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Improved forecast is quick fix, senator says

By Chuck Green
Senior Reporter

Although Nebraska's projected \$65 million budget gap was cut almost in half last Friday, one legislator doesn't anticipate many of the state's economic problems being solved.

And at least one University of Nebraska-Lincoln administrator isn't getting his hopes up, either.

State Sen. Scott Moore of Seward said last Friday's announcement by the state Economic Forecasting Advisory Board was encouraging. But, he

said, optimism should be restrained — at least for now.



"Everybody looks at this new forecast and thinks our problems are solved," Moore said. "But that couldn't be further from the truth. In the short term, things are better, but in the long term, this still isn't enough money to take care of the problems facing the state."

The board's new forecast called

for less than 5 percent annual economic growth for the state's budget in the next 28 months, reducing by \$33 million the projected gap between anticipated state spending and state tax revenue.

Moore said the improved forecast was based on effects of the passage of LB829 in 1991 — which was later found to be unconstitutional — and projected effects of LB1, a personal property tax that was enacted last fall during a special legislative session.

The forecast could be misleading to some, Moore said, because no new

“There still will have to be budget cuts. There's no way around that.”

—Moore
State Senator

economic growth had been generated, just "newly discovered."

"We've got to make some permanent corrections to solve these problems," he said. "Our spending increases at a rate that exceeds our

income, and there are no easy ways to solve that predicament."

Moore, who is chairman of the Legislature's Appropriations Com-

See REDUCE on 6



Staci McKee/DN

Heather Thomas was the victim of a car accident her senior year of high school that left her neck broken.

Close call

Near death experience motivates student to pursue goals

By Katherine Gordon
Staff Reporter

Heather Thomas stood quietly bleeding on the carpet in her aunt's bedroom in Minot, N.D. on the morning of Oct. 1, 1991 after walking a mile and a half from the remote road where she'd just rolled her car.

Her aunt, who luckily had called in sick to work that morning, awoke and asked her disheveled niece what was

wrong.

Eighteen-year-old Thomas, with two cracked ribs, a bruised heart, two major concussions, a cracked breastbone and shards of broken glass in her eye, answered, "I think I've been in an accident. I'm going to bed."

Thomas, now 19 and a freshman nursing major at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, had set out on her usual route to her high school that October morning but was stopped by the accident

that would lead the dance enthusiast to near death, then near paralysis.

The accident that almost took away her ability to dance has encouraged Thomas to minor in fine arts at UNL, focusing on dancing and singing.

The nurses who kept her spirits up and kept her busy while she was rehabilitating in the hospital have encouraged her nursing ambitions.

See PROFILE on 6

UPC president says changes boost diversity

By Steve Smith
Senior Editor

UNL will sport a University Program Council "on the cutting edge" of campus activity groups next year, the president of the council said.

Reorganization of UPC to an event-by-event planning committee will increase the group's effectiveness and diversity, Gary Doyle said, and it could help in the process of bringing big-time acts to UNL.

Doyle said next semester the council would implement the fusion of almost 20 separate subcommittees into an 11-person "super-committee," members of which were chosen last week.

Doyle said the sky was the limit when considering what programs could come to campus.

"It's a totally new way of thinking," Doyle said. "We want to show that UNL is serious about showing concerts with big-time acts."

Doyle listed such acts as Elton John, Guns 'N' Roses and The Black Crowes as targets for future UPC efforts. The musical group Sawyer Brown already has agreed to play at UNL, he said.

UPC currently has about 20 specialized subcommittees that serve the 25 special-interest groups UPC works with, Doyle said.

"The idea was that the committees would work well together," he said. "But the work was very task-specific. People were getting bored with the similarity of the jobs."

The result, Doyle said, was loss of membership in the subcommittees. Fourteen subcommittee chairs resigned in the last year.

Something needed to be done, Doyle said. "Either something was wrong with me or with the structure of UPC as a whole," he said.

"In the format that we have it in now, being on or running a committee is a year-round commitment. A lot of students can't do that," he said. "With this consolidation, we hope to get more students involved."

With the reorganization, UPC's separate committees have been eliminated. Program selections would be made by event directors and executives during meetings where all possible performers would be presented and evaluated by the committee.

Doyle said when the proposal was first put in front of the current UPC members, some minority groups feared their interests would not be

See UPC on 6

Housing office to implement ban, official says

By Mindy Leiter
Staff Reporter

Members of the Residence Hall Association weren't just blowing smoke when they introduced a resolution that would ban smoking in residence hall food service areas.

RHA members are waiting for the Office of University Housing to act on the resolution. They shouldn't have to wait long, said one University of Nebraska-Lincoln official.

RHA resolution would prohibit smoking in food service areas

Doug Zatechka, director of the Office of University Housing, said his department would be working with RHA to implement the smoking ban. He said he hoped to have the ban in effect by the 1994-95 academic year.

"I have supported RHA in the resolution and tried to provide advice," Zatechka said.

A smoker himself, Zatechka said he supported the ban in residence hall cafeterias because it would protect

the rights of non-smokers in the cafeterias.

Zatechka said the current campus smoking policy restricts smoking to smoking lounges and private offices with ventilators.

In the residence halls, students may smoke in lounges, in their rooms and in smoking sections of the cafeteria, he said.

Heath Kramer, the RHA member with a resolution passed by the Asso-

ciation of Students of the University of Nebraska that would ban smoking in all UNL buildings.

Kramer said the RHA resolution was necessary because ASUN's resolution, which still needs approval from the NU Board of Regents, would not cover residence halls.

Both resolutions were based on reports released by the Environmental Protection Agency that described

the health hazards of secondhand smoke.

"In Harper-Schramm-Smith, the smoking area is wide open and smoke travels to the non-smoking areas," Kramer said.

"It is an infringement on the non-smokers' rights to have to walk through smoking areas," Kramer said.

He said the resolution would allow students to continue to smoke in their rooms, but would further restrict smok-

See SMOKING on 6