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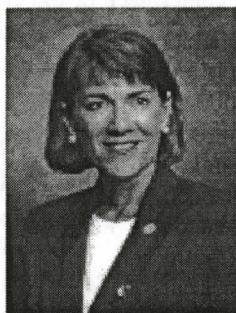
Daily Edition, Monday, May 20, 1996

TUITION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS PASSED

By Shawn Ashley
Staff Writer

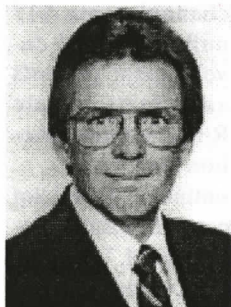
■(GIT) A bill creating tax-free savings accounts to pay the costs of college passed the House on Monday, despite a Republican-driven effort to use the bill to increase the standard deduction and exemption of state taxpayers.

HB2059, by Rep. Laura Boyd, D-Norman, allows Oklahoma residents to deposit up to \$5,000 in so-called tuition savings accounts. The money deposited in the accounts, as well as the interest earned by the accounts, will be exempt from taxation as adjusted gross income, Boyd told fellow House members.



Rep. Laura Boyd

Before acceptance of the bill's third conference committee report, it had to withstand an effort led by Rep. Dan Webb, R-Oklahoma City, to use the bill as a vehicle to double the standard deduction and exemption for state taxpayers, from \$1,000 to



Rep. Dan Webb

\$2,000 each.

Webb reminded Boyd and other representatives that similar measures had been approved last year by the House, but that those bills had been killed by the Senate. Such a move, Webb said, could save the average family of four from \$300 to \$600 annually.

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Boyd resisted the effort, agreeing with Webb that the Senate had killed the measures last year and adding that such an attempt this year might endanger the tuition savings account proposal.

"According to House staff," Boyd added, "the fiscal impact of your proposal is a minimum of \$103 million. That's minimum."

House members voted 56-41 to accept the conference committee report, with most Republicans joining Webb in opposing its adoption.

When asked to give final passage to the bill, it received a 99-0 passing vote.

HOUSE GCCA ADVANCES FOUR BILLS

By Shawn Ashley
Staff Writer

■(GIT) The House division of the General Conference Committee on Appropriations gave 'do pass' recommendations late Monday afternoon to four bills, moving a small step closer to completing its budget work.

The four bills receiving 'do pass' recommendations include **SB806**, **HB1777**, **HB1787** and **HB1800**.

The bulk of the appropriations is earmarked for the state employee pay increase,

although some additional allocations are included in the bills.

SB806 makes appropriations to the House of Representatives and the Senate, as well as the Legislative Service Bureau. The House will see a 4.5 percent increase under the terms of the bill, while the Senate's increase will be 4.8 percent. Both increases are the result of the \$1,200 across-the-board annual pay raise approved for state employees earlier this year.

In addition to the pay raise for employees of the Legislative Service Bureau, an additional \$1.8 million will be appropriated to the agency with the bulk of the money — \$1.75 million — going toward computer hardware and software upgrades and the balance being dedicated to intergovernmental association dues.

HB1777 appropriates funds to the offices of the governor and lieutenant governor. Through the general appropriation bill already approved, the governor's office will receive an additional \$298,000. **HB1777** will pump an additional \$66,267 earmarked for the state employees pay raise. The two bills combined will raise the appropriation to the governor's office by 18.5 percent.

The lieutenant governor's budget in-

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