "They have not been able to control their addiction to the spending habit. Just as bad as drugs. They're hooked on spending."

Jaksha said he objects to this year's 24-percent increase in Nebraska's general fund.

State government isn't the only spendthrift.

Jaksha said he believes every government entity spends more than it should.

But Sen. Warner of Waverly disagrees with Jaksha's analysis of state spending. He said the Legislature has skillfully handled state money and taxes.

"I'm not successful running for re-election on the basis that I spend a lot," said Warner, who has been re-elected seven times.

Warner, chairman of the Legisla-

ture's Appropriations Committee, said that in the past few years, the percentage of growth in state taxes has nearly matched the growth in Nebraskans' personal income.

Nebraska also collects less tax money per \$100 of income than most states, Warner said.

He admits property taxes are high but said they are needed because local governments rely so heavily on them.

Warner said he didn't object to placing a limit on government spending increases as long as the limit was tied to increases in personal income.

But an arbitrary limit set 3 percentage points below the rate of inflation would seriously hurt government services and economic development, he said.

Jaksha said the proposal would spur business because reduced taxes would give Nebraskans more to spend. Inflation would decrease under the 2 percent proposal because runaway government spending causes inflation, Jaksha said.

Warner disputed this, saying state government doesn't cause inflation. In fact, government is the biggest victim of it, he said.

And the most severe casualties of the 2 percent plan coupled with inflation would be services, said Lee Rupp, vice president for university relations at the University of Nebraska.

Rupp, who has been lobbying against the initiative on his own time, said governments would be too poor to extend such things as roads and sewers to businesses.

As a result, potential businesses would never come to the state and established ones would leave, Rupp said.

"Obviously, the 2 percent lid is about the biggest disincentive to economic development that I can think of," he said.

But Jaksha disagreed, calling such rhetoric "political hogwash."

He objected to Rupp's "lid" label. Jaksha said the proposal was not

a lid. He noted that it allowed for an increase of greater than 2 percent.

The proposed amendment would require that 40 of the 49 state senators approve increases of more than 2 percent to the state general fund.

Local governments must get approval from voters before increasing their spending beyond 2 percent.

And if voters vote down the increase, the government doesn't even get 2 percent. It gets no increase.

"It's sort of like rolling the dice," Warner said of the precarious approval process for local governments. He objected to punishing governments for trying to increase their budgets.

But Jaksha compared the process to selling shoes.

"If (local governments) are good enough salesmen, they'll get their commission," Jaksha said. "If they're not good enough salesmen -- if they don't have any justifiable cause, then maybe they deserve to lose it (the two percent)."

The controversy is not likely to be resolved, no matter what the voters do. Spending limits are popular. Between 17 and 21 states have them, Warner said. Jaksha said at least eight states are considering proposals similar to Nebraska's.

If the proposal passes, legislative and court battles over the language of the amendment are likely, those involved say.

Rupp said he had no doubt the proposed amendment would pass if Nebraskans voted on it today. He said a "confidential" poll showed the initiative would have passed if voted on recently.

If it does pass, few Nebraskans will admit to voting for it once they see its true effects, Rupp said.

Getting rid of it will be an arduous process.

"It's the next best thing to chiseling it in granite when a constitutional amendment passes," Rupp said.

That's the kind of stability Jaksha was looking for.

LINCOLN'S ONLY FULL TIME COMEDY CLUB!

FUNNY BONE

AMERICA'S No.1 COMEDY NITE CLUB

FAMOUS FUNNY MONDAY

The Funny Bone Comedy Club & KFRX present

CHARLES FLEISCHER AKA "Roger Rabbit"
The remarkable voice from "WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT"
A Series regular on "LAVERNE & SHIRLEY"
& "WELCOME BACK KOTTER"

Also: **PERCY CREWS II** from "Live at the Apollo"

Monday, September 10th
Showtimes: 7:30 & 9:45
Call Now For Reservations!

808 'P' Street 438-BONE
Sorry, no passes or coupons valid for this show!

Twisters

MUSIC & GIFTS

On Sale This Week at Twisters

Starting Tomorrow

Warrant "Cherry Pie" \$5.97 Cassettes \$9.97 CD's	George Michael "Listen Without Prejudice" \$6.97 Cassettes \$10.97 CD's
Pebbles "Always" \$5.97 Cassettes \$9.97 CD's	Neil Young "Ragged Glory" \$5.97 Cassettes \$9.97 CD's

1401 O St. 434-2500 East Park Plaza 434-2510 6105 O St. 434-2520

AIM HIGH

GET AN EDUCATION IN SCHOLARSHIPS WITH AIR FORCE ROTC.

Your college education represents one of your most important career decisions. Join Air Force ROTC, and you may be eligible for different scholarship programs that can help pay for that education.

But you'll learn something else, too: that Air Force ROTC opens opportunities for you to take your college degree higher, faster and further than you ever realized. Imagine your status as an Air Force officer, and get an education in opportunity -- call

CAPT DOUGLAS WALTERS
472-2415

AIR FORCE ROTC

Leadership Excellence Starts Here

The Clipper

Hairstyling for those who care

474-4455

- Haircutting
- Hair Styling
- Perms
- Color
- Roffler Hair Center
- Free Parking
- 7 Stylists
- Appointment or Walk ins
- Hairpieces For Men

ROFFLER
FAMILY HAIR CENTER

Mon-Fri 8:00 to 8:00
Sat 8:00 to 4:00

124 North 12th Street Lincoln, NE 68508