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may reject plea agreements made between the two sides.

Stressing community corrections as a key part of truth in sentencing, Paul O'Connell, executive director of the commission, urged passage of the proposed Community Corrections Act.

Under the Department of Corrections (DOC), communities would be able to establish local boards to coordinate and administer sentencing options and assess long-term community sentencing needs.

"This provides an option to establish local community action boards to provide resources to increase the availability of statutorily authorized sentencing options and determine the long-range sentencing and treatment needs of the local community," O'Connell said. "What this would do would put much needed resources on the front-end of the system."

He also stressed the importance of passing the Oklahoma Preadjudication Services Act as another step towards truth in sentencing.

Under the act, every felony arrest would include a urinalysis test to identify possible drug use. Offenders would also be subject to criminal history checks and a drug assessment inventory to better determine the best course of action.

"This will provide an accurate assessment and evaluation of an offender prior to adjudication to assist a court in determining an appropriate sentence for the offender," O'Connell said.

HB1138 also requires stronger financial impact statements to accompany related fu-

ture legislation "so that the Legislature is better able to manage available [prison] beds and appropriate for new ones," Ravitz said. Along with that, the TIS Commission would be required to review each piece of legislation that impacts the state's criminal justice system.

Rep. Bill Paulk, D-Oklahoma City, voiced concerns about the provision, saying it would give the commission power to approve or disapprove legislation.

"I adamantly object to this section," he said. "This is an excellent bill except for that section. I would oppose the bill for that reason."

If the bill becomes law, it would not go into effect until 1998. The two year delay is to allow the new system to have a "trial run," giving state officials a chance to work out any problems and to gauge its cost. Sched-

ule A (first degree murder) provisions, however, would go into effect immediately.

Steidley said, "The actual bill will not take affect until '98 so to allow time to sample the program and determine its effect on prison population, total cost, etc."

"Right now," said Attorney General Drew Edmondson, "we don't know what the impact would be because sentences don't mean anything anymore."

Edmondson referred to a recent Court of Criminal Appeals ruling, upholding the 30,000 year sentence — the state's longest — of a man convicted for raping a three-year-old girl.

Steidley said he expects the bill's conference committee to act on the measure sometime next week, with final action being taken before the Legislature adjourns May 31.

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Day Fund appropriations, and tax cuts.

The midterm/REAP plan calls for funding midterm adjustments for the 1994-95 and 1995-96 school years with a mix of Rainy Day and General Revenue fund money. Midterm funding for the 1996-97 school year will be taken exclusively from the General Revenue Fund.

Some \$12.6 million will be needed to fund the 1994-95 adjustments, while \$13.5 million will be needed for the 1995-96 funding. A total of \$15 million will be needed for the 1996-97 school year.

In addition, \$1.5 million will be taken from the Rainy Day Fund in fiscal year 1997 to fund a student tracking program.

In order to win the governor's approval for using Rainy Day Fund money for midterm funding, lawmakers had to develop a permanent solution to what Governor Frank Keating called "a nagging problem."

The terms of that plan call for state aid to be based on current year growth and chargeable formula; for funds to be set aside for mid-year adjustments due to average daily membership growth; and for districts to be allocated state aid beginning in August based on expected chargeables.

Rural economic development will also get a boost under the first component of the plan. Some \$17 million, all from the General Revenue Fund, will be dedicated to rural projects, including \$7.5 million of rural highway projects through the Department of Transportation; \$4.5 million of rural infrastructure improvements through the Water

Resources Board; and \$5 million for the so-called Rural Economic Assistance Program.

That program will allow community-based organizations, including local branches of government, to apply for funding for a variety of economic development projects. That, the governor and Speaker of the House Glen Johnson, D-Okemah, said, will give rural communities the money they need to undertake projects designed to attract businesses and industries to their communities.

The second component of the budget and tax cut program calls for some \$22.7 million of the anticipated \$30 million that will make its way into the Rainy Day Fund to be utilized next fiscal year.

In addition to the \$14.5 million which will go to fund 1994-95 and 1995-96 midterm adjustments, as well as \$1.5 million for the student tracking program, the governor and lawmakers have agreed to take \$1.6 million from the fund for rural fire departments; \$1 million for weather modification/cloud seeding; \$1 million for the governor's emergency fund to cover claims remaining from last year's floods and anticipated claims from this year's wildfires; \$2.9 million for up-front medical payments required as the state's Medicaid program converts to a managed care system; \$320,428 for matching funds to obtain \$1.7 million in federal aid for maintenance of National Guard armories across the state; and \$1.19 million for an Oklahoma Highway Patrol trooper academy and vehicles for the new troopers.

Keating said the proposed midterm fund-

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