

FEDERAL NEWS WEEKLY SUMMARY CONTINUED



DEFENSE

INHOFE SAYS PROPOSED DEFENSE BILL GOOD FOR OKLAHOMA

■(WASHINGTON) U.S. Senator James M. Inhofe, R-Okla., praised the Senate Armed Services Committee's work on the 1997 Defense Authorization bill, saying it wisely sought to correct serious deficiencies in the inadequate Clinton budget. Inhofe also said that strong consensus exists to fund important defense related projects in Oklahoma.

"The Senate Armed Services Committee has acted boldly to provide needed improvements to our national security posture," Inhofe said. "Oklahoma can be proud of the vital role it continues to play in our national defense. I am pleased that military facilities in our state can look forward to moving forward on important defense work in the coming years."

The proposed bill will next go to the Senate floor for debate and final action. A similar bill is working its way through the House. Any differences in the two bills would be reconciled in a House-Senate conference later in the year, after which both houses would proceed to a final vote. Inhofe is a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

—US SEN. JAMES INHOFE, R-OKLA.
05/07/96

GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

NICKLES SPONSORS BILL DEFENDING MARRIAGE

■(WASHINGTON) Oklahoma Senator Don Nickles announced Wednesday he will introduce legislation which defines the words "marriage" and "spouse" for purposes of federal law and allows each state to decide for itself with respect to so-called same-sex "marriages."

Nickles made the announcement at a news conference in Washington at which introduction of the Defense of Marriage Act was announced with House sponsors Rep. Steve Largent (R-OK) and Rep. Bob Garr (R-GA).

"This bill does two simple things," Nickles said. "First, the bill says marriage for federal purposes is the legal union between one man and one woman, and a spouse is a husband or wife of the opposite sex.

Second, it allows each state to decide for itself about same-sex marriages without other states' laws interfering.

"This bill merely reaffirms what Americans have meant for more than 200 years when using the word marriage and spouse. This common sense legislation is important and timely because of action currently underway at the state level to legalize marriages between persons of the same sex, which could have significant implications for other states and the federal government. This has extraordinary significance because of the definition of the words marriage and spouse determine how hundreds of rules and regulations dealing with income taxes, immigration, and federal employee or health benefits are administered."

—US SEN. DON NICKLES, R-OKLA.
05/08/96

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

COBURN PRAISES MOVE BY OKLAHOMA STATE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

■(MUSKOGEE, OK) U.S. Rep. Tom Coburn on Friday praised a resolution by the state medical association which calls for "mandated HIV testing for pregnant women." He said Oklahoma is taking the lead in saving the lives of infants.

The move by the Oklahoma State Medical Association comes on the heels of congressional approval of the Coburn amendment, which may lead to mandatory testing of newborn infants.

Mandatory infant testing will occur if states fail to meet the stringent requirements set forth by the conference. The amendment was part of the Ryan White Care Act, which funds AIDS research.

"I think the move by the state medical association in Oklahoma demonstrates where health care policy is moving in this nation. It needs to move as quickly as possible so we can save the lives of as many infants as possible."

"With the President's signature of the Ryan White Care Act, and with these new requirements, I think we will see many state medical associations follow suit," Coburn said.

In a May 2 memorandum from Mary Anne McCaffree, vice-president of the Oklahoma State Medical Association, she wrote

that the group's original resolution recommended "routine" rather than "mandated" testing.

"The evidence that AZT given to HIV positive mothers reduces the incidence of infected babies from 25 percent to eight percent proved very compelling to the OSMA House of Delegates. Therefore, the resolution was amended into its current form which calls for mandatory testing for HIV in all pregnant women," McCaffree wrote.

—US REP. TOM COBURN, R-OKLA.
05/06/96

OIL & GAS

DOE AGREES TO HELP KEEP OIL FLOWING

■(WASHINGTON) In a deliberate action to prevent a prolonged disruption in the flow of crude oil to 32 major refineries in America's mid-continent, the Clinton Administration Tuesday agreed to help an ARCO subsidiary resolve a temporary problem with a plugged pipeline.

The Department of Energy (DOE) has agreed to supply up to 1 million barrels from its Strategic Petroleum Reserve to ARCO under a short-term lease agreement. The crude oil will be used to help fill the Seaway System, a major interstate service that ARCO is expanding to ship crude oil from the Texas Gulf Coast to Cushing, Okla., a key distribution center to Midwest refineries.

ARCO is working to accelerate the flow of oil into the 30-inch Seaway pipeline because a smaller, companion pipeline it was using to supply the Cushing terminal has become temporarily blocked. This 20-inch pipeline is currently out of service, interrupting oil deliveries to Cushing.

Cushing is the distribution center to two refineries in Texas, nine refineries in Oklahoma and Kansas and 21 refineries in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan and Kentucky. Maintaining an adequate supply of crude oil to these refineries at this time of year is especially crucial to meeting the higher summer demand for gasoline and avoiding additional upward pressure on gasoline prices.

Before ARCO can fully utilize the larger 30-inch Seaway pipeline, it must "pack," or fill, the line with approximately 2.5 million barrels of crude oil. To meet this need, the company approached DOE with an offer to

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