

NEBRASKA STATE GRANGE POLICY
Revised in 2007

AGRICULTURE

WATER

1. The Nebraska State Grange urges all farm operators to have certified water and soil analysis for the application of the correct amounts to be applied, thus preventing excess nitrates from polluting the water supply.

2. The Nebraska State Grange urges that the Water Pollution Control Act to be revised so that the Army Corps of Engineers has authority over only the “navigable waters” and not the “waters of the United States”.

3. The ACP cost-share payment for conservation and livestock pollution abatement facilities shall be continued; and payments be increased to meet the higher costs due to inflation.

4. The Grange encourages small dam structures and good soil conservation practices of percolating water into subsoil, recycling for evaporation and humidity, flood prevention and for irrigation.

5. The State Grange opposes any state control limiting well drilling for livestock or domestic purposes.

6. Where underground water is in short supply, the Grange supports the concept that irrigators ration water equally; that underground water is the property of the landowner giving him the right to have a well for domestic use and irrigation, except that when the use of such water affects the supply of the underground water of neighbors or towns or cities, that then he relinquishes sole right and must share equally on priority use. Priorities for the use of underground and surface waters should be established in this order: 1) domestic 2) livestock 3)irrigation 4)industry 5)recreation or fish or wildlife.

7) The Nebraska State Grange supports the present laws pertaining to pollution of ground water by industry, agriculture, city waste, and should be strictly enforced, and that adequate funding be provided by the Nebraska State Legislature to implement these laws.

8) The Nebraska State Grange reaffirms its support to the Nebraska State Law giving powers to the NRD’s (Natural Resource Districts) to research and educate, and if need be, regulate the use of chemicals by farmers and town people so as not to contaminate surface and ground water.

9) The Nebraska State Grange supports efforts to maintain a fair and adequate supply of water for the Nebraska agriculture, industry, and rural communities from rivers flowing into and out of Nebraska.

CONSERVATION

1) The Nebraska State Grange supports the concept of conservation tillage practices employed in the production of crops on erodible land.

2) The Nebraska State Grange recommends absolutely no farm program benefits for any farm entity taking part in such poor soil stewardship practices as the breaking up of Class VI and Class VII land.

NRD (Natural Resource Districts)

1) The Nebraska State Grange opposes the use of Natural Resource District funds where the primary source of the project is recreation.

2) The Grange urges the Natural Resource Districts (NRD’s) to mail ballots and all project information material to each property owner within an NRD project area which is to be financed by a special assessment on such real property and all affected property owners in a special project have an equal vote and that the election be conducted in a traditional method, whereby, a majority of votes cast makes the decision.

AGRICULTURAL MARKETING

1) Grange urges that American farmers have access to a free and unrestricted world market; and that the Grange go on record to support giving the farmer the right to sell and deliver grain and other commodities direct to foreign nations without interference from organized labor unions or the government, including the amount of grain required to be shipped in American ships, with the grain being exempt from cargo preference regulations.

2) The Grange should work vigorously and solicit the help of other farm organizations to form commodity marketing cooperatives that may draw up their contracts and bargain with processors or retail outlets for pricing of their product.

3) The Grange supports regulations that require any imported meats and produce to meet all or exceed U.S. Health quality and residue standards. The Grange supports requirements that all food for human consumption be permanently identified as to country of origin (COOL). The Grange supports uniform inspection standards for fish, poultry, or red meat, foreign or domestic.

4) If an embargo becomes necessary, the Grange would support only a complete embargo on all products.

5) Grange supports the principle of marketing orders as an equitable way for farmers to market their product and should be preserved.

6) The Grange encourages the use of bartering to expand exports and trade with poor countries.

7) The Grange urges that all grain dealers be required to be fully bonded or insured. The Grange should continue to monitor problems in quality of delivered export grains and encourage appropriate action for improving and maintaining the reputation of the United States as source of high quality grain for foreign consumers, and that fraudulent practices be considered felonies with stiff penalties, so that high quality grain be protected from contamination.

The Grange recommends that all meat processors be required to be fully bonded or insured. The Grange should continue to monitor problems in quality of delivered export meat products and encourage appropriate actions for improving and maintaining the reputation of the U.S. as a source of high quality meat products for foreign consumers and that fraudulent practice be considered felonies with stiff penalties so that high quality meat products are protected from contamination. The Grange encourages that the USDA be adequately staffed and funded to fully perform their inspection duties.

8) The Grange supports research for new uses of crops such as sweeteners, alcohol for fuel, and biodegradable plastics.

9) The Nebraska State Grange supports the present Board of Trade daily fluctuation limit on futures grain trading as follows: wheat \$.10; corn \$.12; oats \$.06; and soybeans \$.30. The Grange opposes the expanded limits on futures grain trading.

10) The Nebraska State Grange supports methods by which the income of grain producers can be enhanced and commends the Nebraska legislature for its efforts in bringing about fairer grain pricing methods.

11) The Grange urges all rural people to patronize farm cooperatives.

12) The State Grange urges the National Grange to work toward the adoption of regulations that require clear labeling of imitation dairy products as non-dairy and that they be separated from dairy products where offered for sale.

13) The Nebraska State Grange urges that packer controlled vertically integrated feeding and raising of cattle, hogs, sheep, and poultry on the producer level be prohibited, unless the farmer producers, through their commodity marketing cooperatives, contract with processors or retail outlets for a price of their product. This resolve is to preserve the free competitive system of the family farmer.

14) The Grange reaffirms its support of ethanol production Congressional Delegation stating the Nebraska State Grange position.

