

NU regents to decide on alcohol sales at basketball games

Written by Joe Harris

LINCOLN, Neb—The University of Nebraska could certainly see a boost in revenue from the sale of spirits at sporting events.

The nonprofit group Project Extra Mile said there's risk that vastly outweighs the reward though.

Wagner doesn't like the idea of the NU Board of Regents approving a measure to allow alcohol sales at Pinnacle Bank Arena during basketball games. He fears alcohol that is bought by someone of legal age could wind up in the hands of a minor. He's also concerned about adults who've had too much to drink putting others in danger when they leave the game.

Earlier this year, more than 20,000 Husker fans responded to an athletic department survey, with nearly three-fourths of them saying they were in favor of or had no problem with alcohol sales at Memorial Stadium.

However, Wagner doesn't think the survey results are the only motive for possibly allowing alcohol vendors to operate at PBA.

"A lot of universities across the country have introduced alcohol sales because they're struggling and they do want to make money," he said. "I think these decisions are kind of made in a vacuum. They're thinking about the fan experience or maybe they're thinking about the money. They're not really considering the harms that can come from these decisions."

The Lincoln Police Department's Northwest Team has been running an underage drinking enforcement project during the first three home football games. They recently released the results, which include 16 citations for minor in possession, 24 for consuming in public, and five for misrepresenting age.

Wagner said moves to allow alcohol sales at university sporting events would undo its decades-long efforts to bring binge-drinking rates down from where they were in the '90s.

The board of regents is scheduled to vote this Friday. You can view the agenda [here](#).

Also on Friday, the board will vote on whether to transform an old steel mill next to the Omaha UNMC main campus into a business hub for healthcare startups. The \$60 million project would expand UNMC's campus.