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1968 PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

NOV 5 1968

by Jack D. Timmons, Extension Economist

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
RIVERSIDE

On November 5, 1968, Nebraskans will again be asked to vote on an imposing number of proposed amendments to the Nebraska Constitution. Fifteen amendments were proposed by the 1967 Legislature for decision in 1968. These amendments cover a broad range of issues. Several of them are controversial.

To make an informed decision on each of the proposed amendments the voter must carefully study each issue in advance of election day and decide how he will vote. The law allows a voter to carry a sample ballot into the voting booth. With the large number of issues involved and the sometimes technical wording of the amendments the voter will find it easier and less confusing to mark a sample ballot at home and take it to the polling booth.

The following explanations of the proposed amendments are presented to help the voter understand the issues involved. An attempt has been made to present the major arguments on both sides of each issue as well as to explain what each amendment would do.

Space does not permit a comprehensive discussion of each issue but the explanations should provide the voter with the basic facts and controversies involved. The information was obtained largely from transcripts of the Legislative hearings and floor debates on each of the proposals and from the Summary of Constitutional Amendments prepared by the Nebraska Legislative Council.

The amendments are presented in the form and order that they will appear on the November ballot. In the interest of space, the exact constitutional text is not presented, but the specific changes are discussed in the explanations.

Proposed Amendment No. 1

"Constitutional amendment reducing the age of electors to nineteen years."

_____ For

_____ Against

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This amendment would reduce the voting age from 21 years to 19. Four other states already have lowered their voting age requirements. Georgia and Kentucky allow 18-year-olds to vote, the Alaska voting age is 19 and Hawaii allows its citizens to vote first when they are 20. North Dakota is considering an amendment for lowering voting age this year. There has also been support for a national law allowing those 18 years old and over to vote for national elective offices.

EXTENSION SERVICE, UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS AND
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE COOPERATING
E. F. FROLIK, DEAN J. L. ADAMS, DIRECTOR

Proponents of this bill contend that young people today have families, have substantial legal responsibilities, serve in the armed forces, pay taxes, and in most other ways are treated as adults. If they are subject to all of these responsibilities, they contend, then they should have the right to a voice in government which influences most of those responsibilities.

A democratic system depends on an interested and informed public to operate successfully. The supporters of this bill contend that young people today are better educated and informed when they graduate from high school than most of their parents. To maintain the interest they have achieved through high school civics courses and activities they should be brought into the electorate before they lose that interest and enthusiasm. There is reason to believe, as a result of studies in Kentucky, that young people who vote at age 18 will participate more consistently throughout their lives than those that wait until they are 21. They will probably divide, by party, in about the same proportion as their older counterparts.

In Nebraska, addition of 19 and 20 year olds would increase the size of the potential electorate by something less than 5 percent, but it would perhaps be more important in its addition of young dynamic ideas and greater responsibility on the part of these young citizens. According to the supporters, the other states that have lowered the voting age have been quite satisfied with the results.

Those opposed to the amendment feel that young people at this age are immature and lack judgment. They feel that young people are easily influenced and that there are significant changes in attitudes between the ages of 18 and 21. Proponents in the hearing replied that maturity is not a factor of chronological age, and that substantial changes also take place between ages 21 and 30 or later.

The amendment was approved by the Legislature on final reading by a vote of 37 for, 11 against, and 1 not voting.

Proposed Amendment No. 2

"Constitutional amendment renaming normal schools as colleges with the Legislature to designate the name of their governing body."

_____ For

_____ Against

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This proposal would change Article VII, Section 13 of the Constitution relating to the state colleges. The present provision refers to these educational institutions as "normal schools." The origin of the name dates back to a time when they were primarily two-year teacher training schools.

Two changes are proposed. One would substitute the name "state colleges" for "normal schools." The other would eliminate the name "Board of Education of State Normal Schools" and leave the naming of the Board to the Legislature. Neither of the changes in any way alter the operation or structure of the state colleges in Chadron, Kearney, Peru, and Wayne but it would make official in the Constitution the fact that these are now colleges rather than normal training schools.

Proponents of the measure say that the change of name would be an advantage in recruiting faculty members and in general prestige of the colleges. There was no opposition to the name change in the hearing.

The proposal passed in the Legislature by a vote of 33 for, 9 against and 7 not voting.

Proposed Amendment No. 3

"Constitutional amendment to authorize the Legislature to provide by law for the consolidation of county offices for two or more counties subject to the right of disapproval by each of the counties affected."

