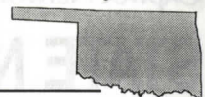


STATE NEWS WEEKLY SUMMARY CONTINUED



some locations (e.g., rural interstate highways), a 75 mph statewide maximum speed limit for all highways is not advisable."

Leftwich said his bill will likely be addressed by lawmakers next week.

—BRANDON BEARD
05/16/96

SENATE VETS COMMITTEE CONFIRMS EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS, ADOPTS RESOLUTIONS

■(GIT) The Senate Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs met Thursday, confirming five of Governor Frank Keating's executive nominations. Members also adopted two concurrent resolutions before adjourning.

Eldrige Colston, of Marietta, was confirmed to the War Veterans Commission of Oklahoma.

A World War II veteran, Colston was sponsored by Sen. Darryl Roberts, D-Ardmore. He will serve a three year term. He succeeds himself to the position.

Thomas Howell, of Duncan, was also confirmed to the commission. Sponsored by Sen. Bill Gustafson, R-El Reno, in place of the absent Sen. Carol Martin, R-Comanche, he will serve a three year term, succeeding Harold Pinney, who was also nominated to the commission.

Pinney, of Eufaula, will also serve a three year term. He was sponsored by Sen. Frank Shurden, D-Henryetta.

Bill Paxton, of Lookeba, also nominated to the commission, was sponsored by Sen. Bruce Price, D-Hinton. He too will serve a three year term.

Though not scheduled for confirmation until next week, James C. Morton was confirmed to the commission. Also sponsored by Gustafson, in place of Martin, he will serve a three year term.

All nominees were unanimously confirmed. Their terms all end on July 1, 1999.

Committee members also adopted **HCR1079**, presented by Roberts. It memorializes Congress to support the State Veterans Home Program. After all committee members were made co-authors, the measure passed with a vote of 6 to 0.

SCR57 was also adopted. It relates to atomic test veterans. It too passed with a vote of 6 to 0.

*"Television is democracy at its ugliest."
Paddy Chayefsky*

The committee is scheduled to meet again on Thursday May 23, 1996, after the legislature adjourns for the day.

—BRANDON BEARD
05/16/96

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

REHABILITATION SERVICES AGENCY DIRECTOR ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT

■(OKLAHOMA CITY) Jerry Dunlap, director of the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services, announced his retirement, effective July 1, after 37 years in administration, supervision and consumer counseling with the Oklahoma vocational rehabilitation program. Dunlap was named director of Rehabilitation Services when it became an independent agency in July 1993.

When accepting Dunlap's retirement request, Commission Chair William F. Crawford said, "Jerry Dunlap and I have been friends since college. I have watched his career for 37 years and appreciate his tremendous service to people with disabilities and the citizens of Oklahoma, and I wish him well."

—DEPT. OF REHABILITATION SERVICES
05/14/96

PUBLIC SAFETY

SPEED LIMITS IN THE SPOTLIGHT AGAIN

■(GIT) The bill that would statutorily set Oklahoma's speed limits was sent back to its conference committee Tuesday with attached instructions to set speed limits on the state's interstate system at 75 mph.

SB685, by Senate Transportation Committee Vice Chairman Keith Leftwich, D-Oklahoma City, would encase the state's speed limits within the Oklahoma statutes. The matter was originally addressed in an executive order from Governor Frank Keating when Congress gave the right to set speed limits back to the states late last year.

The bill would set the limits at 75 mph on turnpikes, 70 mph on highways and interstates and 65 mph in other locations. The measure also sets limits for hard-surfaced county roads at 55 mph and 45 mph for all others, unless otherwise posted. It also abolishes night-time speed limits and addresses truck and car speed limit issues.

Other provisions in the bill provide penalties for the destruction or defacing of traffic signs and clarifies what is the right-of-way on county roads.

Dodging flack from some members, Leftwich said in changing the 70 mph provision, members would be "effectively killing the bill."

"I don't believe this legislation will pass with the 75 mph provision," he said.

"We are giving guidance to ODOT (Oklahoma Department of Transportation)," he added. "ODOT can change this, but if they don't do anything, the statute would prevail."

"If we don't do anything, I suppose the executive order would still be in effect," he said.

The motion to send the bill back to conference came from Senate Transportation Committee Chairman Gene Stipe, D-McAlester. Leftwich moved to table the motion, but was defeated with a vote of 18 to 23.

Capitol Network News attempted to contact Transportation Secretary Neal McCaleb. He was unable to be reached for comment.

—BRANDON BEARD
05/14/96

REVENUE & TAXATION

RETIREEES' TAX CUT PASSES HOUSE

■(GIT) Private sector retirees are a step closer to equality with public sector retirees after passage on Thursday of **HB1621** by the House of Representatives.

Authored by Lawton Democrat Ron Kirby, the bill phases in a \$5,500 tax exemption for private sector retirees at the rate of \$1,100 per year over five years. At the end of that period, private sector retirees will be entitled to the same tax exemption afforded public sector retirees.

The proposal was one of several planned tax cuts announced last week by Governor Frank Keating and a bipartisan group of lawmakers from both legislative houses.

Although endorsed by every member voting in Thursday's House session, the bill's trip across the floor was less than easy.

A second conference committee report for the bill was on the verge of adoption when Kirby asked without explanation that the report be rejected and the bill returned to committee for further conference. The re-

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