

# State leaders rally against initiative

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Russell said passage of Initiative 413 would make the University of Nebraska-Lincoln less attractive for prospective students.

She said the amendment's passage would force UNL to make cuts in faculty, salaries and entire programs of study, all in a period of eight months.

"We could no longer be an innovative or cutting-edge university," she said. "We'd be creating more of the brain drain we've worked so hard against."

NU Regent Chuck Hassebrook of Walthill said voters should reject Initiative 413 and continue to allow access to higher education, "for the many, not just for the few."

"Let there be no doubt: A vote for Initiative 413 is a vote for higher college tuition," he said.

"And let there be no doubt that it would raise barriers to higher education for families of modest means."

State Sen. Bob Wickersham of Harrison, chairman of the Legislature's Revenue Committee, said he opposes the initiative because it would essentially turn the state's fiscal policy over to the courts and force cuts in needed services.

"But most importantly, I think Initiative 413 is a challenge to representative government," he said.

Upon reaching the Omaha Chamber of Commerce building, Kerrey again urged opponents to spread the message of opposition to Initiative 413.

"I hope you will go out and say that the Omaha Chamber of Commerce and other proponents have come up with the identification of a problem, but we believe they have the wrong solution," he said.

In an interview following the event, Kerrey said the amendment would restrict the ability of UNL and other state institutions to make large one-time investments to meet the educational needs of the workforce, particularly in technology.

Rather than passing the amendment, proponents of fiscal conservatism should seek their goals through the legislative process, he said.

He noted that both candidates in this year's governor's race, Republican Mike Johanns and Democrat Bill Hoppner, have said they favor more efficient government and tax relief.

Russell said in a post-event interview that Kerrey's charisma would provide a spark for the opponent forces.

"Senator Kerrey has a very strong voice for the state of Nebraska," she said.

"He has the ability to get people rallied."

# Celebration enchants Nebraskans

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something new to the event each year.

The new aspect this year was a fund-raiser for the Vietnamese refugee children who are in orphanages.

Bui said she hopes the proceeds that the VSA donated, as well as the donations from those who attended, will help all portions of Vietnam.

"We're very interested in helping back home," she said.

The VSA ended the entertainment portion of the show by singing Ben Em Dang Co Ta, which translates to "I'll be there." They dedicated the song to children in orphanages throughout Vietnam.

With the incorporation of a fund-raiser and other new things, Nghi Thai, vice president of VSA, said the evening was a success.

"We incorporated a lot of new things," Thai said.

"I think with our combined effort, it turned out to be really successful."

Staff writer Sheeri Weyers contributed to this report.

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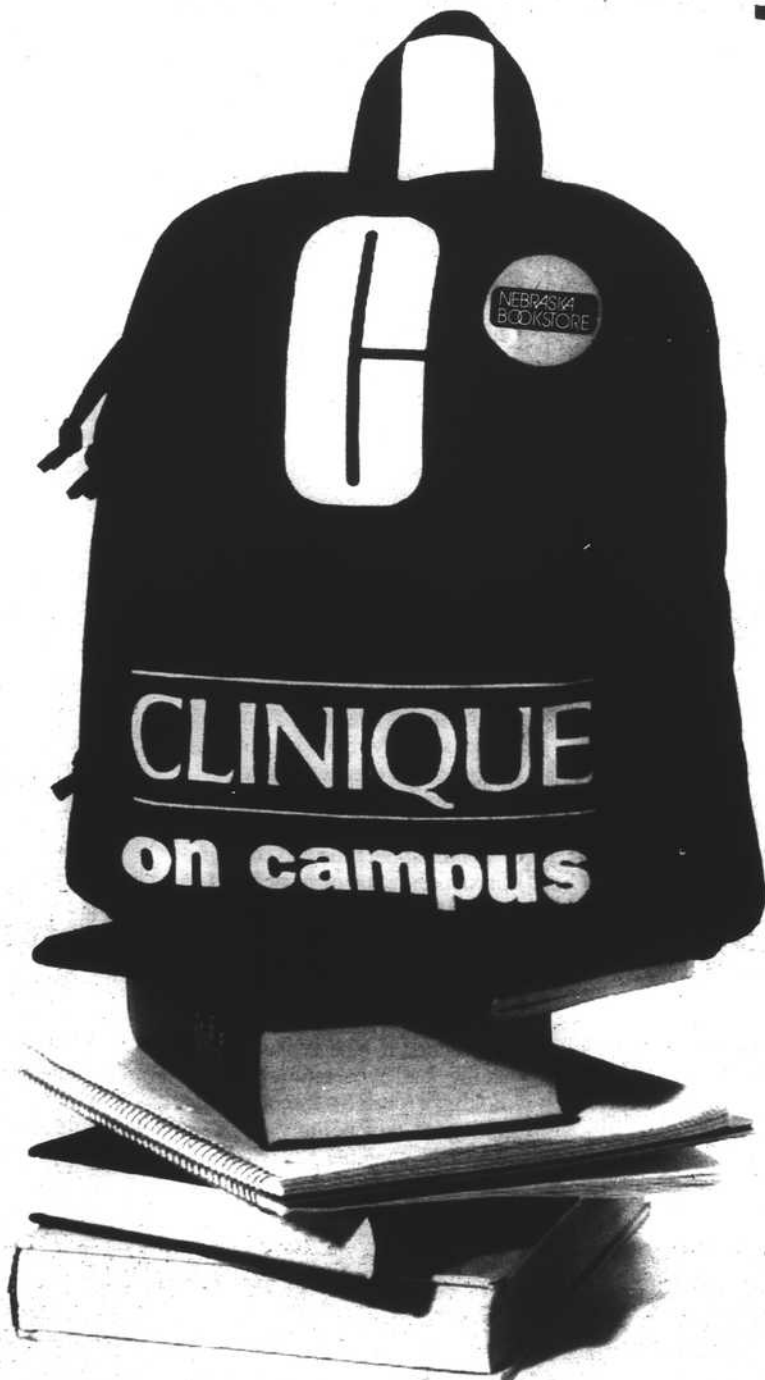
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