15) The Nebraska State Grange supports the extension of guaranteed export credit to the Commonwealth of Independent States of the former Soviet Union and requests that a significant portion of the guaranteed credit to be allocated to feed grains.

16) The Grange reaffirms its support for PL480 and urges Congress to continue to finance this trade program.

17) The Nebraska State Grange supports the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

18) The Nebraska State Grange supports work to assure that livestock prices are equalized in the open market for **all** livestock of equal quality.

19) The Nebraska State Grange supports efforts to demand that in all reports of red meat and/or animal production in the United States, a clear delineation be made between those animals and/or pounds of meat from animals born and raised in the United States, as separate from those animals and/or pounds of meat that have been imported from countries outside the United States.

20) The Nebraska State Grange supports the position that any industrial concentration of livestock feeding in Nebraska be by a sole proprietor, general partnership, or family corporation. 21) The Nebraska State Grange supports the use and promotion of soybean fuels and soybean food products.

22) The Nebraska State Grange encourages the development of value added products with the aid of non-farm groups for the benefit of the agricultural community.

23) The Nebraska State Grange supports mandated limitation of packer controlled cattle to allow supply and demand to set prices.

24) The Nebraska State Grange recommends that a border duty equal to the economic advantage of raw or processed products be imposed on products entering the United States for consumption.

25) The Nebraska State Grange favors the return of traditional livestock trade relations with Canada.

26) The Grange supports the restoration of normal trade relations with Cuba.

27) The Nebraska State Grange supports the development of a program of identification of meat animals by the United States Department of Agriculture.

29) The Nebraska State Grange endorses Teff research between Nebraska/Kansas and Ethiopia pursuing farming and marketing practices that will raise income and pricing control of internationally cooperating smallholder farmers.

COMMODITY CHECK OFF PROGRAMS

- 1) The Nebraska State Grange supports self help organizations such as the various commodity check off groups and opposes the siphoning off of commodity check off funds for the purposes other than to promote and support the commodity involved.
- 2) The Nebraska State Grange strongly recommends that the existing pattern of separate, independent boards of producers responsible for each respective commodity be retained.
- 3) The Nebraska State Grange supports the application of check off fees to all beef, swine, and other agricultural commodities sales including commodity options.

AGENCIES

- 1) The Grange urges the continuation of the USDA as a Department of our Federal government and urges strengthening it with legislation that will insure the continued and proper importance of the production of foods and fibers.
- 2) The Grange urges producers to fill out individual agricultural survey crop reports as accurately as possible in order that the official reports will be more accurate.
- 3) The Grange favors the FDA having to show laboratory and testing proof that low levels of antibiotic livestock feeding are detrimental to human health before banning use.
- 4) The Grange urges that all entities of government should be required to comply with the noxious weed laws of Nebraska.
- 5) The Grange encourages the EPA and FDA to release effective chemicals in emergencies to control insects before damaging losses occur.
- 6) The Grange encourages the FSA to give a higher priority to servicing limited resource loans for small and beginning farmers.
- 7) The Nebraska State Grange recommends that UNL and extension applied research specialists in several disciplines at Lincoln and district centers strengthen and increase programs giving instructions and direct assistance to farmers and agribusiness for improving management of production and marketing systems oriented to needs of family farms and rural communities.
- 8) The Nebraska State Grange recommends that the University of Nebraska establish one or more multidisciplinary teams of scientists whose primary responsibility will be to develop, evaluate, and suggest alternative strategies for long-range agricultural and economic development.
- 9) The Grange should continue to urge the Federal Government to actively foster programs of conservation and development of various energy resources with a goal of early energy independence

from importation as essential protection for U.S. agriculture and general welfare.

10) The Nebraska State Grange will lobby for state funding bills that provide support of agricultural education and encourage their members to promote the establishment of an agriculture education/FFA program in their local school system and go on record as an active supporter of "Friend of Agriculture Education" and the FFA.

11) The Nebraska State Grange opposes the replacement of meat by yogurt in the Federal School Lunch Program.

12) The Nebraska State Grange opposes any usurping of the oversight and control of the Nebraska Insurance Industry by any federal bureau or entity, either instead of or in addition to the present insurance commissioner.

13) The Nebraska State Grange encourages the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation to monitor the quality of adjustments and minimizing the time required to settle.

14) The Nebraska State Grange supports the continuation of pest management control services of the USDA Wildlife Services.

15) The Nebraska State Grange supports programs where all noxious weeds on C.R.E.P (conservation reserve enhancement program) acres be controlled by uniform standards

FARM PROGRAMS

The Nebraska State Grange supports a national farm program that contains the following provisions:

- 1) Continuation of a regulated CRP (Conservation Reserve Program) program, which places highest priority on highly erodible soils.
- 2) An agricultural products reserve program (preferably farmer owned) to isolate a portion of our crop production from the market until prices increase enough to reach a release level (i.e. 125% of loan rate) in connection with this would be a grain storage facility loan program to enable farmers to be in a better position to take advantage of storage payments.
- 3) Total payments from all government farm programs to each person should be limited to \$80,000 per year per person.
- 4) Import and export policies be adopted and administered to ensure a level playing field for all producers (i.e. export enhancement program).
- 5) That the term of CCC (Commodity Credit Corporation) commodity loans be 12 months.

- 6) Price support payments must be paid out on a counter cyclical basis that will increase the per unit payment to the producers suffering the largest loss below the normal yield, and reduce the per unit payment for producers whose production is over a normal yield.
- 7) Continuation and expansion of the CSP (Conservation Security Program) on a national basis.
- 8) The Nebraska State Grange supports a one year extension of the 2002 Farm Bill in the event a new farm bill is not passed in 2007.
- 9) The Nebraska State Grange recommends that farm disaster payments be available only if federal crop revenue coverage insurance is not available.

