

Daily Nebraskan

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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

WEDNESDAY



Liberal vs. Conservative

SPORTS
Animated
analyst pumps
up Huskers



33/13
Windy and colder with a
chance of freezing rain.
Thursday, cold with a
chance of snow.

Budget ax would wound UNL, officials warn

Students, faculty, public would be severely affected

By Michelle Leary
Senior Reporter

UNL will suffer severe repercussions if a proposed 5 percent cut to the University of Nebraska's budget is approved by the full Legislature, university officials said.

Michael Mulnix, executive director of university relations, said the University of Nebraska-Lincoln would take the brunt of at least half of the \$13.98 million cut, part of a preliminary

recommendation approved Monday by the Legislature's Appropriations Committee.

"The university has known for months that a possibility of budget cuts existed," Mulnix said. But the cuts could send the university into a "crisis situation," he added.

"We're not crying wolf," he said. The university already has experienced three successive budget cuts and budget reductions in seven of the past 12 years.

UNL Chancellor Graham Spanier said he was very concerned about the Appropriations Committee's proposal.

"Eighty percent of UNL's budget is in people," Spanier said.

"Cuts of the magnitude being proposed would require us to lay off

dozens, if not thousands, of employees," he said. "Not only would that disrupt the university, it would disrupt the city of Lincoln where most of our employees live."

Spanier said students would feel the greatest impact of the budget cuts. "That's even scarier to me," he said. "This university took 124 years to build and I don't want to see it dismantled over budget problems."

In a written statement, NU President Martin Massengale said all NU campuses already had reduced programs and services in the areas where it was hoped the least damage would be done to teaching, research and public services.

The proposed cut represents 5 percent of NU's fiscal year 1992-93 general fund operations appropriation of

— 66 —

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--Spanier
UNL chancellor

— 99 —

\$279.6 million.

Massengale said the additional 5 percent reduction would leave the university no choice but to restrict the basic programs in ways that directly affect students, faculty and those citizens who depend on the outreach services.

Members of UNL's Government Liaison Committee, who met with

Mulnix Tuesday to voice their concerns, said they were genuinely shocked when they heard about the proposed cuts.

"We are extremely concerned with the budgeting process at Legislature," said Chris Peterson, a GLC lobbyist. "We feel the students were blindsided

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Robin Trimarchi/DN

Abortion-rights supporters march through downtown Lincoln to the governor's residence Tuesday evening. From left to right: Juleigh Morgan; Suzanne Rogers-Lipse, president of the National Organization for Women Lincoln chapter; Kim Tubbs and Monte Lefholtz, treasurer of the Nebraska NOW.

Activists protest abortion-related bills

Laws would prohibit use of public facilities, enact waiting period.

By Jeff Zeleny
Senior Reporter

About 30 sign-toting abortion-rights activists gathered Tuesday to protest two abortion-related legislative bills.

Signs reading: "Doctors went to med school, not senators," and "Rich, white privileged men will not decide," were among some carried by protesters who marched from 17th and O streets to the governor's mansion, 1425 H St.

The march, organized by the National Organization for Women-Lincoln chapter, was organized to draw public attention to anti-abortion Legislative Bills 110 and 156.

LB110, introduced by Sen. John Lindsay of Omaha, was passed out of committee last week. The bill would require a woman to receive information prior to having an abortion, and to wait 24 hours after signing the information.

Suzanne Rogers-Lipse, president of Lincoln NOW, said the bill wasn't needed.

"A woman doesn't decide to have an abortion frivolously," she said.

LB156, sponsored by Sen. Cap Dierks of Ewing, would prohibit the use of public facilities for abortion. It is being held by the Judiciary Committee.

Rogers-Lipse said that if the bill passed, women's lives could be at risk.

If a woman was in a public-funded hospital and needed an abortion for health reasons, she would not be able to have one performed, she said.

Amber Worcester, a freshman environmental science major, said senators needed to be reminded of opposing points of view.

"It's important for people to know that we're still here," she said. "The laws aren't forever. We need to make senators vote right."

Worcester said protesters weren't in favor of abortion, but the choice should be there for those who were.

"I'm against abortion personally," she said, but "people need to realize if they are against abortion, it's not up to them to decide."

Rich Higgins of Lincoln said the issue was of importance to men and women.

"Real men aren't afraid of women's rights," he said. "Most pro-life people are anti-women, which is anti-human."

Tony Lindquist, a senior sociology major, agreed, and participated in the rally to show support for the abortion-rights cause. The issue concerns everyone, not just women, he said.

"Taking away women's choice is taking away men's as well," he said.

Lindquist, who works at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Women's Center, said men needed to get more involved in issues like abortion.

Monte Lefholtz of Omaha, treasurer of Nebraska NOW, led women attached by leashes to signify the abortion gag rule. He portrayed Lindsay in the march.

"I'd be ashamed to be Sen. Lindsay," he said. "He is to America as Islamic fundamentalists are to Islam."

Worcester said the march probably didn't change anyone's mind, but it brought attention to the issue.

"It's better to make people angry than nothing at all," she said.

Bill to lower legal alcohol limit debated

By Chuck Green
Senior Reporter

A proposed bill that would lower Nebraska's legal blood-alcohol content raised disputes Tuesday between state officials and business owners at a hearing for the Legislature's Transportation Committee.

LB80, if passed, would lower the legal blood-alcohol limit from .10 percent to .08 percent.

Under the proposed bill, anyone found to have a blood-alcohol level greater than .08 would be considered intoxicated.

The committee did not vote on the bill Tuesday.

Under Nebraska law, a person convicted on a first offense of driving while intoxicated faces a minimum sentence of seven days in jail, a \$200 fine and a suspended license for six months.

A second offense brings a maximum of 90 days in jail, a \$500 fine and suspension of a license for a year. The maximum sentence for a third conviction is one year in jail, a \$500 fine and a suspended license for 15 years.

Sen. LaVon Crosby of Lincoln, who co-sponsored LB80 with three other senators, said statistics showed that 20 percent of all alcohol-related traffic fatalities in the United States involved drivers with blood-alcohol levels below .10.

That statistic, she said, shows it's time for a change in the law.

"People may feel like they're sober, but in reality, their judgment and reactions are impaired enough to allow an accident," Crosby said. "This bill won't solve everything, but it's a step in the right direction."

David Newell, an Omaha police officer, said he routinely stops motorists who are intoxicated and unable to safely drive, but cannot arrest them because they only test at .08 or .09.

"In fact," Newell said, "I've never tested anyone at .08 who was not significantly impaired and a significant danger to society."

Lancaster County Attorney Gary Lacey said LB80 would increase the number of DWI convictions and decrease the number of alcohol-related fatalities.

One problem with convicting DWI suspects, Lacey said, is the perception by judges that breathalizers — devices used by law enforcement officers to test the breath of drivers under suspicion of driving intoxicated — have an inherent error rate.

"There are six judges in Lancaster County, and all of them have bought the argument of a standard deviation rate," Lacey said. "Because of that, if someone is brought in with a .10, they're usually not prosecuted."

Lacey added that lowering the legal limit to .08 would relieve other forms of stress for law enforcement officers caused by current law.

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