

STATE NEWS WEEKLY SUMMARY CONTINUED

week, Rep. Jim Hamilton, D-Poteau and chairman of the General Conference Committee on Appropriations, said, "This bill didn't develop in a vacuum someplace. It's not good one day and then bad the next."

"You may think it's funny to take a few select agencies and say they're not going to get the pay raise we promised them. I can assure you it's not."

Hamilton concluded, "You can't have it both ways. You've got to say what you mean and mean what you say, and now you've got to do the right thing."

Speaking in favor of sustaining the veto, Rep. Reese said the issue was not just the specific agencies, but the entire budget.

"You've spent last year's, this year's and you're making a big commitment with next year's money," Reese said.

When the votes were counted, Republicans were again victorious, staving off the Democrats effort by a 64-32 vote.

Without debate, the governor's veto of additional funding for the Merit Protection Commission was sustained by a 63-35 vote with Gray joining Republicans in upholding the governor's action.

—SHAWN ASHLEY
05/29/96

GOVERNOR ISSUES MORE LINE-ITEM VETOES

■(GIT) Only hours after House members sustained one veto and minutes before they would vote to sustain two others, Governor Frank Keating on Wednesday vetoed seven line items in five bills.

The vetoes included:

✓ **HB1809**, section eight, appropriating \$114,921 to the Physician Manpower Training Commission;

✓ **SB802**, section one, appropriating \$975,287 to the Attorney General, and section 10, appropriating \$919,155 to the Oklahoma Indigent Defense System;

✓ **SB810**, section nine, which reappropriates \$75,000 to the State Department of Health for a statewide trauma system, and section 32, appropriating \$1.4 million to the University Hospital Authority;

"Our nation was not founded on the pork barrel, and it has not become great by political log-rolling."

*Herbert Hoover
press conference, May 27, 1932*

✓ **SB812**, section one, appropriating \$313,140 to the State Banking Department; and

✓ **SB818**, section one, appropriating \$229,610 to the Alcoholic Beverage Law Enforcement (ABLE) Commission.

Echoing the message of his previous line item vetoes, the governor wrote that the sections were vetoed "because the appropriations contained in those items exceeded the Executive Budget. The excess funds must be preserved for future budgetary needs in order to avoid fiscally irresponsible levels of overall spending."

In a prepared statement released Wednesday afternoon, the governor said he is prepared to veto as many non-essential line items as necessary to make up for what he called "reckless spending practices of the legislature."

Ironically, the governor signed off on a provision of HB1809 which contained an additional \$71.4 million for higher education. What the governor has yet to do, however, is to sign or to veto **HB1810**, which would take \$31.5 million from OSEEGIB to help provide the \$71.4 million for higher education.

The governor also pledged in his statement that his vetoes will in no way effect pay raises for state employees.

"If the legislature sends me back bills with my budget recommendations plus the pay raise money in them and no additional spending, I will sign them" Keating added.

Whether such bills will make it to the governor's desk is yet to be seen. When GCCA chairman Jim Hamilton, D-Poteau, was asked if there was any other vehicle in which the vetoed employee pay raises could be incorporated, he replied: "Why? We've already given you this bill."

—SHAWN ASHLEY
05/29/96

HOUSE REPUBLICANS PUSH PAY PLAN PROPOSAL

■(GIT) Republicans in the House plan on Friday to push a proposal designed to fund the state employee pay raises vetoed by the governor, a Republican representative told Capitol Network News.

"We'll try to do it by inserting it into one of the three Senate appropriations bills scheduled for consideration on Friday," Rep. Jim Reese, R-Narden, said, referring to a proposal advanced twice on Thursday by Re-

publicans that would appropriate money for the pay raise to 14 agencies.

Those agencies had funding for the pay raise vetoed earlier in the week in a series of line-item vetoes issued by Governor Frank Keating.

Rep. Tim Pope, R-Mustang, first raised the issue on Thursday during consideration of **SB832**, which appropriates funds to the State Board of Vocational and Technical Education. Pope tried unsuccessfully to have the bill's conference committee report rejected so that language could be added to "(P)rovide appropriations for the state employee pay raise as authorized by **SB1128** and provide appropriation for the employer's contribution increase for the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System ..." for 14 agencies whose money for those expenses had been vetoed by the governor.

A motion to adopt the bill's conference committee report received a passing vote of 55-41, leading to a passing vote on the bill of 54-43.

Rep. Wayne Pettigrew, R-Edmond, raised the issue later on Thursday when the House considered **SB811**, which specifies budget limitations for health services agencies. Pettigrew asked the bill's author, Rep. Jim Hamilton, D-Poteau, whether he was aware the Edmond lawmaker had instructions on the table to fund the pay raise and related expenses. Hamilton said he was not, and asked House Speaker Glen Johnson, D-Okemah, to rule on the germaneness of the instructions.

After consulting with the chief clerk, Johnson ruled the instructions were not germane because the bill dealt with substantive language, while the instructions made appropriations.

The House adopted the conference committee report by unanimous consent and the bill received a passing vote of 87-10.

Reese said the proposed instructions are germane to the three Senate bills up for consideration on Friday — **SBs 819, 825 and 1254** — which each make appropriations.

Meanwhile, the governor also challenged legislative leaders to "stop playing end-of-session politics" with funds earmarked for state employee pay raises.

The governor reiterated a position expressed by House members of his party during an attempted veto override on Thursday:

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