AGRICULTURAL PUBLIC RELATIONS

- 1) The National Grange and the Nebraska State Grange joins with other leading farm organizations and commodity groups to bring the true story of agriculture to the attention of the American public.

INVESTMENT IN LAND

- 1) The Nebraska and National Grange oppose investment groups investing pension fund money or other funds to purchase U.S. farmland.

LESTER LARSEN ANTIQUE TRACTOR MUSEUM

- 1) The Nebraska State Grange supports maintaining the Lester Larsen Tractor Museum.

DOMESTIC WASTE AND CHEMICALS

- 1) The Grange supports efforts, installations, and safe ways to dispose of chemical containers, other hazardous wastes, and any water contaminants.
- 2) The Grange supports allowable limits of observed and/or established as to the amount of nutrients (organic or inorganic) which can be applied to the land to avoid over saturation of those nutrients of the land.

LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

- 1) The Grange supports long-standing regulations and laws, and future legislation that protects the rights of established livestock farms and feeding operations.
- 2) The Nebraska State Grange support continued efforts to study and qualify data on odor and dust contamination and

ensure that any attempt to regulate such contaminants be based on sound scientific data.

RISK MANAGEMENT

- 1) The Nebraska State Grange supports risk management education in agricultural production and marketing at secondary and post secondary levels, formally and informally, for better understanding and use for greater profits to farmers.

FOOD SAFETY

- 1) The Grange supports and encourages the use of irradiation as a tool in making our food supply even safer.
- 2) The Nebraska State Grange supports efforts to educate all stakeholders involved in the production of food and fiber in the prevention of bio-terrorism.
- 3) The Nebraska State Grange supports state and national regulatory efforts to closely monitor and test animals on game farms in order to prevent the spread of potentially devastating communicable diseases to surrounding domestic and wild animals. The Grange also recommends that the federal government monitor as closely as possible the health status of animals growing in the wild.

LEGISLATION**ENERGY**

1) The Nebraska State Grange supports continued development of domestic resources in an environmentally sound manner, so that the United States can significantly reduce its dependence upon foreign oil.

2) The Nebraska State Grange actively supports research by State and Federal Agricultural Experimental Stations to see if methane gas is economically feasible.

3) The Grange will continue its policy to encourage conservation of energy, the development of alternative energy resources and increased progression in the efficient use of proven energy resources.

4) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation that allows individual states to draft legislation effecting the deregulation of electrical utility industries within their respective state borders.

5) The Nebraska State Grange opposes the forced deregulation of the publicly owned power industry in Nebraska.

6) Nebraska State Grange endorses the "25x25 coalition", the purpose of which is to meet 25% of all American energy needs from renewable resources by the year 2025.

LAND USE

1) The Nebraska State Grange continues to be ever alert in support of a land use program that emphasizes the maximum use of rural land for food production and recommends that all regulations be kept as close to the local level as possible.

2) The Nebraska State Grange recommends that the Nebraska Legislature review our eminent domain laws for the purpose of making the law more accountable, and said entities be required to show reasonable evidence of the feasibility and desirability of the proposal and those easements that are not used within ten years must be renegotiated or removed from the property deed.

3) The Nebraska State Grange supports more "on farm" input of sustainable agricultural systems and that efforts be made to provide incentives in farm bills to encourage such adoption.

4) The Nebraska State Grange urges that the unemployed, the incarcerated, and those assigned to community service be utilized by the city, county and state government in the control of weeds on public property and that city and town officials urge public spirited persons and service organizations to organize and assist in proper control of nuisance and unsightly vegetative growth on public property.

5) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation which would prohibit municipal, county, and state governments from using eminent domain to take private property from unwilling sellers for private, retail, office, residential or entertainment development.

6) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation which would give residents within a city's zoning and building jurisdiction one to three miles extended buffer strip the right to vote on city council and to have the benefit of city services.

7) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation that would have property owners (if city limits and jurisdictional boundaries are expanded) notified by registered mail prior to annexation and the ramifications of the change be explained to them.

FARM FINANCE

1) The Nebraska State Grange supports the concept that grain stored in an elevator with scale tickets or warehouse receipts as proof of ownership be considered as the farmer's property and not be involved in the bankruptcy action involving the elevator or warehouse.

2) The Grange supports legislation for continued low interest financing for R.E.A.

3) The Grange favors adequate appropriations by Congress for guaranteed loans through the FSA, and the lower interest rates to borrowers be limited to loans up to \$200,000 and that the going interest rate be charged on loans or portions of loans above \$200,000.

LAW AND ORDER

1) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation that provides: 1-That owners be encouraged to identify all property by a registration system numbering of all property owners to insure its identification during reported thefts and to improve the possibility of recovery. 2-That all persons convicted of thefts of said property shall be subject, in addition to a statutory penalty of compensation to the victim of a sum, two times the value of the property taken, and that the sum be awarded to the victim as reparation and not as a fine awarded to the state.

2) The Grange is supportive of and works for greatly increased penalties for sexual offenders.

3) The Grange strongly opposes gambling in any and all forms at state and local levels as addictive, immoral, and a very inequitable way of raising taxes.

4) The Nebraska State Grange urges that all engineers, architects, designers and firms in similar professions be required to be responsible for their errors and be bonded to cover their responsibility.

5) The Nebraska State Grange recommends that ownership of nursing homes be clearly and fully disclosed to potential users and others in the community of its location.

