

STATE NEWS WEEKLY SUMMARY CONTINUED



paid to county jails holding state prisoners to \$24 per inmate per day.

The bill also calls for \$136,245 to be appropriated for the supervision of added inmate work crews, as well as \$122,000 for expansion of the Joseph Harp mental health unit.

Lawmakers will also consider a \$1 million appropriation in the bill to fund the Community Corrections Act. That act, **SB1200**, was returned to conference committee for additional consideration by the Senate on Wednesday.

The remainder of the department's additional funding — \$7.1 million — will be used to fund the state employee pay raise, increased OPERS contribution and teachers' retirement contribution increase for teachers in the department's budget.

Funding for the Pardon and Parole Board would increase 5.3 percent under the terms of the bill, with more than one-half of the \$90,000 in additional funding being earmarked for the employee pay raise and increased OPERS contribution. Other additional funding in the bill includes:

- ✓ \$13,000 to restore funds removed in the general appropriations bill; and
- ✓ \$19,552 to cover the actual cost of certain benefits.

—SHAWN ASHLEY
05/22/96

PORNOGRAPHY ISSUE IN HIGHER ED FUNDING

■(GIT) A state lawmaker on Thursday questioned the management of higher education institutions' by pointing to the discovery earlier this year of pornographic materials stored in a university computer system.

"Do you feel there is cause for the legislature to be concerned about how higher educational institutions are being managed," Rep. Fred Perry, R-Tulsa, asked Rep. Jack Begley, D-Goodwell, "when illegal pornography is discovered being stored in one of their computer systems? Doesn't that make you wonder how they're being managed?"

The question appeared to take Begley, author of **SB1809**, which provides funds to higher education, by surprise, and he attempted to shrug off the question. Perry did not relent, pressing Begley for an answer.

At issue was the discovery earlier of a number of files in a University of Oklahoma computer system containing obscene material reportedly downloaded from the Internet.

The discovery and resulting outcry, including that from some lawmakers, led the university to enact procedures restricting access from university computers to some Internet sites known to carry obscene materials.

Referring to actions taken at the university, Begley said that "management has taken control of the situation."

Rep. Loyd Benson, D-Frederick, reiterated that the problem had been addressed, by both the university and the legislature which on Wednesday passed a resolution prohibiting obscene material on state computer systems.

"Sometimes," Benson said in reference to the OU situation, "people have to have things called to their attention before they can take action. That's what happened here."

"I still think it's a question of management," Perry said before House members voted to approve the bill's conference report and gave the bill a 91-9 passing vote.

—SHAWN ASHLEY
05/23/96

GOVERNOR TO BE CONSIDERED FOR PAY RAISE

■(GIT) Governor Frank Keating or his successor could be paid more if lawmakers, as expected, consider and approve a bill increasing the office's salary.

Rep. Dwayne Steidley, D-Claremore, revealed late Thursday that a bill to increase the \$70,000 annual salary paid to the governor is likely to be brought before legislators.

"Some consideration is being given," Steidley told House members, "to introduction of legislation to increase the governor's salary and rightfully so."

The revelation came during questions concerning **SB804**, which appropriates money to the state's judicial system. A component of the bill gives judges from the associate district judge level to the justices on the Supreme Court a pay increase of 6.6 to 12 percent, Steidley said in response to a question from Rep. Wanda Jo Peltier, D-Oklahoma City.

And that means, Rep. Wayne Pettigrew, R-Edmond, said, that elected statewide office holders — such as the lieutenant governor, auditor and inspector, state treasurer and others — would receive a pay increase. That's because legislation passed in 1994 ties the salaries of statewide elected officials to those of certain judges.

The only exception in the law, however,

is the governor's office, Steidley noted.

The law also prevents an elected state official from receiving a pay increase enacted during their term in office. As a result, the increase for statewide elected officials would not take effect until after the 1998 statewide election.

Regardless of the fate of the legislation targeting the governor's office, the remainder of the statewide elected officials taking office after the 1998 election will receive a pay increase if **SB804** is signed, several lawmakers noted. The bill passed both the House, 71-27, and the Senate, 38-4, on Thursday.

No legislation specifically addressing an increase in the governor's salary or its relation to other state officials' salaries currently exists, according to a Legislative Information Network search of active bills and active conference committee reports. That means the language would have to be added to a bill and presented as a conference committee substitute.

—SHAWN ASHLEY
05/23/96

COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

TULSA ELECTRONICS FIRM RECEIVES EXPORTING AWARD

■(OKLAHOMA CITY) Governor Frank Keating announced Wednesday that Lowrance Electronics, Inc. is the recipient of the 1996 Governor's Award for Excellence in Exporting. The governor made the announcement at the 13th annual Oklahoma World Trade Conference held at the Doubletree Downtown Hotel in Tulsa.

Lowrance Electronics, Inc. designs and manufactures sonar and orbital satellite navigation receivers, plotters and mapping systems using the Global Positioning System (GPS) under the brand names "Lowrance," "Eagle" and "Sea" Electronics. The company currently sells products in the U.S. and to more than 45 foreign countries.

The primary applications for Lowrance products are for sport fishing, recreational boating markets and aviation, as well as hunting, hiking and other outdoor markets. The company's common stock is listed on the National Market and trades in the Over-the-Counter Market under the NASDAQ symbol "LEIX."

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