_____ For

_____ Against

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This amendment would allow the Legislature to establish a procedure for consolidating county offices between two or more counties. It is permissive and specifically states that any one county involved should disapprove of a proposed consolidation. Many counties find it difficult to find capable people to fill county offices since they do not have sufficient work or revenue to justify full time salaries. The proposal is the result of a county government study made by a legislative study committee prior to the 1967 session.

Proponents of the bill conclude that it is uneconomical and impractical to provide for all of the offices of county government in many small counties in the state. This amendment would provide the opportunity for two or more counties to go together and, for example, elect one attorney, or one county superintendent, or hire one engineer to carry out the duties in all counties involved. They contend that this would provide greater efficiency, flexibility and economy in county government as well as providing greater expertise. It would not involve consolidation of counties as units of government but would simply allow consolidation of some of the functions which might be better performed on a wider area and population basis.

One opponent appeared in the hearing. He contended that this was an attempt to do away with county government lines and should be opposed.

The bill was passed on final reading by a vote of 41 for, 0 against, and 8 not voting.

Proposed Amendment No. 4

"Constitutional amendment to provide that the Supreme Court shall have original jurisdiction in election contests involving state officers other than members of the Legislature."

_____ For

_____ Against

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Article V, section 2, of the Constitution provides, among other things, for the original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. Original jurisdiction is the term used to indicate those legal problem areas which the Supreme Court can decide directly without their first having been considered by lower courts. This amendment would add to the original jurisdiction of the court all contests over elections which involve state elective officers other than members of the Legislature.

This is a corrective amendment. In 1960 an amendment was passed by the voters allowing the Legislature to establish the method for settling election contests. The 1961 Legislature enacted a statute which provided that contested elections for state executive offices be heard and determined by the Supreme Court. A contest was filed in 1966 contesting the office of State Treasurer. The Supreme Court ruled that the 1961 statute was unconstitutional since it expanded the original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court which was fixed by Section 2 of Article V of the Constitution. The Court said that this jurisdiction, since fixed in the Constitution, could not be expanded by legislative enactment.

This amendment would then specifically provide in the Constitution that the Supreme Court have jurisdiction over contested elections involving all state elective offices except members of the Legislature. This includes state executive offices, the State Board of Education, the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska and the State Railway Commission.

The proposal passed Legislative final reading by a vote of 39 for, 3 against, and 7 not voting.

Proposed Amendment No. 5

"Constitutional amendment to authorize the Legislature to call special elections to submit proposed constitutional amendments to the electors."

_____ For

_____ Against

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The Constitution currently provides, in Article XVI, section 1, that proposed amendments approved by three-fifths of the Legislature shall be entered on the ballot in the next general election. Amendments being considered here were passed by the 1967 Legislature and will be approved or rejected in November of 1968. Amendment No. 5 would allow the Legislature by a four-fifths vote to declare the need for a special election on an amendment they felt was too critical to wait one to one and one-half years as is now the case.

Supporters of this amendment contend that there are occasions when emergencies arise and there is a need for rapid action on a problem. This proposal would not replace the existing methods of proposing amendments but would provide a method for hurrying up the process in extraordinary situations.

One witness at the hearing indicated that county boards might be reluctant to finance the cost of special elections.

The measure passed the Legislature on final reading by a vote of 38 for, 3 against, and 8 not voting.

Proposed Amendment No. 6

"Constitutional amendment providing that the Legislature may classify personal property, and may exempt any of such classes or all personal property from taxation."

_____ For

_____ Against

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The Constitution now provides that all property, not exempted in the Constitution, shall be taxed uniformly and proportionately. In other words, the same mill levy shall apply to assessed value of tangible property regardless of the type of property unless the Constitution specifically exempts it from the uniformity clause. There are a number of different types of property so exempted. Property used for charitable, religious or educational purposes, if non-profit, is exempt. Household goods and personal effects are exempt and the value of homes of paraplegic or multiple amputee veterans are exempt. Motor vehicles and grain and seed are subject to special classification and taxation.

This proposal would allow the Legislature to sort personal property of all types into classes as it sees fit, and may either exempt personal property entirely or apply varying rates to different classes.

The effect of the amendment would be on business personal property such as livestock, farm machinery, printing presses, business inventories, typewriters and other movable property incident to business operations. Business personal property makes up about 17 percent of the total property tax base in the state. Motor vehicles (8%) and land and improvements (75%) make up the remainder of the property which is taxed for local government purposes. However, since mill levies are generally higher in cities and the concentration of personal property is higher there, relative to real estate, the proposed exemption would include about 23 percent of the property tax dollars now collected by local governments. In total the personal property subject to this amendment represents about \$75 to \$80 million in tax revenue.

