

STATE NEWS WEEKLY SUMMARY CONTINUED



Pettigrew argued that larger rural communities, such as Miami, Guymon, Weatherford, McAlester and others, would be able to do more with the money than would communities of 7,000 people or less.

"The question is whether you just want to put some money out there or whether you're looking to pass a true economic development bill," the Edmond Republican said, suggesting that the population limit be increased from 7,000 to 20,000.

For Rep. Robert Worthen, R-Oklahoma City, the concern was how the money might otherwise be used.

"If you think \$17 million is too big of an investment in rural Oklahoma, I don't know what to tell you," Erwin replied.

As would later be reflected in their votes, however, the vast majority of the representatives supported the bill, and many spoke out in favor of it.

Rep. Tommy Thomas, D-Atoka, told his fellow House members that many communities find themselves desperately in need of funds. "Then, \$12,000 might as well be \$12 million," he said. "This gives them access to some money, money that's not going to be available any other way."

Thomas also reminded those in the Legislature that they had helped the urban areas, such as Tulsa and Oklahoma City, in the past. "Now we're asking for something for the smaller communities," he said.

Also urging the adoption of the conference committee report was Mass, who told members, "To watch a small community die over a period of 20 or 30 years is a bad thing."

The co-author of the bill added that if he could, he would have lowered the size of the communities eligible for the program even more, perhaps in the 3,000 resident range. "I want to help people having the hardest time helping themselves."

House majority leader Rep. Loyd Benson, D-Frederick, said, too, that small communities would suffer if larger communities were allowed to compete for the funds.

Responding to Pettigrew's argument to

increase the ceiling for those communities eligible for the funding, Erwin said in his closing that one needed only to visit the larger rural communities "to see that they are doing well, because they are able to get other money to address their needs."

"What we want to do now," he concluded, "is to help the smaller communities."

And the vast majority of representatives agreed, adopting the conference committee report by an 87-11 vote. Passage of the bill followed by a 91-6 vote, with mostly Oklahoma City Republicans voting against the measure.

There was no debate among House members of the funding bill, HB2830, which received easy passage.

The concerns about HB1434 were somewhat different in the Senate, where Sen. Dave Herbert, D-Midwest City, voiced the most objection to the bill.

Referring to the \$4.5 million to be administered through the Water Resources Board, Herbert said the legislature was on the verge of creating a massive bureaucracy.

But Herbert's position was countered by Sen. Gene Stipe, D-McAlester, who said, "This is local government at its best."

Herbert said he was going to vote for the bill and "keep an eye on it." He did indeed vote for it, but then cast one of only four Senate votes against the program's funding mechanism, HB2830.

—SHAWN ASHLEY & BRANDON BEARD
05/16/96

EDUCATION

OU OFFERING LEGAL ASSISTANT COURSES

■(NORMAN) The University of Oklahoma Law Center is now enrolling students in its Legal Assistant Education Program, which trains paralegals, or legal assistants, to work under the supervision of attorneys.

Approved by the American Bar Association, the certificate program prepares graduates for careers in private, corporate and government law-related activities.

Classed are offered on Saturdays at the OU Law Center and are taught by attorneys, law professors and legal assistants who specialize in each area of the law.

Additional information on enrollment is available from Rowena Scott, staff assistant, Department of Legal Assistant Education,

OU Law Center, Room 314, 300 Timberdell Road, Norman, OK 73019-0701; telephone (405) 325-1726.

—OU LAW CENTER
05/14/96

ART THERAPY SESSION SET FOR JUNE AT OU

■(NORMAN, OK) Art therapists and others employed in the helping professions are invited to attend a summer intensive art therapy session June 8 through 28 on the University of Oklahoma Norman campus.

Sponsored by the OU College of Continuing Education, the graduate-level courses are offered in a flexible, condensed format designed especially for working professionals interested in furthering their training and achieving continuing education units in art therapy. Participants can attend all or selected parts of the institute.

All summer session instructors are practicing art therapists registered with the Art Therapy Credentials Board. In addition, all have extensive clinical and teaching experience and are appointed adjunct graduate faculty at OU.

Cost for the courses is \$91.40 per credit hour for Oklahoma residents and \$251.40 per credit hour for non-residents. All students must be admissible to the OU Graduate College to participate in these courses.

For more information or to enroll, call Continuing Education Academic Programs at 1-800-522-0772, Ext. 5105, or locally at (405) 325-5101.

—UNIV. OF OKLAHOMA
05/14/96

GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

SENATE EDUCATION CONFIRMS KEATING NOMINATIONS

■(GIT) The Senate Committee on Education met Monday, confirming five of Governor Frank Keating's executive nominations to related agencies.

Brenda Hickerson, of Granite, was confirmed to the Board of Regents of Western Oklahoma State College.

Hickerson will serve a seven year term, ending March 23, 2003.

Sponsored by Sen. Gilmer Capps, D-Snyder, Hickerson was confirmed with a vote of 9 to 0.

Continued on next page

"Men may be popular without being ambitious; but there is rarely an ambitious man who does not try to be popular."

*Frederick North, 8th Baron North,
March, 1769*