

Daily
Nebraskan
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EDITORIAL

Term limits

Measure 407 will hurt state — vote 'no'

Every election offers voters the opportunity to limit an incumbent's term by voting the official out of office. That should be enough.

But Nebraskans are faced Tuesday with Measure 407, which would set a cap on the number of terms a person could hold in state and federal offices.

Limiting terms would be especially harmful to Nebraska — one of only a handful of states considering the option — at the federal level. Senators and representatives acquire influential committee positions in Washington through tenure. Limiting terms would limit that and reduce the chances for our elected officials to best serve our interests. With only five representatives in Congress, Nebraska needs the best representation it can get.

Term limits also would increase the influence of lobbyists and congressional staff members — the people who are not responsible to voters yet sway votes in Congress.

But the most important argument against term limits should come from the voters. The U.S. government was set up so that voters were allowed to choose who would best represent them.

Ross Perot's candidacy for presidency, the large number of incumbents already turned out of Washington and the dramatic increases in the number of registered voters show that Americans are interested in and willing to accept their responsibility for the future of the United States. Nebraskans should be willing to accept the same responsibility for their state.

Give yourself a little bit of credit and vote against Measure 407.

Help education

Lottery surplus could mend budget cuts

If Nebraskans approve a lottery for the state, the big winner will be the state's education system.

Next Tuesday voters will be asked whether they support a state-run lottery under Amendment 1A.

Randy Moody, director of the pro-lottery group, Friends of Education and the Environment, predicted that the lottery could raise \$65 million. Half the profits — about \$10 million — would be spent on education. Environmental projects would get \$10 million.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln has already come under the Legislature's budget-cutting knife. Other colleges and public schools have experienced similar cuts in their budgets. And the state surely has not seen the end of tough economic times.

A raise in taxes would be the simple answer to compensating for budget cuts to education systems. But "tax hike" seem to be dirty words to Nebraskans.

The majority of the state doesn't want to pay more taxes, no matter what the cause.

Opponents to the lottery say it would only tempt poverty-stricken Nebraskans, hurling them even further into the dark realms of indebtedness.

Those folks deserve a little credit. Most poor people have sense enough not to buy something they can't afford. And those who don't already have pickle cards, keno and horse racing to tempt them — a statewide lottery won't ruin their lives. But the lottery will help students get a better education.

The bottom line is that Nebraska's education system is desperately in need of financial help. The lottery can provide some aid. Nebraskans must vote in support of the lottery.

Every little bit counts.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Staff editorials represent the official policy of the Fall 1992 Daily Nebraskan. Policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. Editorials do not necessarily reflect the views of the university, its employees, the students or the NU Board of Regents. Editorial columns represent the opinion of the author. The regents publish the Daily Nebraskan. They establish the UNL Publications Board to supervise the daily production of the paper. According to policy set by the regents, responsibility for the editorial content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its students.

LETTER POLICY

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 or reject all material submitted. Readers also are welcome to submit material as guest opinions. The editor decides whether material should run as a guest opinion. Letters and guest opinions sent to the newspaper become the property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Anonymous submissions will not be published. Letters should include the author's name, year in school, major and group affiliation, if any. Requests to withhold names will not be granted. Submit material to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.



JEFF HANKINS

Sleepouts don't help homeless

I hate liver — always have and always will.

When I was little, I did everything possible to get out of eating liver whenever it showed up on my dinner plate.

My mom would always insist that I eat it. No matter how I pleaded my case, she usually won the debate. Moms are good at that.



Unfortunately, there were many good reasons for a six-year-old boy to eat liver. But one line of reasoning always seemed questionable to me. I'm sure many of us have heard it.

It goes something like this: "How can you leave food on your plate when there are people starving in the world?"

The point of this argument is that we should feel lucky to have food on the table. But the effect is to create a feeling of guilt that we could actually eat while others around the world are going hungry.

I never fell for this argument. After all, no one in Ethiopia would have been better or worse off as a result of me eating my liver. No one around the world would even know whether I had eaten it.

The only guilt I ever felt was when I deceived my mom by slipping my liver out the back door to Heidi, the family dog.

I don't think my mom ever believed that anyone around the world would benefit from my consumption of a piece of liver. She only wanted me to eat it because it was good for me.

Thinking back, I now realize the underlying lesson to be learned from the liver debates.

Economics, like liver, is not a zero sum game.

Unfortunately, in every economy there are winners and losers. But the fact that one person succeeds does not automatically mean that someone else must fail.

For every winner there is not a corresponding loser.

Some people in this country choose to ignore this reality and make people feel guilty for achieving any level of success.

Recently, UNL students were victims of such guilt tactics.

Following the Great Plains Winter Sleepout benefit for the homeless on October 16, students were condemned by sleepout supporters for failing to take part in the event.

