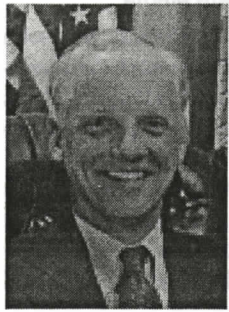


Pay Plan, continued from page 2
state employee pay raises.



Gov. Frank Keating

"If the legislature will send me clean, revised appropriations bills that address the raises and nothing more than our original budget, I'll sign them before the close of business Friday," Keating said. "My pen is uncapped and ready. The legislative leadership knows very well that these much-needed raises are mandated and will go into effect on July 1 no matter what they do. By making this money a political football they're putting agency heads throughout state government in an unnecessarily difficult position."

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

"(Wednesday) they were talking about adjourning early," he said. "They can't claim they don't have time to revise these bills and assure full funding for the raises."

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 de-

velopment 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 Environmental 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.

PUBLIC EMPLOYEES OUTRAGED BY VETOES

By Brandon Beard
Staff Writer

■(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.

Jones accused the second and fourth floors of dragging their feet and creating partisan gridlock in terms of addressing the issue, pointing out that each of the bills originally passed with at least 74 votes in the House and 40 votes in the Senate.

"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.

"Political partisanship in the last two days of the Legislature serves no one," he said.

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

"I'm not going to get into a racial argument, but in some categories, minorities will be the hardest hit."

Jones also said that the Office of the State

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