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they have better resources available to them," said Senator Williams. "We need to level the playing field for our kids."

"The states we are competing with are investing more money on education and as a result, have higher per capita personal incomes. The only way we are going to match their personal income levels is by investing in education."

According to the study, the six states with the highest per capita personal income ranking also have the highest per pupil expenditure ranking.

The six states (including Oklahoma) with the lowest personal income ranking also rank the lowest in per pupil expenditures.

Oklahoma's per capita personal income is 81 percent. When adjusted for cost of living, it rises to 98.1 percent.

"Our low cost of living helps make us more competitive, but it doesn't take us as far as we need to go in education," said Senator Williams. "We're still in the bottom ten no matter how you look at the numbers, and that's unacceptable from both an education and economic development standpoint."

The Senate leadership is advocating a plan that would invest an additional \$83 million in common education and institute important new reforms as well.

The Senate education package, SB1100, calls for deregulation and public school choice. It also includes funding for new classroom technology, teacher training and performance incentives among other things. Teachers' retirement and midterm funding is being addressed in separate legislation.

"We want to invest money directly into the classroom where it will do the most good," said Senator Williams.

Governor Keating has proposed an alternative program for common education, but it contains very little money for actual classroom expenses. Of the new funding proposed for common education in the executive budget, only \$3.1 million would be placed into the funding formula that benefits the classroom budgets of all schools.

The lion's share of the funding would go to retirement, midterm adjustments and miscellaneous education programs. The largest budget item, \$48 million for midterm, would benefit only a few eligible schools. Two-thirds of Oklahoma schools, those that do not qualify for midterm, would not receive a single dollar.

Of the 550 Oklahoma school districts, only 202 qualified for midterm funding in the 1994-95 school year. Under the present midterm formula, 30 districts would receive almost half of the \$48 million dollars in new funding proposed by Governor Keating.

"I think our plan is the best on the table right now because it places the most emphasis on the classrooms in all of our public schools," said Senator Williams.

The full Senate is expected to vote on SB1100 this week, possibly as early as tomorrow.

LAND CLASSIFICATION BILL HELPS HUNTING PRESERVES

From Department of Wildlife

■(OKLAHOMA CITY) A bill currently making its way through the legislative process would benefit landowners who have created hunting or nature preserves on their property or are considering doing so. Specifically, the bill would make sure there is not a tax penalty to convert agricultural land to a hunting or nature preserve.

Senate Bill 1004, by Don Williams of Balko, would, for ad valorem tax purposes, specify that agriculture land that has been converted to a nature or hunting preserve would retain its previous classification as agriculture.

"Agricultural land is valued differently than other commercial-use land and the purpose of

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