

STATE NEWS WEEKLY SUMMARY CONTINUED

Some of the appropriations approved by lawmakers have included unrelated spending that exceeded the executive budget requests presented in February.

"They knew precisely what they were doing by lumping money to fund the raises with other budget-busting items," he said. "By tying them together, they made it impossible to separate the raise money from other funds. To safeguard the public from irresponsible spending, I had no choice but to use the veto."

Keating said legislative leaders have adequate time to revise the vetoed sections of the appropriations bills to include the raise money and exclude additional spending.

Maintaining the position they staked out on Wednesday, Democratic lawmakers reiterated that they would not resubmit bills containing the pay raise for the legislature and governor's consideration.

"We have no plans to bail the governor out of the dilemma he has created," said Senate Pro Tempore Stratton Taylor, D-Claremore.

Also on Thursday, Keating issued the following line-item vetoes:

✓ **HB1780**, section 31, appropriates \$3,000,000 to OCAST;

✓ **HB1782**, allocating \$300,000 of OCAST's appropriation to research and development partnership projects involving two year or four year institutions of the State System of Higher Education with persons, entities, cooperative programs, or with Oklahoma industry;

✓ **HB1783**, section 4, appropriates \$227,326 to State Fire Marshall;

✓ **HB1795**, section 12, decreasing DEQ's appropriation level by \$3,047,663; section 14, references decrease noted in section 12; section 17, appropriates \$178,688 to Department of Mines; section 20; appropriates \$450,000 to MESONET via the Water Resources Board; and section 23, appropriating \$ 50,000 to complete Mangum Reservoir Project of the Water Resources Board;

✓ **HB1799**, creates in the State Treasury a revolving fund for the Department of En-

vironmental Quality to be designated the "Department of Environmental Quality Revolving Fund." The fund shall be a continuing fund, not subject to fiscal year limitations, and shall consist of all monies received by the Department from appropriations, administrative penalties, fees, charges, gifts and monies from any other source that are not designated for deposit to any other fund authorized by this Code;

✓ **SB800**, section 40, Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation; and section 47, State Board of Vocational & Technical Education appropriation of an additional \$1,486,980 from the proceeds of bonds deposited in the Oklahoma Building Bonds of 1992 Fund (B) in the State Treasury;

✓ **SB805**, proposal to use funds from the State Judicial Retirement Fund to implement Supreme Court computer automation plan and court security enhancements;

✓ **SB814**, section 2, appropriates \$250,000 to the Dept. of Agriculture for Rural Fire Training Centers; section 4, appropriates \$100,000 to the Dept. of Agriculture for a diagnostic swine lab; section 5, appropriates \$30,000 to the Dept. of Agriculture for Rural Development Council; section 8, appropriates \$45,000 to the Dept. of Agriculture to fund the salary of a Regional Fire Coordinator; section 9, appropriates \$370,000 to the Dept. of Agriculture for a Center for International Trade; section 10, appropriates \$ 15,000 to the Dept. of Agriculture to support the Economics of Agriculture event; and section 20, appropriates \$303,170 to the Horse Racing Commission;

✓ **SB816**, section 1, State Arts Council; section 9, appropriates \$336,500 to the Dept. of Tourism & Recreation for planning & development; and section 11, appropriates \$200,000 to the Dept. of Tourism & Recreation for the Multicounty Organization Match increase; and

✓ **SB1043**, expands damages for injury to a right to or interest in water.

—SHAWN ASHLEY
05/30/96

PUBLIC EMPLOYEES OUTRAGED BY VETOES

■(GIT) "This association is not playing the game of Democrats and Republicans, we just want to address the issue," was the comment from Oklahoma Public Employees Association (OPEA) Executive Director Gary Jones

Thursday, blasting Governor Frank Keating and the Legislature for their failure to enact legislation that would, they say, give some \$7.1 million in mandated pay raises and related employee expenditures to state employees.

Jones responded to the numerous vetoed bills containing the state employee pay increases set forth in **SB1128**, signed into law last month. Attempts to override the governor's vetoes failed late Wednesday in the House.

"How can you on one hand vote for a piece of legislation and then turn around and not vote to override the governor's veto," Jones asked. "If there was a problem with the budget, they [the Legislature] have had four months to fix it."

Jones estimates some 1,500 employees could possibly be affected by the cuts. Since the pay raise has been signed into law, agencies would be required to somehow find the money to fund the salary increases. Layoffs and furloughs may be necessary to meet the, what Jones calls, unfunded mandate.

Jones said agencies anticipating employee reductions include the Merit Protection Commission, the Indian Affairs Commission and the Human Rights Commission.

Jones also said that the Office of the State Auditor and Inspector stands to lose an estimated 10 auditors as a result of the cuts.

Conversations with the governor's office and Office of State Finance Director Tom Daxon yielded some hope. Daxon is reported to have said that if lawmakers would present legislation listing specific line-item expenditures, the governor would be able to line-item veto specific sections of the measures, saving the pay-raises.

The issue must be addressed by 5:00 p.m. Friday when the Legislature will adjourn for the last time until 1997, unless the governor exercises his right to call the Legislature back into special session where the matter could possibly resurface.

—BRANDON BEARD
05/30/96

FOURTH OVERRIDE ATTEMPT UNSUCCESSFUL

■(GIT) House Democrats tried unsuccessfully for the fourth time in two days to override line-item vetoes issued by the governor.

Some \$631,234 appropriated to the Office of the State Auditor and Inspector and

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"Nothing just happens in politics. If something happens you can be sure it was planned that way."

Franklin D. Roosevelt