6) The Nebraska State Grange supports a law in which victims and witnesses of violent crimes, including but not limited to murder, attempted murder, sexual assault, and assault, must be notified in writing at least 60 days before any hearing in which the person convicted of that crime is seeking release or change in release status from either a penal complex or mental institution. In the case of murder, the family of the victim must be notified at least 60 days before such a hearing takes place. In the event that the victim, witness or family of a victim cannot be located, it must be shown by the institution from which the criminal seeks release; that a reasonable attempt has been made to locate person or persons as well as his or her legal counsel and/or legal counsel involved in the original case.

7) All members of the Nebraska State Grange are encouraged to cooperate with county and state officials, other farm organizations, and the State Patrol to help locate illegal marijuana production and harvest; and that the Grange members cooperate with landowners, farm operators, and other agencies to control or eliminate them.

8) Since Nebraska has no statutes to handle hunters who are intoxicated or under the influence of drugs, and to protect farmers and ranchers who suffer the most from this dangerous activity of intoxicated hunting, the Grange encourages the Nebraska State Legislature to pass a law where first, second, and third time offenders will be treated the same as a motor vehicle driver who is driving under the influence as it pertains to fines, hunting license revocation, attend hunter safety classes and jail sentences. Furthermore, the state legislature should give the game wardens the necessary means such as breath analyzer equipment to test for these conditions.

10) Every State Grange member is urged to contact their senators and representatives and the National Grange is urged to mount a vigorous campaign to urge Congress to pass and strictly enforce anti-corruption laws relating to the conduct of Federal government business.

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11) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation to discourage adults for and/or serving alcohol to minors by increasing the fine to \$2000.00 and one day in jail per citation.

MARKETING AND TRADE

1) The Grange registers its strong opposition to the application of cargo preference to competitive agricultural exports. Those agricultural and maritime interests are commended for working out an agreement that would: 1-end the cargo preference requirement on blended credit and other USDA commercial export programs; 2-include funding for any cargo preference in the budget of the Department of Transportation rather than the USDA.

2) The Grange supports the strict enforcement of our present anti-monopoly laws.

3) The Nebraska State Grange urges the U.S. government to investigate the breakfast foods' industry for possible overpricing in relation to true cost of production and to investigate anti-competitive behavior, which keeps less expensive generic brands from attaining a more significant share of the market.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

1) Since the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has set standards on the uses of pesticides and herbicides, the Nebraska State Grange favors state legislation that will conform to the EPA standards but will not restrict the private applicator, such as farmers, and ranchers, from applying pesticides and herbicides on his own farm or ranch. The Nebraska State Grange supports the continued research, testing, regulation and supervision of these agricultural chemicals.

2) The Nebraska State Grange opposes any attempt to transfer the responsibilities of predator, noxious weed and pest control to the natural resource districts.

3) The Nebraska State Grange encourages the Nebraska Department of Environmental Control to continue a system of collecting and safely disposing of obsolete and restricted use chemicals.

4) The Nebraska State Grange opposes the out-of-state sale of underground water by individuals or by the state with the exception of bottled water (5 gallons or less) used for human consumption.

- 5) The Nebraska State Grange recommends a \$.05 per beverage can or bottle refundable deposit to help reduce the litter problem.
- 6) The Nebraska State Grange supports laws that will prohibit dumping or storage of any other state's urban or commercial wastes in Nebraska.
- 7) The Nebraska State Grange will work with other organizations to have the Unicameral pass as strong a law as is constitutional to protect Nebraska's most valuable resources, its land and water, from contamination.
- 8) The Nebraska State Grange favors strict enforcement of laws regulating large livestock enterprises so that they add no more solid and liquid manure containing nitrogen to the land than a crop will use, so that excess nitrogen will not contaminate underground water.
- 9) The Nebraska State Grange will work with other interests to urge Congress to amend and revise the Endangered Species Act in a manner that provides a balance and economic stability, considers humans a part of the ecosystem and does not infringe on private property rights.
- 10) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation that will restrict dispensation of Environmental Trust Funds to either governmental entities or to those organizations which are accessible to members of the public and whose members also have the ability to vote for and be elected to that organization's board of directors.

GOVERNMENTAL ISSUES

- 1) The Grange is opposed to changing the Nebraska Unicameral to a partisan body.
- 2) The Grange should redouble its efforts to persuade Congress to stop deficit spending and balance the budget, and begin to reduce the national debt.
- 3) The Nebraska State Grange urges legislation on the National level that would in court cases severely restrict the awarding of punitive damages.
- 4) The Nebraska State Grange encourages U.S. agricultural and subsequent industries to provide an acceptable wage and conditions of employment that will attract legal employees that will provide a sufficient work force.
- 5) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation that will require individuals that commit property damage to repay the full

- cost of the damage inflicted in addition to other legal penalties. Parents and guardians of people underage should be held responsible for the damage caused by their youth. Furthermore, more intense and increased penalties of the law should be applied for the desecration and destruction of private and public property to include schools, churches, cemeteries, etc. as a deterrent to future injury or damage.
- 6) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation that would prohibit heavily tinted vehicle windows that prevent observance of occupants or contents and prohibit purchase and use of these vehicular glasses from other states by Nebraska residents.
- 7) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation or a Constitutional amendment banning non-Nebraska residents or non-registered voters from circulating initiative or referendum petitions.
- 8) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation that require a filing fee to the County Registrar of Deeds be increased to fully pay for administrative costs.
- 9) The Nebraska State Grange urges the Nebraska Legislature to return to Agricultural Societies their right to establish annual budgets of expenditure by way of public hearing and within legislative constraints, as was their previous taxing authority; thereby removing from county boards the temptation to balance budgets at the expense of county fair budgets.
- 10) The Nebraska State Grange supports federal legislation that would set a maximum settlement level on liability insurance that can be collected.
- 11) The Nebraska State Grange and the National Grange support and protect the second amendment to the U.S. Constitution (right to bear arms).
- 12) The Nebraska State Grange opposes the use of tax money for candidate campaigns for public office.
- 13) The Nebraska State Grange continues to support the 2005 law regulating the creation of municipal counties and to cooperate with other groups to do the same.
- 14) The Nebraska State Grange opposes interim zoning, unless protections for agriculture are included.
- 15) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation that would require any expenditure (over \$25 or cash in-kind) by an individual or group that is designed to favor one candidate over another in primaries and general elections be reported to the Nebraska Accountability and Disclosure Commission within the present statutory time frame. This includes letters/postcards mailed out to

