

Gambling assistance groups may get aid

A bill providing funds to programs that help addicts moves closer to acceptance.

By ERIN SCHULTE
Senior Reporter

Compulsive gambling assistance programs in need of funding are one step closer to receiving an annual \$1 million after a legislative bill moved closer to approval Monday.

An initial amendment to LB248, which deals with technical wording in gambling laws, would have provided \$250,000 each year until 2000, and \$500,000 per year after then to programs that help problem gamblers stop their habit. It was advanced to select file with an adopted amendment Monday.

Sen. Ernie Chambers of Omaha

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vehemently opposed the original amendment and said it was a token gesture not aimed at correcting the real problem of compulsive gambling.

He said the money was a balm to soothe a government's conscience after it lured people to spend money gambling.

"We have created a precipice, and we say to those who don't fall over the side, we'll give them a Band-Aid," he said. "We are going to assuage our guilt by putting some piddly amount of money out there."

Sen. Kate Witek of Omaha said the amendment was not proposed to debate the actual issue of legal gambling.

Witek said the programs were successful in helping rehabilitated gamblers restructure finances after beating addiction, pay back debts and keep families together.

Sen. Stan Schellpeper of Stanton said not enough funds were currently available to help all the people who wanted to overcome their gambling addictions with help from the group.

"This money is needed, and it's needed now," Witek said.

Chambers said offering the money just encouraged people to gamble.

"Go ahead and (gamble), and when you have a problem, the state is there to take care of you," he said.

Three senators agreed with Chambers.

Sen. Jennie Robak of Columbus said there were other groups that government did not help, including the mentally ill and people with other habits.

"I don't know why we have to fund addicted gamblers any more than addicted credit card users," Robak said.

Chambers introduced an amendment that would nullify the first amendment, but later withdrew it to

propose an amendment that would instead provide \$1 million yearly on the condition that the groups could prove they needed money to provide services.

He said he was satisfied the money would not be wasted if the funding had to be approved by the Legislature.

"If the need is not demonstrated, not even the \$500,000 would go into the fund," he said. "Even I can agree with that."

"Need must be demonstrated to Scrooge multiplied 48 times."

Sen. John Hilgert of Omaha said the need-based wording was a good idea.

Witek said states like Iowa put around \$5 million into similar programs to combat compulsive gambling, and Schellpeper said the funds would make Nebraska more progressive in its approach to the problem.

"Nebraska is a leader with money like this," he said.

Investigation finds officer not at fault

From Staff Reports

Officer Launa Humiston acted within Lincoln Police Department use-of-force guidelines when she shot a suspect Friday, according to an investigation that ended Monday.

Lincoln Police Chief Tom Casady said he had determined Humiston acted properly when she shot Chester Breitzman in the abdomen as he reached for a knife during a pursuit.

Breitzman was still recovering in Lincoln General Hospital under police guard. Casady said he was unsure when he would be released from the hospital, but knew where he was going next.

"He'll be going directly to jail," Casady said.

Humiston, in the meantime, has been returned to full-duty status, Casady said.

Breitzman led Humiston and another officer on a high-speed chase through southeast Lincoln early Friday morning after he had allegedly robbed a convenience store. The chase ended near 74th Street and Fox Hollow Road, where Breitzman crashed into a group of trees.

When Humiston and another officer, Bob Hurley, approached the vehicle shouting commands, Breitzman did not listen. When he reached underneath the seat of his 1977 Chevy pickup, Humiston shot him. Officers found a 6-inch boning knife in his hand.

Breitzman was arrested for armed robbery and flight to avoid arrest.

Bill pushes for diversity in hiring of NU faculty

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iversity officials who testified on bills Monday, the problem of racial and gender diversity was apparent.

"Every one of those has been a white male," she said.

Jim Lewis, chairman of UNL's Mathematics and Statistics Department, said more needed to be done to recruit women and minorities, but an unfunded mandate wasn't the way to do it.

"You can say that you want major changes at the university," Lewis said, "but the bill needs serious work."

