

Tourism & Recreation

OKLAHOMA TOURISM AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT WILL REMAIN UNDER THE COMPETITIVE BID SYSTEM

■(GIT) Members of the House Tourism and Recreation Committee met Wednesday and approved two bills. **SB1028** received an amendment that altered the purpose of the bill. Rep. Bill Mitchell, D-Lindsay and author of the bill, said a provision in the bill allowing the agency to opt out of the competitive bid system would expedite construction projects, such as the Quartz Mountain construction project. The amendment to the bill, offered by Rep. M.C. Leist, D-Morris, deleted section 1 and 2. Those sections pertained to the competitive bid issue.

The measure also removed contracts entered into for specified purposes by the Department of Education from exclusion and mandated that the Oklahoma Film office remain in Tulsa. Rep. Ron Kirby, D-Lawton, tried to amend to bill to move the office back to Oklahoma City, however, the amendment failed.

Committee members also approved **SB929**, authored by Rep. Larry Adair, D-Stilwell. The measure authorizes a pilot entrance fee program at Dripping Springs State Park in Delaware County.

FROM: MARTA MCCLOSKEY

DATE: 03/27/96

REMINGTON PARK DESERVES BLAME FOR DEATH OF SIMULCASTING BILL, STANLEY SAYS

■(OKLAHOMA CITY) Remington Park race track deserves a large share of the blame for withdrawal of a bill that would have allowed state horse racing tracks to simulcast out-of-state races, according to Rep. Fred Stanley, D-Madill.

"Remington Park made it absolutely clear to me and just about everyone else that they would withdraw their support from the bill if my amendment was attached," said Stanley. "Remington officials preferred to see the bill withdrawn instead of passed with an amendment that would have prevented them from reducing the number of quarter horse races."

Most Oklahoma horsemen are in the quarter horse business. Further reductions in quarter horse races at Remington Park, the state's largest track, would put a huge dent in the state's horse industry, Stanley said.

The amendment Stanley was proposing would also have allowed all three Oklahoma horse tracks—Remington Park in Oklahoma City, Fair Meadows in Tulsa, and Blue Ribbon Downs in Sallisaw—to have their races televised to off-track wagering facilities.

Presently, Remington Park will not allow any other track access to monitors in off-track wagering facilities. That violates the spirit of the original agreement among the three state tracks for off-track betting, the lawmaker related.

"There is a lot more at stake here than simply making Remington Park happy," he said. "We have to boost the entire horse industry, from Remington Park all the way down to the regular Oklahomans who depend on the horse industry for their livelihoods."

"If the state's entire horse industry is to continue growing, then passage of this legislation—with the Horseman's Association amendment attached—is vital."

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