organization members, phone calls made on a candidate's behalf, phone polls, and recorded phone messages.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

1) The Grange vigorously encourages that moneys from the Federal Highway Trust Fund be released for the improvements of rural roads and bridges.

2) The Grange favors rural development that vitalizes the family farm through government programs, to make family farms economically viable.

3) The Nebraska State Grange and National Grange support efforts to provide adequate tax incentives to make the production and use of ethanol/ETBE economically feasible.

4) The Nebraska State Grange and National Grange supports legislation making it possible for first time home buyers to be able to withdraw the money from their IRA account without penalty to cover a down payment and closing costs for purchase of their first home.

5) The Nebraska State Grange supports state and private programs to bring a variety of employment opportunities to the rural counties of Nebraska.

6) The Nebraska State Grange will cooperate and work with other groups in an effort to reaffirm and reestablish in Nebraska law the intent of I300.

7) The Nebraska State Grange reaffirms its support for research and production of industrial products such as ethanol and ETBE fuel for automobiles, sweeteners, plastic, and food products from corn, soybeans, grain sorghum, wheat, and other agricultural products.

8) The Nebraska State Grange supports the inclusion and use of ethanol blend for vehicular fuel, with state and federal tax exemptions to encourage production making it competitive with 100% petroleum based fuel.

9) The Nebraska State Grange supports the general concept of the New Homestead Economic Opportunity Act, which attempts to use tax incentives and government backed Venture Capital Fund to attract new residents and businesses to rural areas suffering from high out-migration.

SOCIAL ISSUES

1) The Nebraska State Grange urges that all Grangers and all people everywhere, be called upon to speak out in opposition to such profane and vulgar language and the immoral communication via the media in an effort to reverse the moral degradation of our society.

2) The Nebraska State Grange supports the necessary state and national laws to withhold any legal recognition by the state or nation from same sex entanglements misnamed marriage.

3) The Nebraska State Grange favors a United States Constitutional Amendment defining a legal marriage as only between one man and one woman.

ANTI-BIGOTRY

1) The Nebraska State Grange condemns, unequivocally, hate groups that attack religious and racial groups.

PREVENTING SLAMMING

1) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislative efforts to prevent a company from switching telephone service to different company without customer's knowledge (slamming).

TV MERGER

1) The National Grange opposes the merger of Direct TV and Dish Network.

STATE TRACTOR TESTING

1) The Nebraska State Grange will use all available influence to support the Nebraska State Tractor Test Laboratory and resist efforts, which would seriously weaken or endanger the future of the laboratory.

2) The Nebraska State Grange and the National Grange will work with other farm groups to make a Nebraska Tractor Laboratory Test or an equivalent test, a national requirement to sell farm tractors in the United States.

TAXATION

STATE SALES TAX

- 1) The Grange opposes a sales tax on services.
- 2) The Grange favors keeping the sales tax a privilege of the state and cities only and not allow other government subdivisions to impose a sales tax.

STATE PROPERTY TAX

- 1) The Nebraska State Grange recommends the following:
 - a. The State Legislature create a number of property tax valuation basis divisions such as:
 1. personal property
 2. residential real estate
 3. non-farm real estate
 4. commercial real estate
 5. farm real estate
 6. additional divisions if needed
 - b. Property be assessed equally within a division, but need not be equal between divisions
 - c. The State Constitution be amended if necessary to allow such divisions and a different tax valuation.
- 2) The Nebraska State Grange reaffirms its opposition to the assessment of personal property tax on livestock, farm equipment, and inventories, and business inventories. The Nebraska State Grange favors replacing the personal property tax with sales and income tax.
- 3) The Nebraska State Grange encourages the Nebraska State Legislature to amend the current Greenbelt Law to allow land used for agricultural purposes and located within a village or city limits or SID (sanitary and improvement district) be assessed and taxed at the agricultural rate.
- 4) The Nebraska State Grange supports providing property tax relief to the Nebraska taxpayers when there is unexpected surplus of sales and income tax occur before or simultaneous to an increase in State spending.

TAX RULES AND REGULATIONS

- 1) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation requiring the county treasurer to send notices of pending property taxes prior to delinquent date.
- 2) The Nebraska State Grange recommends that pay raises to all public employees be evaluated and made on a dollar and not on a percentage basis.

3) The Nebraska State Grange reaffirms its longtime position that receipts from state sales and income taxes should be kept essentially equal.

4) The Nebraska State Grange supports the redefinition of the term “real property” to include improvements that are fixed to the land.

5) The Nebraska State Grange shall continue to work to insure that the reevaluation of property in Nebraska be carried out in equitable and timely manner in all counties of the state.

