

STATE NEWS WEEKLY SUMMARY CONTINUED

Coppedge said. "In fact, the midterm problem has been with us for 30 years and I never heard OEA say much about it.

The education secretary said OEA, which claims to represent Oklahoma's teachers, "ought to insist on higher standards of honesty than this."

—THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
05/22/96

BILL TO LIMIT TAX EXEMPT BONDS FOR POLITICIANS

■(GIT) A measure aimed at halting public officials' involvement in tax exempt bond negotiations passed the Senate Thursday, which sparked political dart throwing among members.

The bill, **HB1238**, by Sen. Kevin Easley, D-Broken Arrow, prevents elected officials and their spouses from participating in the bond transactions if they have a "direct or indirect financial interest in the project."

Calling the measure a "bullet," aimed at his professional livelihood, Sen. Charles Ford, R-Tulsa, said many elected officials in the state would be affected by its passage.

Other members felt the bill would hinder entrepreneurs from running for elected office.

Sen. Dave Herbert, D-Midwest City, said the measure would narrow public servants down to those who could afford to live on salaries paid by those who elected them. The former mayor of Midwest City reminded members he was only paid \$100 per month for that office.

"We all know what this bill is about," said Sen. Helen Cole, R-Oklahoma City. "This bill is about J.C. Watts."

The bill's House Author, Rep. Ed Crocker, D-Norman, brought the legislation forward as a result of suspected impropriety surrounding Oklahoma Congressman J.C. Watts. Crocker is a candidate for Oklahoma's Fourth Congressional District, running against Watts.

The former Corporation Commissioner sits on the congressional oversight committee which regulates the country's banking and lending policies. He has been criticized for seeking tax-exempt funds for his private business dealings.

"Fair is fair," she said. "Under any other circumstances I'd probably be for this bill, but it is a means to getcha."

Easley said the bill was drafted last year.

Members barely adopted the bill's con-

ference committee report with a vote of 23 to 22. The bill ultimately passed with a vote of 27 to 19. It now goes to the House for its consideration.

—BRANDON BEARD
05/23/96

MAPS BALLPARK REVISED PLANS DUE IN JUNE FOR JULY BIDS; MAYOR TO HOLD SPECIAL MEETING WITH BOARD IN JUNE

■(OKLAHOMA CITY) Members of the MAPS Citizens Oversight Board were told Thursday that the final, revised plans for the Bricktown Ballpark will be delivered in June and that the second round of construction bids will be taken in July. Board Member Bert Cooper said Mayor Ron Norick told a special "Mayor's Committee" yesterday about the plans and said the Construction Review Subcommittee will hold a special meeting on June 14 to consider the plans and be briefed by the mayor. The entire MAPS Citizens Oversight Board will also hold a special meeting on June 17 to consider the plans which will then be presented to the City Council for consideration on Tuesday the 18th. That timeline left one board member wondering if the citizens board was a "rubber stamp" since the full board will have only one day to consider the revised plans.

The board was also told — for the third time — that funding for the highly-touted Local Business Utilization Plan was running out and would be gone in four months. Project Coordinator FSB said it has no plans to continue the LBU past its contractually-required cut-off date, but suggested the city take over the LBU process and apply it to all city projects. City officials said there were no plans to continue or expand the LBU at this time.

—CITYNET
05/23/96

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

OMBUDSMAN EFFORT FAILS AGAIN; ABORTION RULES TACKLED ON NEW BILL

■(GIT) An effort to protect the state's long-term care ombudsman program failed again on Tuesday when the program was ruled not to be germane to the bill in which it had been included.

Most of the debate over **HB2393**, by

Rep. Mark Seikel, D-Harrah, had focused on provisions in the bill dealing with the creation of the Early Identification and Service Support for Children and Families Act, when Rep. Scott Adkins, R-Broken Arrow, asked whether the inclusion of the ombudsman program in the bill was germane.

After a lengthy consultation with Chief Clerk Larry Warden and a brief question of Adkins, Speaker Pro Tempore Rep. Jim Glover, D-Elgin, ruled that the ombudsman portion of the bill was not germane.

Rep. Carolyn Coleman, R-Moore, then introduced instructions to return the bill to conference committee for further consideration and to strike the bill's first section, which dealt with the creation of the early identification program. Combined with the earlier ruling, Glover noted, the action would leave the House without a workable bill.

Coleman's motion was rejected by a 27-72 vote. Seikel then asked for and received unanimous consent to reject the conference committee report and to return the bill for further conference committee consideration.

The dispute over the ombudsman program began earlier this month when Rep. Abe Deutschendorf, D-Lawton, first attempted to bring the bill containing the program out of conference. The conference committee report for that bill, **HB2407**, was rejected, and at the urging of Rep. Dan Webb, R-Oklahoma City, was returned to conference with instructions.

Additional wording included in the instructions called for the state health department to establish minimum safety standards for free-standing abortion clinics. The bill later died in conference.

Ironically, the same rules concerning free-standing abortion clinics were included in instructions for a conference committee report approved by the House on Tuesday.

By voice vote, House members ordered **SB1290** returned to conference committee and instructed the committee to add language allowing the department of health to set minimum safety standards for abortion clinics and to set and enforce a penalty for those clinics violating the standards.

SB1290, by Rep. Calvin J. Anthony, D-Stillwater, would have directed the health department to establish rules regarding the establishment of provider service networks.

This time, it was Rep. Forrest Claunch,

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