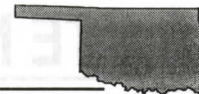


STATE NEWS WEEKLY SUMMARY CONTINUED



SB818, by Sen. Enoch Kelly Haney, D-Seminole, appropriates funds to the Oklahoma Alcoholic Beverage Laws Enforcement (ABLE) Commission, the Council on Law Enforcement Education and Training (CLEET), the State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI), the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, the Department of Public Safety (DPS) and the Board of Medicolegal Services.

Though every agency in the bill received additional funding for the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS) contribution and the state employee pay raise, most agencies found themselves with no additional operating funds for the upcoming fiscal year.

Exceptions include an additional \$131,513 for data processing charges and secretarial support.

CLEET receives an additional \$19,000 to cover rent increases.

DPS funding increased by \$1,200,072 to support academy funding and intoxilizer equipment. In a separate appropriation, through the general appropriations bill (**SB837**) passed earlier this year, DPS received \$692,000 to fund a lease-purchase agreement for a new plane for the executive branch.

Though most appropriations bills addressed this year have gone smoothly, rarely sparking debate, Senate lawmakers Wednesday objected to the measure's almost static funding for the Board of Medicolegal Investigations. The agency had asked for additional funds to staff an additional pathologist.

Senate Appropriations Committee Vice Chairman Cal Hobson, D-Lexington, said, while he understood the members' frustrations, to hold up the appropriations of six agencies was not feasible.

Through a role call vote, the bill's conference committee report was adopted with a narrow vote of 27 to 17. The measure itself was passed with a vote of 44 to 0.

Without debate, the House adopted the bill's conference committee report and gave the bill a 95 to 0 passing vote.

HB1805, also by Haney, appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services (DHS), the Department of Rehabilitative Services and the Office of Juvenile Affairs.

A key point in DHS funding is \$983,691 for the funding of 97 new social workers to

take on the agency's child welfare caseload, many coming from promotions within the agency.

Members adopted the measure's conference committee report and eventually passed the bill with a vote of 45 to 0.

The bill drew little interest in the House, where members voted 62-29 to adopt the conference committee report and 89-3 to pass the bill.

Rep. Wayne Cozort, R-Tulsa, offered the only resistance to the bill, saying he believed the \$15.8 million appropriated to the Office of Juvenile Affairs for Community Youth Services was neither well spent nor well accounted for.

Also passing both houses on Wednesday were **HB1812** and **SB812**. The House bill appropriates funds to the State Election Board and Ethics Commission, while the Senate bill appropriates funding to the State Banking Department and Oklahoma Securities Commission.

Both measures passed the House without discussion or debate and no negative votes. The same was true in the Senate.

The Senate also passed two measures considered by the House on Tuesday — **HBs 1792** and **1815**.

Appropriations in **HB1792** include \$96,392 to the Merit Protection Commission and \$527,718 to the Office of Personnel Management. The bill received a 45 to 0 passing vote in the Senate. **HB1815**, which received a passing vote of 47-0 in the Senate, appropriates nearly \$2.5 to the Department of Central Services, including \$308,708 for the employee pay raise and OPERS increase, \$1.7 million for debt service on 1995 bonds and \$400,000 for replacement of the agency's asbestos removal revolving funds.

The bill also allows the department to spend up to \$548,775 from the Motor Vehicle Liability Account to provide salaries and administrative expenses; \$274,637 from the Risk Management Participation Revolving Fund and \$42,666 from the Oklahoma

Motor License Agent Indemnity Fund for salaries and administrative expenses of the Comprehensive Professional Risk Management Program. Exempted from budgetary limits by the bill are expenditures from the Risk Management Revolving Fund.

—**BRANDON BEARD & SHAWN**
05/22/96

\$45 MILLION PROPOSED FOR DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

■(GIT) Lawmakers are expected to consider appropriating some \$45 million to the Department of Corrections on Thursday — enough money to meet the department's immediate needs, but not enough to meet the anticipated growth in prison population, according to DOC estimates.

SB820 is expected to be moved from the General Conference Committee on Appropriations to the House and Senate floors sometime Thursday. The bill was laid over by the House division of GCCA in a postadjournment meeting on Wednesday.

The bill appropriates \$45 million in growth money to the Corrections Department, as well as an additional \$90,708 to the Pardon and Parole Board.

Included in the proposal to be considered by the legislature is \$18 million to annualize the supplemental appropriation received by the department earlier this year. That money went to lease private prison space in Oklahoma and Texas for 969 inmates. Also included in the proposal is an additional \$12.8 million to provide 800 new private prison beds in fiscal year 1997.

That, however, may not be enough, according to DOC estimates provided to the subcommittee. Some 866 additional beds will be needed by the department by the end of the current fiscal year, according to those estimates. In addition, the department projects its total population will grow by another 1,530 inmates during fiscal year 1997. That means that while being funded for 800 beds, the agency is projected to need 2,396 additional beds.

Full funding for the department's Northeast Oklahoma Correctional Center at Vinita, \$1.5 million, and a work center in Frederick, \$511,500 are also proposed in the bill. Some \$885,800 is included in the bill for the creation of a reassessment unit to the Northeast Oklahoma facility. Additionally, \$3.2 million is proposed to increase the per diem rate

Continued on next page

"Everybody in government is like a bunch of ants on a log floating down a river. Each one thinks he is guiding the log, but it's really just going with the flow."

Robert S. Strauss
Time, Apr. 17, 1978