Proponents of this measure contend that this amendment would give the Legislature greater flexibility in the taxation field. They would be better able to adjust inequities in the property tax field and provide for the revenue needs of local government. This group points out that the Legislature can make other specific exemptions within the personal property field and should be able to adjust all of them. Some of the proponents contend that the entire class of personal property should be exempt from taxation since some businesses pass the personal property tax on through higher prices, while some find it very difficult to shift the tax. This creates inequitable treatment of businesses. It is also contended that the present system is a form of double taxation. This occurs because personal property is taxed through the sales tax when it is purchased and then a property tax is applied to it each year that it is owned. Real estate and improvements do not have sales taxes levied on them when they are sold.

It is contended that the exemption of personal property taxes would not only help existing business in the state but would be an inducement to industrial location from other areas.

Opponents of the measure say that the measure would cut local revenues and be particularly damaging to school financing. Cities would most feel the effects of reduced revenue. Their primary concern is in obtaining replacement revenue. One opponent felt that the exemption would be unfair because it would exclude trailer houses from property tax and create an unfair position relative to permanent homes.

One argument opposing the measure that has been advanced is that the tax system has just undergone a major change and that it should now be left alone for at least a couple of years to see how it works. It should be noted that the amendment is permissive and the Legislature need not act on it until it feels the need for exemption or classification exists.

This proposal was passed in the Legislature by a vote of 45 for, 2 against, and 2 not voting.

Proposed Amendment No. 7

"Constitutional amendment to permit the Legislature to increase the number of regents of the University of Nebraska and to require the Legislature to redistrict the state for their election."

_____ For

_____ Against

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This proposal amounts to a general overhaul of the method electing the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska. There are four basic changes made in the Constitutional provision which pertains to the Board. First, it provides that there shall be no less than six and no more than eight regents on the Board. Presently Article VII, Section 10, provides for six only. The Legislature would then have the discretion of determining how many will be on the Board within the specified limitation.

Second, the proposal would require redistricting of the Board of Regents after each decennial census. The existing provision leaves this to the discretion of the Legislature. They have never been changed.

The third change provides that the redistricting, when necessary after a census, may be accomplished by a majority vote of the Legislature. The present provision requires a two-thirds vote.

The fourth change allows the Legislature to cross county lines in establishing boundaries of the Regent districts when it is considered necessary. The present requirement limits boundaries to county lines.

Finally, the provision establishes the procedure for designating incumbent regents to various districts when the lines are redrawn. The legislation which establishes the new boundaries must provide that the regents elected prior to the redistricting shall continue in office and it must designate which district they will represent for the balance of their term.

Those appearing in favor of the bill point out the need for redistricting since it has not been done since the districts were first established in 1921. They also contend that the regents' districts should be uniform with others such as the Railway Commission, Board of Education, etc., in terms of numbers of districts, the ability to cross county lines where necessary, and in the kind of majority required to enact a redistricting statute.

None opposed the proposal in hearing.

The Legislature passed the bill on final reading by a vote of 42 for, 5 against, and 2 not voting.

Proposed Amendment No. 8

"Constitutional amendment to permit the Legislature to authorize lotteries, raffles, and gift enterprises which are intended solely as business promotions or the proceeds of which are to be used solely for charitable or community betterment purposes without profit to the promoter thereof."

_____ For

_____ Against

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This proposal would amend Article III, Section 24, of the Constitution. The Constitution, when originally adopted, prohibited the Legislature from authorizing any games of chance, lottery, or gift enterprise for any purpose. This provision has been amended three times. In 1934 parimutual betting on licensed horse races was authorized. In 1958 bingo playing was authorized for non-profit organizations in existence for more than five years prior to application for license. The third amendment to this provision came in 1962 authorizing the conduct of games of chance, lotteries, or gift enterprises "where the consideration for a chance to participate (does not) involve the payment of money for the purchase of property, services, chance or admission ticket, or require an expenditure of substantial effort in time."

Many activities are still prohibited because of the restrictions on purchase of property, admissions, services, etc. Such things as drawings at functions where admission is charged, lotteries where purchase of a chance or a product is required, and similar events are prohibited.

