

South Dakota

Abortion Law Modification OK'd

BY CHET BROKAW
Associated Press

PIERRE — With South Dakota's year-old abortion law tied up in a court challenge, the South Dakota House approved a bill Monday that would change some of the counseling requirements for women seeking abortions.

The bill leaves intact the current law's main requirements that women seeking abortions wait 72 hours and undergo counseling at pregnancy help centers that discourage abortions. But it changes provisions that deal with a woman's first consultation with a doctor at an abortion clinic and requires that counselors at the pregnancy help centers be licensed.

Opponents said they doubt the changes will have any effect on the court challenge filed by Planned Parenthood, which argues the 2011 law is an unconstitutional burden on a woman's right to an abortion. A federal judge has suspended most of the law from taking effect until the court challenge is decided.

The bill would specify what factors an abortion clinic doctor would consider when deter-

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REP. ROGER HUNT

mining whether a woman is at risk of developing mental health problems if she has an abortion. It also would require that the counseling sessions at pregnancy help centers be conducted by counselors who are licensed in their fields. Those counseling sessions are supposed to determine if a woman has been coerced into seeking an abortion.

The measure's main sponsor, Rep. Roger Hunt, R-Brandon, said this year's bill cleans up language in last year's law and clarifies the Legislature's intent in passing the law.

Rep. Peggy Gibson, D-Huron, said the bill should be defeated because it will just add to the state's legal costs in defending an unconstitutional law. The counseling requirement as-

sumes a woman has not thought carefully about her decision to get an abortion, she said.

"South Dakota women are perfectly capable of thinking for themselves," Gibson said.

Gibson said the Legislature should leave the issue alone because voters in 2006 and 2008 rejected ballot measures seeking to outlaw most abortions.

But Hunt said the counseling is needed to make sure a woman is fully informed before getting an abortion.

"The bottom basic issue is we do not want to take the life of an unborn child," Hunt said.

The measure would list risk factors that could cause a woman to have psychological problems after having an abortion. Those include coercion, conflicts with her religious views, her age and previous mental health problems. A doctor at an abortion clinic would have to discuss those risk factors with a woman.

The bill also clarifies that, in most cases, the same doctor who conducts the initial interview should also be the doctor who performs an abortion.

Nebraska Measure Would Push For Term Limit Extension

BY MICHAEL AVOK
Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. — Members of the Nebraska Legislature would be able to serve three terms rather than two under a proposed constitutional amendment that cleared an early hurdle Monday, despite criticism from opponents that it would appear lawmakers were just looking out for their own interests.

The Legislature's Executive Board voted 6-3 to allow the measure to be discussed by the whole Legislature. If approved, voters would decide in November whether to boost term limits from eight years to 12 years.

At several times during this year's session, lawmakers have lamented the level of experience and lack of knowledge caused by the turnover that term limits create. That topic came up again Monday in committee.

"I think this would do more for the development of the body than a pay increase," said Sen. Steve Lathrop of Omaha.

Lathrop was referring to another measure the Executive Board approved last week that would

raise lawmaker salaries from \$12,000 per year to \$22,500 per year.

Supporters of the term-limit extension said adding four more years to a lawmaker's job would help the state in the long run.

Opponents questioned whether it is the right time to add to term limits.

"I don't think it's wise to come from this body," said Sen. Deb Fischer of Valentine. "It looks to me to be self-serving. I believe that's the way it will be perceived. When we came in, all of us knew it would be eight years. I don't believe any one of us is indispensable. People step up here and work hard."

In advocating a pay raise for lawmakers, Sen. Scott Lautenbaugh of Omaha said that most people can no longer afford to serve in the Legislature. He says it has become a collection of retirees, the wealthy and those who own their own businesses.

He advocated for a \$20,000 annual raise, saying that many young, competent people who could run for office aren't doing so because it's difficult to serve the public and hold a full-time job.

But, he said that he was happy with the \$22,500 per year salary recommended by the Executive Board.

Recognition For Vets On South Dakota Licenses Passes Senate

PIERRE (AP) — South Dakota's veterans don't have to carry honorable military discharge paperwork when they go shopping at retail stores if a Senate bill turns into law.