Like many other students, I am tired of being blamed for problems that I did not create. I am tired of being attacked for choosing not to take part in such feel-good events as a homeless sleepout.

Homeless sleepouts, which take place nationwide, are perfect examples

of how misguided the homeless advocacy has become.

I will not deny that homelessness is a serious problem. And I think that some organizations are truly committed to solving the homeless problem. Such groups help people clean up, find work and get back on their feet. These organizations, while few and far between, should be commended.

Many homeless advocates have lost sight of bringing the problem to an end. They promote class envy, spread feelings of guilt, and exploit the homeless for their own gains. If you think that such groups do not exist, look into it. You would be surprised.

There are many examples of ridiculous efforts made by homeless advocates, such as "dumpster dining etiquette" booklets and shopping cart ownership rights. But one of the dumbest ideas yet is the annual sleepout.

These sleepouts are nothing more than a pitiful attempt for some people to pretend that they care about ending homelessness. It is hard to believe that spending one night on the street could make anyone feel much closer to the problem.

The homeless must certainly appreciate the compassion shown by this one-night slumber party. This night on the street, equipped with party refreshments, must have really opened everyone's eyes to the real world.

I realize that roughly \$25,000 was raised for various organizations. But surely these groups could think of a more productive way to promote awareness.

Why should we drag society out onto the street for a superficial night of homelessness? The whole direction of this event, and many other homeless programs, is backwards.

I don't claim to have the answers to the homeless problem. But I do know that I am working three jobs and investing thousands of borrowed dollars in myself, doing everything I can to secure a comfortable lifestyle and be

responsible for my own level of achievement in life.

We must all be held accountable for our own actions. This is the first step in correcting the homeless problem and most of the other ills in American society.

If we shy away from challenges and fail to overcome obstacles, then maybe we deserve to be out on the street. And if being on the streets is terrible enough, we would certainly be motivated to achieve something better.

The homeless advocacy groups should exist for the sole purpose of helping the homeless to get back into productive societal roles. They should help those who are ready and willing to help themselves.

Instead, many homeless groups shift their attention to those people who have homes, jobs and steady incomes. Solving the homeless problem has taken a back seat to spreading feelings of guilt and class envy.

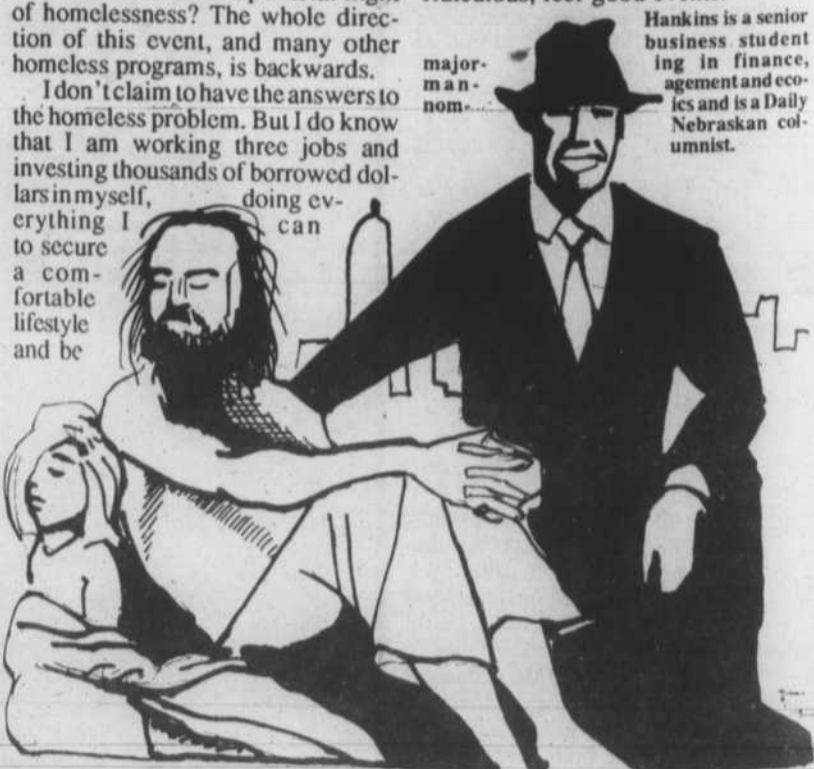
Homelessness, like liver, is not a zero sum game. Eating my liver and sleeping in a warm bed has nothing to do with the number of people living on the street. I don't feel guilty for living my particular lifestyle — and I shouldn't.

Liver is good for us, and we should eat it.

Homelessness is a serious problem, and we should confront it. But spreading feelings of guilt does nothing to solve the issue at hand.

If participating in sleepouts makes you feel better about the homeless problem, that's fine. But don't assure me that I don't care simply because I choose not to take part in such ridiculous, feel-good events.

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David Badders/DN