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HB2725 by Rep. Ed Crocker, D-Norman, and Sen. James R. Maddox, D-Lawton, stating that taxpayers with a taxable income of at least \$1 million in at least one of the three last taxable years may compute tax on an annual basis;

HB2748 (committee substitute) by Rep. Bob Plunk, D-Ada, and Sen. Dick Wilkerson, D-Atwood, allowing a tax deduction for the amount of tuition paid by a taxpayer to a public or private Oklahoma college up to \$1,000 with provisions exempting deductions for grants, scholarships, stipends or other forms of financial aid; and

HB3006 by Rep. Weaver and Sen. Ben. Robinson, D-Muskogee, modifying required deadlines for authorization to establish branch banks.

FROM: SHAWN ASHLEY

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Business & Labor

SENATE LABOR COMMITTEE PASSES ANTI-WORKPLACE VIOLENCE MEASURE

■(GIT) Members of the Senate Committee on Business and Labor passed a measure Monday creating the Workplace and Employee Protection Act. **HB2374**, a committee substitute by Sen. Angela Monson, D-Oklahoma City, passed with a stricken title.

According to the bill's language, the purpose of the measure is to "provide for safety in the workplace in this state through prohibition of threats of actual physical harm, harassment, stalking, harassing or obscene telephone calls, or violent acts against an employing entity or its employees, agents, contractors or business invitees." The measure also states the Act is meant to supplement, not replace current law.

The measure allows for the filing of petitions for protective orders for the purposes of seeking relief under the provisions of the act.

An amendment to the bill, by Monson, drew some fire from members. The change states that a petition for a protective order, provided for under the measure, shall not apply to striking employees. This includes those members who are part of a collective bargaining agreement.

"If you want to outlaw picketing, that is what you have done," said Sen. Gene Stipe, D-McAlester. "We passed an anti-stalking law and we passed Sen. Shurden's gun bill. What else can we do?"

Claiming the bill needed work, Sen. Ben Brown, D-Oklahoma City, said it also needed clarity.

Monson said the bill was an attempt to create a safer workplace environment.

Sen. Frank Shurden, D-Henryetta, said he would possibly bring a floor amendment to the measure, allowing for employees to carry a firearm in the event he or she received a death threat.

Shurden attempted to amend the bill by removing its section ten. The section reads "Actions taken in good faith by an employing entity pursuant to the Workplace and Employee Protection Act shall establish an affirmative defense for the employing entity in a civil action."

The amendment was defeated.

Other measures addressed by the committee include **HB1672**, a committee substitute by Long. The measure modifies terms in the Employment Security Act of 1980. It provides conditions under which an employee cannot be disqualified for benefits.

After removing section 12 of the measure, relating to liens against delinquent employers, and having its title stricken, the measure passed with a vote of 9 to 1.

HB2310, by Stipe created the classifications of journeyman plumber technician, journeyman electrical technician and journeyman mechanical technician. The categories represent sub-classifications of journeymen.

After members killed the measure with a vote of 4 to 6, Stipe asked that the vote be reconsidered.

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