

**Midterm**, continued from page 1  
a section requiring ad valorem (property tax) funds to be chargeable one year sooner than before.

White-Rankin said cities like Norman, while they may not show a growth rate of 1.5 percent for a single year, would have two years worth of ad valorem growth to fall back on.

"Norman has had a lot of new ad valorem money," she said.

Kay Floyd, of the Oklahoma School Boards Association, called the measure "a good solution to a complex problem."

"It appears to be what we all had agreed to be the best solution," she said. "It takes midterm funding away as an issue every year. The plan is a permanent solution and funds the education of students wherever they are."

Coppedge said with the permanent solution in place, mid-term funding will no longer be the "political football" it has been in the past. He said the State Aid formula, however, will not go away as easily.

"People who know the most about this want to simplify the formula," he said, referring to numerous considerations, or weights, in the formula that make it somewhat complex.

Gifted students, sparsity of the school location, size of the school, economic situations of students and level of teacher experience all play into the amount of funding schools receive each year.

"You'll never have a system that is 100 percent acceptable to everyone," Coppedge said.

The Keating appointee said he expects the governor to sign the measure into law.

## RESOLUTION COULD THREATEN THE INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ACT, BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS SAYS

By Marta McCloskey  
Staff Writer

■(GIT) A congressional resolution introduced into the House of Representatives last April would amend the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978. "It would make it easier for non-Indians to adopt Indian children without tribal consent," said Ada E. Deer, assistant secretary for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. However, one Oklahoma Attorney believes that the Act is already too vague and sometimes misused.

The state Adoption Law Reform Committee created by HB1322 met early last November to start recodifying Oklahoma's adoption laws. During that meeting, Chairman, Rep. Russ Roach, D-Tulsa, told members that even though the Oklahoma Indian Child Welfare Act was both important and imperfect, the committee would already have their "hands full" trying to recodify the general laws. At that time, John O'Connor, a Tulsa attorney and committee member, suggested that the Act needed to be codified along with the general adoption laws. "If we are going to do a complete job, we should include it," he said.

Currently, the committee is still meeting, but O'Connor said the issues concerning the Act are "still on the back-burner."

"I personally believe that the Act was made too broad," O'Connor said. "Initially it was aimed at involuntary removal." He further explained those biological parents consisting of one Indian and one non-Indian run into problems when voluntarily giving their child or children up for adoption.

O'Connor gave an example of this by citing a case he had worked on. The unwed mother, a non-Indian, gave birth to an Indian man's child and decided to give the child up for adoption. The Indian man was notified twice and did not express opposition. However, before he could sign the papers for the legal adoption to be final, the tribe he belonged to sent their tribal police to take the baby because the baby's paternal grandmother decided she wanted to raise the baby. "The hospital wouldn't release the child without a district court order," O'Connor explained.

In fact, O'Connor said that not only did the man verbally consent to his child's adoption, his tribe also did a home-study visitation of the potential adoptive parents.

O'Connor said that some of the Nations are interpreting their role as parents, even if

the child is only 1 percent over 512 Indian. "They don't care, they are just coming in and taking over," he added.

O'Connor explained that the parents, not the tribe, should be the ultimate decision makers with adoption. "What gives Tribes more superiority than biological parents," O'Connor asserted. "Parental rights should predominate!"

O'Connor said the Oklahoma Supreme  
*See Indian, page 3*

### **Delay**, continued from page 1

eral efforts to prosecute Cochran, who was found guilty May 6 by a federal jury of five counts of wire fraud, two counts of money laundering and one count of transporting illegal profits across state lines. The charges were tied to the airport trust authority bond issue and a deal involving the non-profit Sisters of St. Mary Healthcare Authority in Missouri.

Jurors also acquitted Cochran of 13 felony counts related to two of the turnpike deals, including the 1992 bond issue in which he was alleged to have hidden a \$6.5 million fee, and the Grand River Dam project.

Cochran has said he will appeal the convictions, which under federal sentencing guidelines could put him in prison for less than 10 years and require that he forfeit more than \$629,000 in hidden profits.

"We have been working closely with federal prosecutors and did not want to do anything that might jeopardize their case," Adams said. "That same line of thinking still applies."

Meanwhile, the embattled financier faces a host of other courtroom disputes:

✓ A US Securities and Exchange case pending in federal court in Oklahoma City accuses Cochran and two past aides of fraud;

✓ In a \$6.5 million suit of its own, the turnpike authority accuses Cochran and Stifel of fraud and deceit in the 1992 bond deal;

✓ Cochran, a former aide and Stifel are accused by the Pottawatomie County Development Authority of making \$302,000 in "secret profits" in a case pending in state court; and

✓ A case recent filed in state court by the Comanche County Hospital Authority alleges Stifel and Cochran lied to make a \$100,000 fee on a 1993 bond deal for the Lawton hospital.

### Capitol Network News

A division of

GIT, Inc.

P.O. Box 61206

Oklahoma City, OK 73146-1206

Office (405) 528-2546

Fax (405) 521-9807

Net: gitinc@ionet.net

Web: <http://www.exoweb.com/git>

Darwin P. Maxey, Publisher

Mary Millen, Editor

COPYRIGHT© GIT, Inc., 1996. No part of this publication may be reproduced, transmitted, transcribed, stored in a retrieval system or translated into any language in any form by any means without the written permission of GIT, Inc. The data contained herein is obtained from government sources, but it is not warranted as to the accuracy by the publishers.