This amendment, if passed, would allow the Legislature the discretion to determine which types of contests and raffles might be allowed. It would still limit them to only those types of events that are intended as business promotions or are used for charitable purposes.

Proponents of the amendment contend that there has been some confusion on the part of Nebraska citizens and promoters of national contests as to what is permitted. As a consequence, in many contests that are somewhat questionable Nebraska residents have been excluded from national contests. They feel that this amendment, plus clarifying legislation, would clear up this confusion and provide Nebraska merchants with the freedom to conduct such promotions. It would also provide many non-profit organizations with another means of raising funds for charitable purposes. They also commented that the amendment does not open the door to a state-operated lottery, as some opponents have contended.

Opponents of the proposal contend that this simply legitimizes the philosophy of getting something for nothing and that this philosophy is dangerous to moral character. They also said that it tends to make many people compulsive gamblers.

The measure passed the final reading in the Legislature by a vote of 32 for, 10 against, and 7 not voting.

Proposed Amendment No. 9

"Constitutional amendment to provide the Legislature shall provide by law for the establishment of a Board of Parole and provide the qualifications of the members thereof; and to provide that the power to pardon shall rest with the Governor, Attorney General and Secretary of State, sitting as a board."

_____ For

_____ Against

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Article IV, Section 13, of the Constitution currently provides for a Board of Pardons composed of the Governor, Attorney General and the Secretary of State. This board has the power to "remit fines and forfeitures and to grant commutations, pardons, and paroles after conviction and judgment, under such conditions as may be prescribed by law, for any offenses, committed against the criminal laws of this state except treason and cases of impeachment."

If the proposed amendment passes, the above named executive officers sitting as a board would still have direct responsibility for all of the functions except parole. The amendment would allow the Legislature to provide by law for a separate Board of Parole and the qualifications of its members. This new board would review and grant all paroles. In addition they would advise the Governor, Attorney General and Secretary of State on all cases involving remission, respite, reprieve, pardon or commutation.

The proponents of this amendment include all three members of the present Board of Pardons. Several reasons are given for the desired change. Proponents feel that the present ex officio members do not have the time or competence to make the important decisions called for in the complicated area of paroles. There needs to be a board with full-time responsibility and professional competence in the field. The present board must accept the judgment of a classification board for approval and it has no supervision. The rising crime rate has increased both the work load and the complexity of parole problems. At present there is also no check on the supervision of parolees by the board. There was no opposition to the proposal in the hearing.

The proposed amendment was passed by the Legislature on final reading by a vote of 40 for, none opposed, and 9 not voting.

Proposed Amendment No. 10

"Constitutional amendment to provide that the Legislature may, by special law, create public corporations which are or have been organized wholly or in part

for the purposes of the generation, transmission, or sale, or any combination thereof, of electricity."

_____ For

_____ Against

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This proposal would amend Article XII, Section 1, of the Constitution which pertains to legislative powers over corporations. It now provides that no corporation may be created, extended, changed or amended by special law. In other words the Legislature must only provide for regulation, organization and supervision through general laws that will apply to all corporations alike. The section exempts from this limitation corporations organized for charitable, educational, penal or reformatory purposes.

The Legislature has been struggling for several years with the problem of coordinating public power generation and transmission in the state. In 1965 they passed a statute creating a grid system that would unify control. It was to be in the form of a public corporation and a political subdivision of the state similar to the position of a regular public power district. The Supreme Court declared the act unconstitutional on the grounds that this was creation of a public corporation by a special law.

The proposed amendment would provide additional exception from the special law provision "those public corporations which are or have been organized wholly or in part for the purposes of the generation, transmission, or sale, or any combination thereof, of electricity." This would allow the Legislature to then pass legislation creating the type of public power corporation structure and control system they consider appropriate.

The proponents of the proposal contend that the present provision is restrictive and prevents the Legislature from solving the public power problems of the state. This is an unnecessary restriction in Nebraska which is totally public power. Its supporters further state that the amendment would not discriminate among public power districts and would not be special legislation except to the extent that it applies only to public power corporations. They said that the public power problems of the state are unique and the Legislature must have the authority to deal with them.

Opponents of the measure contend that it is special legislation. They contend that the corporation set up under the 1965 legislation places too much authority under one board, and they expect this to be reestablished if the amendment is approved. They also felt that this would establish a dangerous precedent for establishing special corporations and that it is neither desirable or necessary for solving public power problems. They further said that the amendment as submitted to the voters is misleading since it only says "create" while the actual wording in the amended section of the Constitution would also allow extension, change or amendment of such corporation.