6) The Nebraska State Grange opposes diverting FICA, withholding and self employment tax payments to other retirement plans because it will decrease the payments of Social Security, and when private investments fail those who diverted will be worse off.

SCHOOL TAXES

1) The Grange opposes the use of tax money for non-public schools.

2) The Nebraska State Grange supports a state law that would require the State of Nebraska to fully fund the programs, which it has mandated by state law that affect the public schools of Nebraska.

3) The Nebraska State Grange recommends that state sales and income tax combined be increased to positively replace property taxes until sales, income, and property taxes each pay 1/3 of all mainline taxes.

4) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation that would bring about taxation on agricultural land on 80 per cent of its productive ability rather than on the sale value of surrounding farm and ranch land.

5) The Nebraska State Grange favors the funding of the community college system from state funds rather than property taxes.

GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES

1) The Nebraska State Grange asks the Agricultural Economics Department of the University of Nebraska to conduct free tax schools throughout Nebraska by the Cooperative Extension Service noting the various characteristics of the varied forms of taxes, how these taxes affect the economy and taxpaying citizens, and our society.

2) The Nebraska State Grange supports continued partial funding of the Nebraska State Fair with state funds.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TAXATION

1) The Grange strongly opposes the use of funds raised by highway user taxes for purposes other than those originally intended.

2) The Nebraska State Grange urges Congress close the tax loophole shelter by applying the cash account restriction to all corporations and family farms having sales over \$5,000,000.

3) The Nebraska State Grange recommends that prepaid feed, seed, fertilizer, and chemicals be allowed to be deducted as expenses in the year purchased.

4) The Grange opposes any increase in federal gasoline tax, or other petroleum products as a way of reducing the national debt or deficit spending.

5) The Grange supports a one-time exemption from income tax on the sale of real and personal property regarding capital gains on depreciated assets.

6) The Nebraska State Grange resolves that deficit spending by our federal government be stopped now, and that the national debt be reduced in an orderly manner.

7) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation that would retain the Federal Estate Tax with the stepped up basis provision as in now in place and that exemptions amounts/tax credits be based on a figure of five million dollars.

8) The Nebraska State Grange supports a change in the Federal Income Tax regulations concerning the Earned Income Credit so as not to reward a couple by giving them a larger amount of earned income credit on their federal income tax return just because they are not married.

9) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation that would require all contributors pay a percentage of their total income to Social Security.

EDUCATION, HEALTH AND WELFARE

EDUCATION-PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1) The Grange recommends that our educational system be returned to placing emphasis on the basics of education.

2) The Grange strongly supports the Vo-Ag programs and recommends: 1-Subordinate Granges should become familiar with the local Vo-Ag advisory board and/or support committees and encourage the inclusion of a Grange member thereon. 2-State Granges should be alerted to the trend of abolishing and/or incorporating leadership positions and oppose any attempt to cut or weaken state programs. State advisory boards should include a member active in agriculture. 3-The National Grange supports a national advisory committee including members representing vocational agriculture. 4-The National Grange supports a full vocational program in the public schools: (a) all programs should provide for a twelve month supervised curriculum. (b) all programs should provide a supervised occupational experience; (c) curriculums should be based on established competency needs; (d) all programs should include an active FFA chapter.

3) The Nebraska State Grange is opposed to all school busing for integration purposes.

4) The Grange opposes compulsory statewide school reorganization.

5) The Nebraska State Grange supports the concept of Class 6 school districts and would urge this type of educational system be continued and expanded.

6) The Nebraska State Grange recommends that history text books at all levels include more information on the effects of theology on history in order to support morality and ethics in schools.

7) The Grange recommends that teachers be required to attend a workshop to learn the basic requirements for teaching hearing-impaired students.

8) The Nebraska State Grange supports student testing at Grades 4, 8 and 11 at the state level only if all public, private and home schools are required to participate. The state level standard test dealing with core subjects should be used. Systems with multiple attendance centers should report test results identifying attendance and districts and not aggregated into "district averages".

9) The Nebraska State Grange supports the immediate return of autonomy to all active Class I school districts in Nebraska and the continued recognition of them as political subdivisions

10) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation that provides increased federal funding for rural education, including tax incentives to promote federal/state partnerships for renovating rural schools, and allocating of state dollars for better teacher salaries and benefits to strengthen public schools. Federal Impact Aid should be made available to rural school districts.

11) The Grange opposes the use of propaganda educational materials to promote animal activism, vegetarianism or other questionable substance or fact.

12) The Nebraska State Grange urges secondary schools to continue agriculture education in their high school curriculum.

13) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation which will return former Class I affiliated property to the K-12 it was attached to prior to the implementation of LB126.

14) The Nebraska State Grange supports new legislation directing the NBELF (Nebraska Board of Educational Lands and Funds) to carry out the immediate and orderly sale at public auctions of all remaining real property held by the NBELF. All property held by the NBELF shall be offered for sale within a period of time ending 12-31-2010. Furthermore, opening bids must be at least the value established by the county assessor in the county where the property is located. The proceeds resulting from the sale of the properties be placed in a state educational trust fund administered by the state treasurer. Following the completion of dispensing of all school lands, the NBELF shall be disbanded by the legislature.

EDUCATION-UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

1) The Grange opposes any legislation to permit the possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages on tax supported college campuses and facilities.

2) It is recommended by the Nebraska State Grange that any coordinated long range plan for the University of Nebraska must make certain that the present Agricultural Extension Services are continued and improved for Nebraska's largest industry, agriculture.

3) The Grange encourages the people of Nebraska through the actions of the Board of Regents, the legislature, and the governor to increase and/or maintain funding levels for IANR teaching, research, extension and public service programs that will help assure that Nebraska agriculture can be competitive in the future and that the state's economy will benefit from agricultural strength.

