

(Continued)

those in the private sector, although they, too, have certain standards that must be met in order to do business with the state.

"When we look at contracting with a private prison, we take into account a variety of factors — safety, the plant's physical construction, staffing and so on," Massey said. "We do that as a matter of course, and those involved in the private prison industry are aware of that."

"Obviously, we are concerned that the prisons be safe and meet our standards."

Price must bring the matter back to the Senate floor no later than Monday or it will die.

## EDUCATORS COMMENT ON WILLIAMS REFORM BILL

By Brandon Beard  
Staff Writer

■(GIT) It has been called "the son of HB1017." The measure by Sen. Don Williams, D-Balko, reforming many of the state's educational issues is drawing comments from educational leaders. Senate lawmakers passed SB1100 this week.

"It probably has a good chance of getting through both houses," Education Secretary Dr. Floyd Coppedge said of the measure. "Although I think the school choice issue may have a tougher time in the House."

One of the measure's larger issues, the Parental School Choice Act removes school district limitations by allowing parents to decide where their children go to school. It would, however, allow districts to deny the transfer if it caused classes to exceed size limitations or if available materials or previously adopted policies prevent it.

The biggest fight over school choice has been centered on transportation of students. Questions have risen as to who is actually responsible for getting students to school; the district or the parents.

The Williams measure would allow nonresident school districts to provide transportation from its district line to the assigned school. The resident district may also transport the student to its boundary, but the measure does not require it. It also provides that if the resident district chooses not to transport the student, and that student qualifies for free or reduced lunch, the resident district shall reimburse the student's parent for each day transportation is not provided. It limits reimbursement to 180 days or 20 miles per day, one way and not to exceed \$.10 per mile.

"I think the district should have the final say and transportation should be dealt with in a fair and equitable manner," said House Subcommittee on Higher Education Chairman Rep. Laura Boyd, D-Norman. "Oklahoma has been very good about encouraging modified school choice by leaving it up to the district."

Boyd is the co-author of a House measure also attacking the mid-term funding solution. HB2055 by Rep. Jack Begley, D-Goodwell, not only proposes a solution to the funding problem,

(Continued)

### Capitol Network News

GIT, Inc.

P.O. Box 61206

Oklahoma City, OK 73146-1206

(405) 528-2546, Office (405) 521-9807, Fax

DARWIN P. MAXEY, Publisher

COPYRIGHT ©GIT, Inc., 1996. No part of this publication may be reproduced, transmitted, transcribed, stored in a retrieval system or translated into any language in any form by any means without the written permission of GIT, Inc. The data contained herein is obtained from government sources, but it is not warranted as to the accuracy by the publishers.