The proposal was passed on final reading by a vote of 36 for, 8 against, and 5 not voting.

Proposed Amendment No. 11

"Constitutional amendment to change the restriction on members of the Legislature being appointed to state office by providing that members shall not be appointed to another state office while holding membership in the Legislature or while the Legislature is in session during the term for which he was elected."

_____ For

_____ Against

"Constitutional amendment to provide that when the terms of members of the Legislature commence at different times, the compensation of all members may be increased or diminished at the same time."

_____ For

_____ Against

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The proposal includes amendments to Article III, Sections 16 and 19. The amendments were passed in the same Legislative act and are, hence put together under number 11 on the ballot. However, since each deals with a somewhat different subject they call for separate decisions by the voter.

The first of these two amendments would allow a legislator to resign his seat and be immediately appointed to a state office except during the time the Legislature is in session. The Constitution presently provides that a member of the Legislature cannot accept appointment to another state office during the term for which he was elected. Thus he now would have to wait until the end of his four year term before he could accept such an appointment. If the change is adopted he would still have to resign and, because of another Constitutional provision, could not accept a position that he had worked to create as a legislator. He could accept only a position that had already existed when his term began.

Proponents of this amendment contend that the existing provision is over-restrictive and sometimes prevents capable legislators from being used effectively in other government positions they are qualified to hold. It was felt that a legislator should have the freedom to accept a position for which he had an interest as long as the Senate was not in session.

One opponent to the bill contended that this would broaden the already considerable appointment of power of the Governor and should not be allowed.

The second amendment involved in this proposal provides for a change in the compensation restriction on legislators. As now constructed the Constitution says that no legislator may have his compensation increased or decreased during his term of office. Since legislators now serve four year staggered terms, it means that only the newly elected one-half could receive increases after a pay raise was authorized. The other one-half with two years remaining on their terms would not receive the raise. This amendment would allow a compensation change to go into effect for all legislators at the same time.

The same problem used to apply to various other state agencies and offices that had staggered terms of office, but this was corrected by amendment in 1952.

Proponents of this proposal felt that it would be unfair for one-half of the legislative body to be paid one level of compensation for two years and the other half a higher scale. As it stands now, the increases must be approved by the voters through amendment to the Constitution anyway, so the legislators would not be voting themselves raises without public approval. No opposing arguments were raised.

The act approving submission of these two amendments passed in the Legislature by a vote of 36 for, 5 against, and 8 not voting.

Proposed Amendment No. 12

"Constitutional amendment to provide that the Legislature may by general law provide that a portion of the value of any residence actually occupied as a home-
stead by any classification of owners as determined by the Legislature shall be exempt from taxation."

_____ For

_____ Against

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This proposal would give the Legislature the authority to establish exemption of a portion of the value of an owner-occupied home from property taxation. Several other states have provided these exemptions with the stated purposes of encouraging home ownership and lessening the tax liability for those having low incomes -- particularly the elderly retired. Other states having this exemption include Alabama, Florida, Hawaii, Iowa, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Dakota and Texas.

This has not meant total exemption of value but some maximum figure such as \$2000 or \$5000. Again this amendment would be permissive and allow the Legislature to deal with it as it saw fit.

Those favoring the amendment contend that there is a particular hardship on retired persons who still own their homes but have greatly reduced income. Many of them have found it difficult to keep up the taxes after their retirement and sometimes have to sell their homes or go without other necessities. A part of the proponents said it is to help this group that they support the measure, and they do not intend to support exemption of a broader class of owner-occupied residences. However, other proponents tend to also favor some type of maximum exemption that would encourage home-ownership and would encourage young people to plant roots and stay in Nebraska.

Opponents of the measure feel that the exemption would potentially cover such a large amount of property that substantial tax increases would be necessary on the remaining property to maintain local government services. This increase would have to be levied against business and rental property. They contend that it would actually hurt low income people because they are primarily renters rather than owners of homes. About 40 percent of the population rents and they would, through rent, pay much of the increased tax.

The amendment would hurt revenues to schools particularly in some areas according to the opponents, and until the new tax system has had a chance to work for awhile no further major changes should be made.

This measure was passed by a vote of 37 for, 6 against, and 6 not voting.

Proposed Amendment No. 13

"Constitutional amendment to permit the state to guarantee or make long-term or low-interest loans to Nebraska residents seeking adult or post high school education."