4) The Nebraska State Grange strongly urges the continuation of the University of Nebraska School of Technical Agriculture at Curtis and that it be fully funded by the State of Nebraska.

5) The Nebraska State Grange endorses the FCL project (Family Community Leadership sponsored by the Cooperative Extension Service) and encourages building the extension budget and accumulation of an endowment fund at the University of Nebraska Foundation that will support the project's continuation to build leadership across the entire state.

6) The Grange requests the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska to maintain comprehensive programs and levels of excellence to serve the needs of Nebraska and its people in this changing world.

7) The Nebraska State Grange goes on record in opposition to reduction in the budget allocations at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln affecting the agriculture and home economics programs.

8) The Nebraska State Grange strongly recommends that the control of the Nebraska Community Colleges remain at the local level.

EDUCATION-OTHER

1) The Nebraska State Grange supports the establishment of associations for education of physically and mentally disabled persons across the state and encourages each individual Grange to give support to such associations of their own area.

2) The Grange supports all programs of preventive education and rehabilitation on alcohol and illegal drug abuse and stricter governmental enforcement of laws on possession, selling, transportation, and using of alcohol and illegal drugs.

3) The Nebraska State Grange wholeheartedly supports the efforts of the National Grange to recreate esteem, and restore fatherhood as the vital social role of men.

4) The Nebraska State Grange encourages its members to join the Nebraska Rural Radio Association, which is so supportive of Agriculture and rural America.

5) The Nebraska State Grange opposes the granting of any public money for the creation of any form of art that is offensive or repugnant to the religious, moral, or cultural values of the majority of the people of this nation.

HEALTH

1) Everyone with private water systems are urged by Grange to have their water tested periodically and that facilities for testing be made available at the county level. Abandoned wells should be sealed as well,

2) The Nebraska State Grange supports nurse practitioner programs under the supervision of the State Board of Examiners, Nursing Division.

3) The Nebraska State Grange recommends that the State Health Department be required to maintain immunization records for all children under 18 years of age, and the providers of all immunizations be required to send all information to the State Health Department.

4) The Grange supports legislation requiring a telephone with hearing enhancement devices be installed in rest areas on the interstate system.

5) The Grange goes on record favoring that 50% of all taxes levied from alcoholic beverages be divided equally between treatment for alcoholism at tax supported centers and for compensation to victims suffering from accidents involving drunken drivers.

6) The National Grange recommends that all national television-broadcasting companies close caption all of their news programs and recommends that all local television stations close caption all local news programs.

7) The Nebraska State Grange recommends that a law be passed by the federal government making a health insurance policy binding thus protecting the insured from being dropped in the middle of an extended illness and its complications.

8) The Nebraska State Grange and National Grange supports legislative efforts to enact Medicare coverage that provides seniors with choice, access, and quality of prescription drugs.

9) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation that will insure that the results of genetic testing can be used only by the patient and the representative whom they designate.

10) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation that would allow law officers to enforce laws regulating handicapped parking both in public and private shopping areas.

11) The Nebraska State Grange supports efforts that the Food Quality Protection Act be carefully implemented to protect the nation's food supply, without unnecessarily restricting producer's access to vital inputs. Congress should ensure that EPA promulgates regulations to protect consumer safety through reduced residue levels; it does not restrict or cancel the safe use of crop protection products. All actions must be science-based, and pursued in a balanced manner.

12) The Nebraska State Grange supports relaxation of privacy regulations involving hospital patients so that news of their

confinement, with the approval of the patient or family, be made available to members of the clergy and the caring public.

13) The Nebraska State Grange opposes excessive regulations that result from implementation of the Safe Drinking Water Act in Nebraska. The Nebraska State Grange supports research to develop tests that accurately identify and differentiate *C. parvum* from all other species of cryptosporidium and differentiate infectious organisms from non-viable organisms.

14) The Grange supports the federal government's rights to negotiate the price of drugs it buys.

15) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation on the national level to legalize the reimportation of prescription drugs with the following requirements: strict limitation to drugs from licensed pharmacies and wholesalers operating in Canada; and the FDA be given the resources and authority to ensure safety of reimported drugs from Canada employing technological and other safeguards.

16) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation requiring that all prescription drugs be labeled with the country of origin.

17) The Nebraska State Grange urges that government funds be used only on stem cell research on postnatal or adult stem cells.

SAFETY

1) The State Grange urges that the local Grange assist in any way possible to achieve the goal of rural home identification for fire departments.

2) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation to regulate and prevent the availability of pornography on the internet to children in schools and public libraries.

3) The Nebraska State Grange endorses and supports the McGruff House Program in Nebraska and recommends that McGruff House operators should be screened prior to approval as a McGruff House. People who are selected must be stable, reputable people who have had no misdemeanors or felony encounters with the law.

PUBLIC WELFARE

1) The Grange supports the retention of the right to work law in Nebraska.

2) The Grange supports a bill that would demand as part of the sentence complete restoration of all vandalism damage to property and a six-month probation period for each \$1000 worth of damage.

3) The Nebraska State Grange supports the concept that before a person can be released from custody on bond, they may be required to post bond for the full amount rather than the 10 percent as now is permissible.

4) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation to protect property owners from liability from uninvited persons trespassing on their property.

5) The Grange should work toward making Social Security numbers as part of the birth certificate, to be issued to all children born in the United States.

