

## LAWMAKER SAYS TAX-EXEMPT FINANCING NOT FOR POLITICIANS

From House Media

■(OKLAHOMA CITY) The state House of Representatives will consider a bill Wednesday that would prevent elected officials from using tax-exempt bond financing to line their own pockets.

State Rep. Ed Crocker, D-Norman, said he wrote **House Bill 1238** because of concerns expressed to him by many Oklahomans about possible abuse of the program by a public official.

The lawmaker said there are allegations that U.S. Rep. J.C. Watts is using his influence as an elected official to secure millions of dollars in tax-exempt financing for business deals.

Watts is a freshman Republican member of Congress who sits on the congressional committee charged with oversight of the nation's banking and lending policy. The former state corporation commissioner has drawn criticism before because of his zealous efforts to secure tax-exempt financing for his private business.

A recent series of investigative reports by KTOK Radio in Oklahoma City has raised even more questions about Watts' financial deals and campaign ethics. Though Watts is threatening legal action against KTOK, the latest revelations have given the bill a boost, Crocker said.

As written, the measure would force disclosure of participation by any federal, state or local official in a project that benefits from tax-exempt financing. Almost any interest by an elected official in a legal entity seeking tax-exempt funds would disqualify the entity seeking the financing.

Crocker said the proposed law would not prevent elected officials from participating in business deals in which there is no conflict of interest.

"But politicians wouldn't have access to this very limited pool of funds," he said. "They would have to find some other form of financing."

The lawmaker acknowledged his bill

would place a higher standard on elected officials.

"This does make it tougher on those of us elected to office," he said. "Our constituents didn't elect us to office to get rich. We were elected to conduct the people's business in an honest, aboveboard manner. Any failure to do that, as the allegations suggest, erodes public confidence in their government."

Crocker concluded by saying it is far more important to preserve public trust in government than it is for politicians to get rich.

"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."

Crocker is a candidate for Watts' congressional seat. State House records indicate, however, he filed this bill long before he became a candidate for Congress.

## SENATE HUMAN SERVICES CONFIRMS NOMINATIONS

By Brandon Beard  
Staff Writer

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

Dr. Dan Fieker, 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.

Fieker said some of his goals include getting the board "more involved in the legislative process."

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

Dr. Jay Gregory, of Muskogee, was also unanimously confirmed to the State Board of Health. Past president of the Oklahoma State Medical Association, he said he is confident his experience will serve him well in the position.

"I do have my hand on the pulse of health care in Oklahoma," he said.

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

Gregory said 75 percent of all Muskogee hospital patients are Medicare and Medicaid patients.

"PHO's (physician hospital organizations) are failing because hospitals are more concerned about profit and doctors are more concerned about the patients," he said, commenting that with all the changes in health care, patients will still be the main concern.

"The laying on of hands, where the doctor meets the patient, will never change. It can't change. If it does, I am no longer a doctor."

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.

*"When men are ruled by fear, they strive to prevent the very changes that will abate it."*

*Alan Paton, Saturday Review, 9/9/67*

## CRAWFORD PRESENTS AWARDS TO HIGH SCHOOL AND STUDENT

From Insurance Commissioner

■(OKLAHOMA CITY) The three high school students who won the first annual art contest sponsored by the Oklahoma Insurance Department will be recognized at awards assemblies this week. Insurance Commissioner John Crawford announced that the Oklahoma Association of Insurance Agents will provide cash prizes for the school art departments attended by the winning students. "We really appreciate the insurance agents support in our project and I am sure the teachers will find use for the \$300, \$200 and \$100 checks," commented Crawford.

First place winner Nadiye Coskuner who attends Enid High School will see her art on the cover of the 89th Annual Report and Directory. This publication is submitted to the Governor by the Insurance Department each year and has a total circulation of approximately 7,000 copies. Second place winner, Justin Wayne Hill, is a student at Lexington High School and third place winner Clint Levi Clark is a student at Chandler High School. "The art of these students is so impressive that we are featuring a color reproduction of their work along with each

*See Crawford, page 6*