_____ For

_____ Against

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Article XIII, section 3, of the Nebraska Constitution now provides that: "The credit of the state shall never be given or loaned in aid of any individual, association, or corporation." The above proposed amendment would make an exception in the case of loans to post-high school students. It could apply to both college students and to students obtaining training in vocational schools.

The proponents of the measure say that it would increase the number of opportunities for young people to obtain post-high school education. By delaying the payment until after they begin earning income based on the education the costs could be substantially paid by the students benefiting from the training. Experience has shown that student loans for education have resulted in nearly 100 percent repayment, so the risk to the state should be quite low according to the supporters. They contend that there are many students and potential students that need additional funds. The federal loan guarantee program has not been effective because many banks will not extend student loans under the program.

Those in favor of the measure also cite the particular problems of parents with more than one child in school at one time and the difficulty that girls have of earning enough to keep themselves in school. Present scholarships are all taken and there still are many students that need help. They further contend that this would help keep young Nebraskans in the state and would help in the economic growth of the state.

Opponents of the measure state that many scholarships and loan programs already exist. Many of them oppose the concept because they are opposed to credit in general and feel that this would also risk taxpayers' money in financing people for their own personal gain. They contend that working in school is "good therapy" and that more responsibility is necessary in the student.

The proposal passed in the Legislature by a vote of 30 for, 9 against, and 10 not voting.

Proposed Amendment No. 14

"Constitutional amendment authorizing the State of Nebraska to issue bonds for construction of highways if the Legislature determines by a three-fifths vote of its elected members that the need for construction of highways in this state requires such action, and to pledge state revenue closely relating to the use of such highways for payment thereof."

_____ For

_____ Against

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This amendment would allow an exception to the Constitutional provision in Article XIII, Section 1, that limits state government debt to no more than \$100,000. It provides for highway construction to be executed now and paid for by issuance of revenue bonds. The bonds would be financed by all or part of the revenues from highway user fees such as motor vehicle fuel taxes or motor vehicle license fees.

The proponents of this measure contend that the need for highway construction is critical right now. They feel that it would be cheaper and more effective to incur debt now and build them, than to try and build them as the revenues become available, since costs will undoubtedly continue to rise and fewer miles of road will be built in the future on the same revenues. The economic development of the state depends on adequate roads and transportation systems, according to the supporters, and the sooner they are built the more the state will benefit.

Opposition to the measure comes from different groups who have different reasons for opposing it. Some feel that a highway authority should be created with the power to issue revenue bonds according to the needs of the state. Other opponents are totally against the state relaxing its debt limitation for any purpose. They contend that many other states have gotten into trouble with debt financing and that Nebraska should finance only what they can pay for from current revenues. Still others feel that there are other critical needs in the state, and if the credit provision is to be changed it should include a broader range of functions that could be so financed.

The bill proposing this amendment passed final reading by a vote of 30 for, 11 against, and 8 not voting.

Proposed Amendment No. 15

"Constitutional amendment to provide that each member of the Legislature shall receive a salary of not to exceed four hundred dollars per month."

_____ For

_____ Against

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Article III, Section 7 of the Constitution presently provides the legislators shall receive a salary not to exceed two hundred dollars per month. This amendment would raise the maximum to four hundred dollars per month.

Members of the Legislature do not receive per diem payments during a session or any other compensation except actual expenses for one round trip to the state capitol for any regular or special session.

Supporters of the amendment cite the increased costs of being a legislator as well as increased work load since compensation was last increased in 1960. They contend that many able and competent persons are now hesitant, and sometimes unwilling, to file for election to the Legislature because of the low compensation. Some already in the Legislature do not intend to return because of the financial sacrifice. Most legislators do not expect to be highly paid for their services but do feel that their pay should at least cover their actual expenses.

One misunderstanding that frequently arises when legislative pay increase is proposed concerns the work load. Many people feel that the legislators only work six or eight months every two years when the Senate is in session. This is the period when they have the most pressure and the longest hours but is by no means the end of their responsibility. All of the legislators are members of one or more interim study committees on various topics which may involve future legislation. This means periodic meetings, usually in Lincoln, for discussion and many hours of study at home. In addition they are called upon to make speeches and reports, both to their constituents and to other groups in the state, often at their own expense. Add to this the frequent calls they receive from their constituents on various topics of interest and the time they spend seeking out the opinions and feelings in their districts and it is apparent that this is equivalent to a full-time occupation.

There were no opposing arguments posed in the hearings.

The bill passed the Legislature by a vote of 39 for, 1 against, and 9 not voting.