6) The Nebraska State Grange supports Article I Section 27 of the Constitution of Nebraska (adopted in 1920) "The English language is hereby declared to be the official language of this state, and all official proceedings, records, and publications shall be in such language and the common school branches shall be taught in said language in public, private, denominational and parochial schools"; and that English be declared official language of the United States.

7) The Grange supports tougher prosecution practices, stronger federal laws, and vigorous enforcement of existing obscenity laws.

8) The Grange urges that the United States should actively support international efforts to maintain peace; to foster human rights and justice; to improve health; and to increase global food supplies, to conserve soil and water; preserve genetic resources; and to provide a cleaner environment.

9) The Nebraska State Grange condemns flag burning and desecration.

10) The Nebraska State Grange supports the efforts that are designed to diminish violence in TV programs.

11) The Grange supports legislation requiring a qualified interpreter be present at any trial or government hearing in which a mentally, physically, or hearing-impaired person is involved as a litigant and desires assistance.

12) The Grange urges restraint combined with appropriate action: that in this time of high emotion we not overrule the precepts that all mankind are children of God and the protection of innocent wherever in the world, be the highest priority.

13) The Nebraska State Grange is opposed to the concept of global warming.

TRANSPORTATION

HIGHWAY

1) The Nebraska State Grange supports the concept that the split of funds to be allocated for highways and mass transit be liberalized somewhat to favor mass transit, but should not exceed a ratio of 5 to 2, as compared to a traditional ratio of 4 to 1.

TRUCK REGULATIONS

1) The Nebraska State Grange recommends that the owner, not the hired driver, of a commercial vehicle be responsible for violations for the mechanical conditions of a commercial vehicle.

2) The Grange recommends that the length and weight limits currently in effect not be allowed to increase and that consideration be given to downsizing those already in use.

3) The Grange opposes allowing triple trailer trucks on all federal highways.

4) The Nebraska State Grange urges the State of Nebraska Department of Roads to construct no more than three additional undeveloped rest areas along the interstate system in Nebraska and they be reserved exclusively for commercial truckers.

TRANSPORTATION REGULATIONS

1) The Grange goes on record as upholding the use of electronic recordings made by patrol officers as a source of acceptable evidence with some tolerance for error.

SAFETY

1) The Nebraska State Grange urges that county commissioners or other proper authorities should be assigned to periodically inspect all railroad crossings, with the power and intent to improve and clean up said crossings.

2) The Nebraska State Grange supports a change in the law to require use of turn signals at least 200 ft. from intersection or side road.

3) The Nebraska State Grange is in favor of local weed districts working more closely with landowners or renters to correct the problem of brush and trees in road ditches.

4) The Grange supports legislation aimed at removing the unsafe drivers and drug users from the road.

5) The Grange urges county officials to survey their counties for visually obstructed road intersections during crop growing season and install signs or take appropriate action as required for safety.

HIGHWAY FINES

1) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation that would direct all highway fines derived from overweight citations to the Highway Maintenance Fund and not to the local school treasurer.

ALTERNATE FUEL SOURCES

1) The Grange supports efforts to promote ethanol as a viable alternative for a larger part of our energy needs and to investigate why ethanol blended fuel raised in price at the same rate as conventional petroleum products.

2) The Nebraska State Grange supports legislation that will require all states to offer a 10 percent ethanol blended gasoline as a motor fuel.

3) The Nebraska State Grange opposes the outright abolishment of the Federal Ethanol Tax Credit.

YOUTH AND JUNIORS**YOUTH PARTICIPATION**

1) The Nebraska State Grange urges that all subordinate Granges stress all previously organized and existing programs and encourage their youth members by showing their genuine appreciation for the youth's interest in the future of Grange.

YOUTH AT STATE SESSION PLANNING

1) The Grange recommends that a youth member be on the planning committee for the State Session.

FUNDS FOR YOUTH

1) Twenty-five cents out of each state membership fee should be budgeted just for the State Grange Youth (ages 14-35).

YOUTH AND JUNIOR CONTESTS

1) The Nebraska State Grange supports and encourages an open crafts display and contests under the direction of the Youth Committee at the Nebraska State Grange Session. 4-H craft items may be submitted, judged and prizes awarded.

NEBRASKA STATE GRANGE EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP

- 1) The Nebraska State Grange Foundation Scholarship may be awarded to any college age person enrolled in an approved institution. This renewable scholarship will be granted on scholarship funds available and on the discretion of the Executive Committee.
- 2) The scholarship will be \$500. One half payable to college at the beginning of the fall semester and one half at the beginning of the spring semester with consideration by the scholarship committee in case of various types of school. In case of withdrawal or default by the recipient, another applicant will be considered.
- 3) Requirements of the scholarship:
 - a. Must be a high school graduate
 - b. Must be a 4th degree member for a year or child or grandchild of a Grange member
 - c. Must be enrolled in a college or vocational school.
 - d. First time applicants must have at least a 2.0 (C) cumulative grade point average. To be eligible to reapply, applicants are required to have a 3.0 (B) cumulative grade point average.

- e. Recipients are required to communicate back to the Nebraska State Grange at the annual meeting on the progress they are making toward their goal.
- 4) Preference will be given for persons enrolling in agriculture or related fields and first time recipients.

AFFILIATED JUNIOR MEMBERSHIP

1) The Nebraska State Grange recommends the following requirements for affiliate Junior membership: any child between the ages of 5 and 14 may become a Junior member in the Nebraska State Grange by paying their dues to any organized Junior Grange in the State. They will then become a member of that Junior Grange. This will enable them to receive full benefits of being a Junior member, and allow them to compete in the state and national contests without requiring attendance at that Junior Grange's regular meetings, due to his or her distance from that Grange.