

STATE NEWS WEEKLY SUMMARY CONTINUED



erodes public confidence in their government."

"Elected officials should not put themselves above average citizens," he asserted. "The power of government comes from the people, and the people are the most important component of our system."

—HOUSE MEDIA
05/14/96

SENATE HUMAN SERVICES CONFIRMS NOMINATIONS

■(GIT) The Senate Committee on Human Resources met Tuesday to confirm still more of Governor Frank Keating's executive nominations.

Dr. Dan Fieber, of Tulsa, was confirmed to another nine year position on the State Board of Health. His second term, he has served as president of the organization this year.

Sponsored by Sen. Don Rubottom, R-Tulsa, Fieber was unanimously confirmed.

Dr. Jay Gregory, of Muskogee, was also unanimously confirmed to the State Board of Health.

The State Board of Health is the authority responsible for writing the rules and regulation for the state's health maintenance organizations (HMO's).

Sponsored by Sen. Ben Robinson, D-Muskogee, Gregory will serve a nine year term.

Grace Goodeagle, of Quapaw, was confirmed to the Oklahoma Indian Affairs Commission. She will serve a three year term, ending August 15, 1998.

Sponsored by Sen. Rick Littlefield, D-Grove, she was confirmed unanimously.

Keating nominee to the State Board of Licensed Social Workers Phillip Davis, was not present for his confirmation. He has rescheduled for another date.

—BRANDON BEARD
05/14/96

POLITICS BECOMES ISSUE IN BILL'S DEFEAT

■(GIT) Politics took center stage on Wednesday when House members were asked to consider a bill designed to prohibit the involvement of public officials in tax exempt bond issues.

Rep. Dan Webb, R-Oklahoma City, asked that **HB1238**, by Rep. Ed Crocker, D-Norman, be sent back to conference committee for further consideration. If that hap-

pened, Webb indicated, he would ask that the committee be instructed to add provisions that would prohibit the chair and vice chair of state recognized political parties from participating in certain programs, such as the Ag Link and Business Link loan programs.

The proposal drew immediate negative response from members of the House, particularly Democrats.

Tulsa Democrat Russ Roach asked Webb what authority, if any, lawmakers had to apply a law to specific private entities.

"We would be skating on thin ice," Webb admitted. "But the question is if we are going to err, is it better to err for the benefit of taxpayers or those involved in the political process?"

"I believe it's in the best interest to err in the interest of taxpayers."

Asked by Roach why his proposal targeted four specific people, Webb said, "They wield the greatest influence on the process. If you want to include others, I would certainly go along with you."

A comparatively subdued Crocker told House members that the bill had been before them for some 15 months in an effort to address what he said he felt was a serious problem. Webb, he said, "is just trying to hitch a ride."

When the issue of accepting the bill's second conference committee report was put to a vote, House members voted 63-36 along party lines and the bill was put before them for final consideration.

Without further debate, the bill received a 93-6 passing vote.

—SHAWN ASHLEY
05/15/96

VETOED BILLS MAY LIVE AGAIN IN SPEED LIMIT MEASURE

■(GIT) Two bills vetoed by Governor Frank Keating this week may reappear before the Legislature adjourns. The two bills, **SB988**, by Sen. Ted Fisher, D-Sapulpa, and **SB1017**, by Sen. Frank Shurden, D-Henryetta, may be incorporated into **SB685**, the measure that would statutorily set the state's speed limits, among other things.

The Fisher measure, **SB988**, would direct the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) to issue permits for multi-state oversize and overweight vehicles. It would also designate specific routes for vehicles operating under those permits.

Keating vetoed the measure, he said, be-

cause it violates the state constitution, as it delegates the authority to regulate the special permits to a non-governmental entity.

Fisher urged the matter to be handled quickly. He said trucks in Louisiana were granted the special permits by ODOT, in anticipation of the problem being fixed by the bill. But, with the measure being vetoed, the vehicles are essentially "trapped."

Transportation Secretary Neal McCaleb told *Capitol Network News*, "If the bill's language were permissive and not imperative, I think it would find favor with the governor."

The other measure, **SB1017**, by Shurden, was designed to eliminate speed traps on the state's highways. The bill states that the troop commander in charge of a highway patrol troop may designate specified portions of federal aid primary highways and the state highway system to be in the service area of the troop.

Though Keating said he was opposed to speed traps, the bill removed local law enforcement control.

A meeting with Shurden and the governor has been scheduled for Monday to discuss alternative language. Shurden said he would consider giving the commissioner of public safety the authority to designate where the Oklahoma Highway Patrol would have jurisdiction over state highways.

In a move Tuesday, Sen. Gene Stipe, D-McAlester, was successful in sending **SB685** back to conference committee with instructions to change the bill's interstate speed limit to 75 mph. Thursday, however, he removed those instructions, though the bill is still in conference.

McCaleb said, referring to a letter sent to Leftwich from Dr. Alan Soltani, ODOT chief traffic engineer, that he supports the 75 mph limit on rural highways, but not in the metropolitan areas or on four-lane highways.

The letter states that, nationally, speed limits are set based on the 85th percentile speed, representing the percentage of people driving below a certain speed.

"In Oklahoma," McCaleb said, quoting the letter, "the 85th percentile speed for rural interstate highways, posted 65 mph, was 75 mph and for urban interstates, posted 55 mph, this figure was reduced to 68 mph."

Soltani further states in his letter, "...that while 75 mph speed may be warranted in

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