

(Continued)

Members voted unanimously to do pass the measure out of committee.

HB2887, authored by Don Williams, authorizes the State Regents for Higher Education to administer the student loan guarantee program under the federal Higher Education Act of 1965. It also authorizes the Regents to make collection efforts.

Larry LeVern, recoveries' manager for the Oklahoma Guaranteed Student Loan Program, said the problem with collections stems from individuals who "job hop" or are self-employed. This bill will allow the program to use methods similar to provisions passed in a law last year revoking drivers' and professional licenses for child support.

The measure received a do pass, and a stricken title.

HB2317, authored by Sen. Ed Long, D-Enid, was the first bill to receive debate. The measure deletes contextual requirements relating to the residence of a child for school purposes. It clarifies statutory reference. Long offered an amendment to strike the language in section four of the bill, addressing the disbursement of school lunch program funds. This language will be further addressed in conference.

Sen. Don Rubottom, R-Tulsa, debated in opposition of the bill, focusing on section two of the bill. "I know the privacy issue gets old, but when we establish a tracking system that an employer or political group could eventually gain access to, we could hurt a student's privacy," he explained.

Rubottom contended that students should get the same privacy rights given to juvenile delinquents and individuals who receive special education. Long said he was not pleased with how the bill ended up, but he was willing to work on it in conference committee. Members voted 10 to 1 to do pass the bill.

Kindergartners were discussed next in **HB2437**. The bill, also authored by Long, requires that underage students shall participate in developmental assessments to determine if the child is ready for admittance to kindergarten. It requires the Board of Education to develop and adopt a written plan outlining the kindergarten program being offered to the underage child. Long offered for the title and enacting clause to be stricken, and told committee members the measure should be added to SB1100.

The disagreement between lawmakers hinged on the testing requirements of four-year-olds and weight charges.

Members voted 10 to 2 in favor of the bill.

Medical insurance became the focus of **HB2192**, also authored by Long. The bill modifies language relating to the Oklahoma Youth Apprenticeship Committee. Long explained that the measure was a shell bill, and he intended to discuss the contents of the bill with Secretary of Education, Dr. Floyd Coppedge.

Rubottom tried to amend the bill with a bill he authored, **SB1159**. The amendment failed. It would have eliminated medical coverage for students participating in the program, assuming their parents retained private medical insurance.

The measure received a vote of 12 to 1 by committee members.

HB2466 received minor discussion, however, there was concern from some committee members. The bill, by Long, amends language relating to a teacher's right to due process and compensation or benefits when a board of education receives a superintendent's recommendation for a teacher's dismissal unless the career teacher is convicted of a felony.

Long agreed that the bill needed additional work. In accordance, the enacting clause and title were stricken. Members voted unanimously in favor of the bill.

Education deregulation became another issue for members. **HB2720**, authored by Sen. Penny Williams, D-Tulsa, modifies statutory reference to the powers and duties of the State Board of Education. The provision addressing school choice received the most attention from members. Penny Williams offered to amend the bill by replacing the section on school choice with SB1100's version of school choice.

Hendricks tried to amend the amendment to restore the original language, however, his amendment failed to receive a second. The measure received a vote of 9 to 1.

(Continued)