

HOUSE REJECTS PAWN SHOP CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT

By Shawn Ashley
Staff Writer

■(GIT) The House on Thursday rejected the second conference committee report for the so-called pawn shop bill.

Originally designed to limit the number of pawn shops in Oklahoma communities,



Rep. Ron Kirby

the bill was reformed to require only a higher net asset value for those who apply for a pawn shop license, **HB2172's** author Rep. Ron Kirby, D-Lawton, told the House.

It was that very element, however, that appeared to persuade a majority of House members to vote 37-59 against acceptance of the bill's second conference committee report.

Rep. Dan Ramsey, R-Chickasha, called the definition "one of the most unusual I have every seen." As defined by the proposed bill, net assets "include the investment made in cash, bank deposits, merchandise inventory, and loans due from customers excluding the pawn service charge." Excluded from the definition by the proposed measure were "investments made in fixed assets or real estate, furniture, fixtures, or equipment, investments made in stocks, bonds, or other secu-

rities, or investments made in prepaid expenses or other general intangibles."

Kirby defended the definition, particularly that part dealing with securities, saying, "Some of these investments are not as liquid as some of you would want us to believe."

The Lawton Democrat said the point of the bill was to protect pawn shop customers by establishing a minimum investment level that would insure the customers could recoup their property if the pawn shop was forced to shut its doors.

Ultimately, he said, "It's a sugar coated bill. It's easy to swallow and it's not going to get you in trouble with your constituents."

That was not the view, however, of Ramsey, who said, "I'm going to have a hard time explaining why someone with \$1 million invested in stocks is not qualified to obtain a pawn shop license. Isn't that worth just as much as cash in the bank?"

Rep. Richard Phillips, R-Warr Acres, told Kirby that he might actually be driving away those he was hoping to attract to the industry.

"If you're looking to attract prudent people to the industry, I don't think you're going to do it by saying they have to take their \$50,000 or \$100,000 and put it in the bank and get three percent interest."

Kirby's arguments to the contrary failed to sway a majority of the House's members and the conference committee report was rejected.

BUSINESSES, CITY CHAMBER AND GOVERNOR BRING AMERICAN AIRLINES JET SERVICE BACK TO OKLAHOMA CITY

By Marta McCloskey
Staff Writer

■(GIT) After a series of meetings between officials of the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce, Governor Frank Keating and representatives of American Airlines, an announcement was made Thursday by the airline to restore jet service to Oklahoma City.

Lieutenant General Richard Burpee from the Chamber, along with efforts of Keating's office and the State Department of Commerce, had asked local businesses "What increased level of business would American Airlines receive if they restored jet service to Oklahoma City?" Apparently, the response was positive. "We received pledges from high-ranking officials that revenue performance would improve," Jack Williams,

American's vice president and general sales manager added, "Those leaders, including Burpee, came to us with specific business plans that show genuine support for American jet service on the Oklahoma City-Dallas/Fort Worth route. It's a decision based on solid business principles and we are excited about bringing service back."

Burpee explained that the Chamber asked American to review a 5-year, \$10 million economic development plan targeted to put money back into Oklahoma City. With funds raised privately, the plan would include a national marketing campaign, promotion of a pro-business environment through legislation, the expansion of existing business, implementation of infrastructure technology transfer, the expansion of international mar-

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VETOED BILLS MAY LIVE AGAIN IN SPEED LIMIT MEASURE

By Brandon Beard
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■(GIT) Two bills vetoed by Governor Frank Keating this week may reappear before the Legislature adjourns. The two bills, **SB988**, by Sen. Ted Fisher, D-Sapulpa, and **SB1017**, by Sen. Frank Shurden, D-Henryetta, may be incorporated into **SB685**, the measure that would statutorily set the state's speed limits, among other things.

The Fisher measure, SB988, would direct the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) to issue permits for multi-state oversize and overweight vehicles. It would also designate specific routes for vehicles operating under those permits.

Keating vetoed the measure, he said, because it violates the state constitution, as it delegates the authority to regulate the special permits to a non-governmental entity.

"This legislation mandates the Department of Transportation to accept truck weight load limits set by the private entity without regard to concerns about the effect such limits may have on Oklahoma streets, roads, bridges and highways," the governor said in his message accompanying the bill.

He also said that current law authorizes ODOT to enter into regional truck permit compacts when it is "practical and feasible for the state."

Sen. Gene Stipe, D-McAlester, called the governor's reason for vetoing the measure "inconsistent." Currently Oklahoma has some 1,500 compacts with other states.

"Somebody on the second floor isn't communicating," he said. "The right hand isn't talking to the left."

Fisher urged the matter to be handled quickly. He said trucks in Louisiana were granted the special permits by ODOT, in anticipation of the problem being fixed by the bill. But, with the measure being vetoed, the vehicles are essentially "trapped."

Transportation Secretary Neal McCaleb told *Capitol Network News*, "If the bill's language were permissive and not imperative, I think it would find favor with the governor."

The other measure, SB1017, by Shurden, was designed to eliminate speed traps on the state's highways. The bill states that the troop commander in charge of a highway patrol troop may designate specified portions of federal aid primary highways and the state highway system to be in the service area of the troop.

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