



March 17, 2008

**An Open Letter to the Omaha City Council:  
Oppose Unnecessary Taxpayer-Funded Stadium!**

Dear City Council Member:

On behalf of the nearly 2,500 Nebraska members of the National Taxpayers Union, I write in opposition to a taxpayer-funded stadium plan in downtown Omaha. Mayor Mike Fahey has proposed a \$140 million project (nearly \$60 million of which would come from taxpayers) to replace Rosenblatt Stadium, home of the College World Series. However, years of economic research and observation have proven that taxpayer-financed stadium projects do not provide the economic benefits that proponents claim. Instead of spending hard-earned taxpayer dollars on a stadium boondoggle, the city ought to focus on providing services that conform to its core mission, including an upcoming \$1.5 billion sewer project.

Mayor Fahey's plan would hike the hotel and car rental taxes, putting Omaha at a severe disadvantage when comparing costs to those in nearby cities. According to research by Nebraska Taxpayers for Freedom, Omaha's hotel and car rental taxes would be higher than such cities as Council Bluffs, Lincoln, Des Moines, and even St. Louis and Minneapolis.

Virtually every economist who has studied the issue of publicly financed stadium projects has concluded that they do not provide notable economic benefits. Instead of generating new entertainment spending, these projects tend to simply redistribute existing dollars from other outlets like theaters and restaurants. Spending millions in public funds on a replacement of Rosenblatt Stadium would constitute a victory for corporate welfare and a bitter defeat for the hard-working taxpayers who would bear the financial burden.

Perhaps more importantly, Omaha is in little danger of losing the College World Series. A March 13, 2008 article in *USA Today* said that Omaha "does not have to build a new stadium in order to keep hosting the College World Series." Unlike the situation with many other stadium projects across the country, there is no other city known to be competing with Omaha for the right to host the event.

Authorizing the taxation and expenditure of nearly \$60 million for an inefficient, unnecessary stadium would be a tremendous mistake. I urge you to protect taxpayers and oppose any stadium handouts.

Sincerely,

Andrew Moylan  
Government Affairs Manager