After the hearing, the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska President Eric Marintzer said the bill's goals were good, but it tried to achieve them the wrong way.

"It ties the university's hands when you have to hire someone based on their race or gender," Marintzer said. "The word that

"The word that never came up during that hearing was 'quality.'"

ERIC MARINTZER
ASUN president

never came up during that hearing was 'quality.'"

Wesely said the 11-to-1 ratio of men to women of full professors at UNL was "not right," but eventually said that advancing the bill might not be the best thing to do and urged the committee to hold the bill.

Broadcasters oppose gambling-promotion bill

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to casinos, and then fining them when they succumb to that temptation?" Pat Loontjer asked, referring to the punishment of underage youth caught in a Council Bluffs casino last month. Loontjer is the director of Gambling with the Good Life.

Speakers opposing the bill also included representatives of the Nebraska Christian Coalition and a state keno operator organization.

The Committee on General Affairs also heard arguments Monday supporting and opposing seven other gambling-related bills affecting the state lottery, pickle cards and bingo.

"We're saying we're pro-First Amendment and pro-advertising."

HOWARD SHRIER
Nebraska Broadcasters Association

Planned health center criticized

GRAND ISLAND (AP) — Terri Thiessen says education and not health should be the focus of public schools. She is the leading critic of a plan to put a health center in a high school.

The proposed health center, which would be a first in the state, is a risky social experiment that would put children's lives at risk, Thiessen said.

Supporters maintain the proposed center at Grand Island Senior High would reduce absenteeism and dropout rates and would meet health needs currently unmet by the school nurse. The idea was presented last month to the school board by St. Francis Medical Center.

The school board is expected to consider the plan Monday.

Thiessen said she worried the center would interfere with parental responsibility and would dispense advice on pregnancy and birth control issues.

"My first concern is that school is an academic institution," she said. "People pay taxes so their children will have a good education. I have a real concern about putting a medical facility in a school. We already have plenty of social welfare in this country."

Senior High Principal Kent Mann said the health center was proposed only because students at the high school have health needs beyond the

scope of the school nurse.

Mann said students should miss less school because the health center can provide "basic prescription medicines — almost over-the-counter-type medicines" — to help them deal with sore throats, congestion, sinus infections and other ailments that could cause them to miss several days.

Although St. Francis Medical Center would operate the health center, Thiessen said, the center would be obligated to make referrals. She said the report on the proposed center said one possible place for referral is Women's Health Services, which she believes emphasizes contraception rather than abstinence.

Survivors of public servants could get college tuition aid

From Staff Reports

Children and spouses of public-safety servants killed in the line of duty would be provided with free college tuition under a legislative bill proposed Monday.

The Legislature's Education Committee heard testimony on LB267, sponsored by Sen. John Hilgert of Omaha. The bill would cover the children and spouses of firefighters, police officers and other public servants

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killed as a direct result of injuries sustained on the job.

"We want to send a clear message that we appreciate the efforts of public-safety servants and that we as a community care for their children," Hilgert said.

Tuition credits could be used at any public college or university in Nebraska, or an equal amount could be applied to private in-state colleges.



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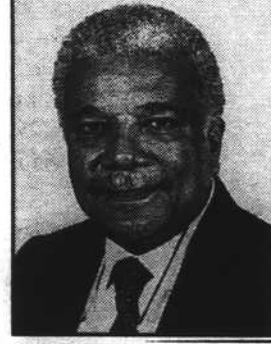
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Ali Mazrui
 Featured in the PBS series, "The Africans: A Triple Heritage," director, Institute for Global Cultural Studies, Binghamton University

From the Cold War of Ideology to the Cold War of Race: The Threat of Global Apartheid in the 1990s

Humanity has rightly celebrated the end of the Ideological Cold War between the United States and the former Soviet Union, between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, and the end of political apartheid in South Africa. But has the end of ideological confrontations been succeeded by a newly emerging system of global apartheid? Mazrui will explore this and other questions.

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