

## FOURTH OVERRIDE ATTEMPT UNSUCCESSFUL

By Shawn Ashley  
Staff Writer

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

Some \$6310,234 appropriated to the Office of the State Auditor and Inspector and \$1.8 million allocated to the Oklahoma Tax Commission were at issue on Thursday when House members considered overriding Governor Frank Keating's line-item vetoes in HB1787.

The 63-35 vote to sustain the governor's veto came despite praise from both sides of the aisle for State Auditor and Inspector Clifton Scott and the work performed by his office.

"He may have the toughest job in all of state government," Rep. Tommy Thomas, D-Atoka, told fellow House members during debate on the motion to override the governor's line-item veto. But, Thomas said, the veto was inconsistent with Keating's claim of being a law and order governor and protector of the public's interest.

"The veto is inconsistent," he said, "and ill advised at best. If he is going to say he's tough on crime, for law and order and say he stands for the public's interest, this veto is wrong."

House Majority Leader Rep. Loyd Benson, D-Frederick, also praised the auditor and his staff, reading off a long list of investigations conducted by the auditor's office, as well as a list of criminal convictions that have resulted from the probes.

"I sat down yesterday," Benson said, "and tried to figure out why the governor would pick on the state's watchdog, and I just can't."

The veto, Benson added, could lead the office to cut 10 auditors if funds for the state employee pay raise are not made available. That, Benson said, would devastate an office already involved in seven investigations

and with more than a dozen requests waiting.

Republican lawmaker Leonard Sullivan, of Oklahoma City, said the veto represented part of "a new era in state government."

"It's like you're being hit in the head with the two-by-four," Sullivan said. "You should be learning that the governor is part of the budgeting process."

"This and the other vetoes show that the Republicans and governor are part of the process. This is like a training program for you, because you may be in the minority next year."

That idea did not sit well with Rep. Jim Glover, D-Elgin, who argued the Republicans should have been active in the process last week when the appropriations bills were considered.

"The right thing to do," Glover said, "was to stand up when the bills were out here."

Rep. James Dunlap, R-Bartlesville, also said the vetoes represented a change in the status quo.

"This represents the ability of this side of the aisle to change the way this legislature does business," Dunlap said, adding that he supported the auditor and his office and that he had voted for Scott in the last election.

"But these bills put all the appropriations together into one lump sum. That doesn't give the governor the ability to line-item veto those things he feels are inappropriate or excessive," Dunlap said.

Speaker of the House Glen Johnson, D-Okemah, concluded debate on the unsuccessful effort to override the governor's veto, saying the Republicans' idea of affecting the budget process "was a good idea — one week ago when the bills first came through."

Johnson called the Republicans' decision to sustain the vetoes "partisan politics at its worst."

"What has changed in this bill?" Johnson asked. "Not one word. But what has changed is that the governor has decided he didn't like this bill."

"You've got a chance to exercise your best judgment," Johnson added, "or to let someone else decide what is your will. You were elected to cast your vote, not to vote the way the governor decides is best."

"This," Johnson concluded, "is the right thing to do."

Like the three override attempts before Thursday's, the final vote reflected a strict party-line decision and the attempt failed.

## PARENTAL CONTROL FOR TEEN DRIVERS BECOMES LAW

From Senate Media

■(OKLAHOMA CITY) Parents will soon be able to have a say in whether their teenagers are able to get a driver's license. That's according to Sen. Brad Henry, principal author of the bill.

"I'm very pleased that the Governor has signed **Senate Bill 1115**. This measure gives parents an important tool for ensuring their children's responsibility and safety," said Henry, D-Shawnee.

"The problem in the past has been, that even if a parent had real concerns about a child's maturity or responsibility, there was nothing a parent could do to stop that teenager from getting a driver's license," explained Henry.

Under Senate bill 1115, a parent will be able to file an objection with the local Department of Public Safety testing location. They would also have the ability to get a minor's driver's license revoked until age 18. A revocation would remain in effect for at least three months.

Rep. Bob Weaver co-authored the measure in the House of Representatives.

"If a parent knows a teenager is simply not mature enough, or has a drug or alcohol problem, they need to be able to keep those kids from getting a driver's license until they can get straightened out. This bill does that," said Weaver, D-Shawnee.

The parental control law goes into effect November 1, 1996.

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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 governor created this mess," Jones said, "let him figure it out."

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.