The full Senate voted Monday in favor of a bill that recognizes veterans on a driver's or operator's license.

Sen. Jeffrey Haverly, a Rapid City Republican and the bill's prime sponsor, says this way former service members can get discounts offered by retailers without having to carry proof of service.

The U.S. Defense Department issues a DD-214, which identifies the veteran's condition of discharge.

Veterans must pay to renew their license in order to get the distinction.

This bill passed 34-0.

North Dakota Higher Ed Board To Sue To Drop Fighting Sioux

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — North Dakota's Board of Higher Education voted Monday to sue to attempt to block a public vote on a state law that requires the University of North Dakota's athletics teams to be called the Fighting Sioux.

The board approved the lawsuit after meeting by telephone with state Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem, who said he was confident the law violates the North Dakota Constitution. The constitution gives the board broad powers to manage the state's 11 public colleges, Stenehjem said.

Board members described their decision as a defense of their constitutional prerogatives, while nickname supporters described it as an affront meant to silence voters.

"In the wake of very serious problems within the North Dakota university system, our state Board of Higher Education has instead decided their priority should be trying to use the legal system to disenfranchise the voters of North Dakota," a spokesman for the referendum campaign, Sean Johnson, said in a statement.

The university has been trying to retire the nickname and a separate logo that shows an American Indian warrior's square-jawed profile. Last November, the North Dakota Legislature repealed a state law that required UND to use the nickname and logo.

However, nickname supporters filed referendum petitions last week with North Dakota's secretary of

state, Al Jaeger, to revive the pro-nickname law. It is now back in effect.

If Jaeger decides the petitions are valid, the question could be put on North Dakota's June 12 statewide primary election ballot. Voters would then decide whether to uphold the law, which requires the university to keep the nickname and logo, or repeal it.

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6-7pm — Domestic Beers
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5-7pm — Hamburger/
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Friday

Ribs

or Menu Serving 5:30-8:00

Saturday

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Bingo Wed. at 7:00pm

Sunday at 6:30pm

Happy Hour M-F 4:30-7:30

Chislic Served Last

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17TH

Nintendo Dsi Drawings Every Hour at 10PM & 11PM

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18TH

Cash Drawings Every 15 Minutes 7:15 to Midnight

OHIYA BINGO February 16th & 17th

Reg. Session \$16 Pays \$50

Warm-ups 6PM, Reg. Session 6:30PM

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207 W. 11th St., Yankton

Saturday, February 25

4:30-7:00PM

Serving Turkey, Stuffing,

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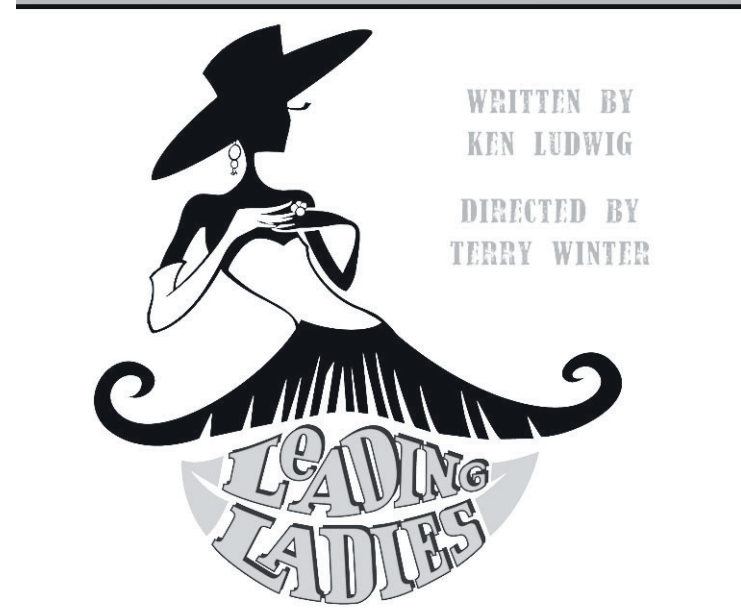
Corn, Cranberries and Cake.

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Tickets can be purchased at the door the day of the supper.

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