



March 15th, 2017

Veto Statement for Appropriation Bill #11

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Senate,

While campaigning for this office exactly a year ago I publically stated that I support the Daily Nebraskan, and I maintain that stance today. It is no secret that I have been an ardent auditor of all student fee users over the last three years during my time serving in this body, and the Daily Nebraskan has been no exception. During that time though I have also come to understand that the publication does serve a vital role on this campus and as I have come to know - and respect writers who cover this body and the ASUN organization, my appreciation for the Daily Nebraskan has strengthened. In this specific case though the decision to veto was about the numbers for me.

The Editor in Chief of the Daily Nebraskan, among others, has assured me that no student fee dollars go to paying the wages of writers. If this is the case then the amount of content generated by student writers should not be affected by a reduction in student fees. Instead, efficiencies in operation can be found without affecting the ability to continue paying hardworking students. When reviewing the materials provided by the Daily Nebraskan at the March 8th Senate meeting it appears that more dollars are being used to pay administrative expenses, (\$104,658) than are being used to pay students writers (\$83,481), more specifically those administrative dollars are being paid with our student fees.

The Daily Nebraskan has told us that a \$718,307 reserve account is a necessary safety net to protect against lawsuits pertaining to libel and other hazards that may affect the paper. While I do acknowledge that these are real risks and to ensure the long-term sustainability of the paper it is necessary they keep enough money to handle such disputes. However, the CFA subcommittee in their research has found that the insurance deductible for such an occurrence is approximately fifteen thousand dollars. In other words, if the Daily Nebraskan were involved in a lawsuit, their insurance would cover the loss beyond that deductible.

In comparison, take for example, the University Health Center who also runs a risk of being sued for malpractice, the healthcare equivalent of libel. The Health Center has a 10.8 million dollar budget and a reserve account of 1.1 million dollars, just

fewer than 10 percent in reserve. This reserve provides them a safety net to pay any insurance deductibles for such cases. For a second comparison, consider Campus Recreation, an organization that operates a climbing wall, leads camping trips, and has a plethora of equipment and programs, which could result in great liability to the organization. Yet, they have a 1.2 million dollar reserve account and an annual budget of 10.3 million dollars, again roughly 10 percent in reserves, and again enough to pay any liability insurance deductible should they be faced with a lawsuit.

The Daily Nebraskan on the other hand has a \$700,000 reserve with an annual budget of \$461,000, or approximately 150 percent in reserves. In other terms, they could pay the insurance deductibles on 46 lawsuits currently.

It is for these reasons that I believe the Daily Nebraskan should come in line with the philosophy that this senate has applied to all the other fee users of fiscal responsibility. I support the CFA recommendation of \$114,650 to the Daily Nebraskan and believe that it is a fair allocation given a study of the organization's financials, the methodology that has been applied to all other fee users, and with stewardship of student fee dollars in mind.

Some of the brightest and most creative minds on campus work for the Daily Nebraskan, I look forward to the innovation that will come from the campus wide conversation we've had the past few weeks, and encourage the senate to sustain the veto.