

## CRIME & JUDICIARY

### MARTIN AMENDMENT TO SUSPENDED SENTENCE BILL FAILS

■(GIT) "You have bypassed the committee process," said Sen. Herb Rozell, D-Tahlequah, to Sen. Carol Martin, R-Comanche. The comment came in response to Martin's amendment to SB1231, by Sen. Bruce Price, D-Hinton, dealing with suspended sentences. Originally an unheard bill before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Public Safety and Judiciary, the amendment was brought to the floor, drawing criticism for Martin. It would create county farm work programs as a form of alternative sentencing.

Questioning the necessity for the bill, Sen. Keith Leftwich, D-Oklahoma City, said judges are capable of sentencing prisoners to similar community sentencing programs without the measure.

Sen. Ben Brown, D-Oklahoma City, said the money would be better spent on prevention and treatment rather than incarceration.

Senate Majority Leader, Billy Mickle, D-Durant, said the bill was not specific to types of crimes, allowing for violent criminals to be placed into programs with less than maximum security supervision.

With a vote of 16 to 25, a nearly straight party-line vote, the amendment failed. The bill, "gutted" of most of its language, with its emergency clause, passed with a vote of 41 to 0. It will now go to the House for consideration.

FROM: BRANDON BEARD

DATE: 03/04/96

### TRAFFIC-CONTROL DEVICE TAMPERING BILL TO INCLUDE TRAFFIC CITATION

■(GIT) Monday in session, members agreed to amend HB2078, dealing with tampering with traffic-control devices to include failure to yield to the right-of-way when exiting a subdivision. The bill, authored by Rep. Tommy Thomas, D-Atoka, is an attempt punish those who willfully deface, knockdown, injure, alter or remove any road sign or marker posted in Oklahoma.

The act would be a misdemeanor and punishment would be a fine of up to \$100 or imprisonment in the county jail for a 30 day term, or both.

Rep. Dwayne Steidley, D-Claremore, amended the bill to include rules adopted for subdivisions. In particular, a rule that could warrant a traffic citation if, when an individual is exiting a subdivision, they do not yield the right-of-way.

The bill passed unanimously. It will now be heard in the Senate for further consideration.

FROM: MARTA MCCLOSKEY

DATE: 03/04/96

### GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE ON TOBACCO AND YOUTH DISCUSSES OPTIONS

■(GIT) The Governor's Task Force on Tobacco and Youth met Thursday to continue discussions about possible options to keep tobacco out of the reach of Oklahoma's youth.

The Task Force has proposed a resolution that would give the ABLE Commission more manpower to enforce tobacco related crimes.

In the Resolution presented by Dean Henderson, the Task Force moves, "To increase state-level enforcement activity in the critical effort to reduce illegal sales of addictive tobacco products to Oklahoma youth, we recommend that the Oklahoma State Legislature and the Governor approve funding for at least six agents for the Oklahoma ABLE Commission (two per geographi-

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