

## POLITICS BECOMES ISSUE IN BILL'S DEBATE

By Shawn Ashley  
Staff Writer

■ (GIT) Politics took center stage on Wednesday when House members were asked to consider a bill designed to prohibit the involvement of public officials in tax exempt bond issues.

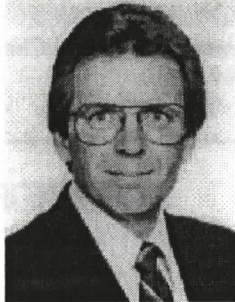
Rep. Dan Webb, R-Oklahoma City, asked that **HB1238**, by Rep. Ed Crocker, D-Norman, be sent back to conference committee for further consideration. If that happened, Webb indicated, he would ask that the committee be instructed to add provisions that would prohibit the chair and vice chair of state recognized political parties from participating in certain programs, such as the Ag Link and Business Link loan programs.

The proposal drew immediate negative response from members of the House, particularly Democrats.

Tulsa Democrat Russ Roach asked Webb what authority, if any, lawmakers had to apply a law to specific private entities.

"We would be skating on thin ice," Webb admitted. "But the question is if we are going to err, is it better to err for the benefit of taxpayers or those involved in the political process?"

"I believe it's in the best interest to err in the interest of taxpayers."



Rep. Dan Webb

Asked by Roach why his proposal targeted four specific people, Webb said, "They wield the greatest influence on the process. If you want to include others, I would certainly go along with you."

Rep. Ron Kirby, D-Lawton, pressed Webb about whether he would vote for the bill if it's amended or if he was simply trying to kill the bill.

"If the language is good and inclusive," Webb responded, "I would vote for it."

As Kirby pressed for more information concerning Webb's proposal, the representatives entered a heated exchange that ended with Kirby accusing Webb of avoiding his questions and Webb claiming he had answered them.

A comparatively subdued Crocker told House members that the bill had been before them for some 15 months in an effort to address what he said he felt was a serious problem. Webb, he said, "is just trying to hitch a ride."

When the issue of accepting the bill's second conference committee report was put to a vote, House members voted 63-36 along party lines and the bill was put before them for final consideration.

Without further debate, the bill received a 93-6 passing vote.



Rep. Ron Kirby

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GIT, Inc.

P.O. Box 61206  
Oklahoma City, OK 73146-1206  
Office (405) 528-2546  
Fax (405) 521-9807  
Net: gitinc@ionet.net  
Web: <http://www.exoweb.com/git>

Darwin P. Maxey, Publisher  
Mary Millen, Editor

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## KEATING, NICKLES: DOLE MADE RIGHT CHOICE

By Shawn Ashley  
Staff Writer

■ (GIT) Oklahoma Governor Frank Keating and Senator Don Nickles joined other Republicans from across the nation in supporting Senator Bob Dole's decision to leave his seat in the US Senate and to devote himself full-time to his presidential campaign.

"If Bob Dole wants to be president," Keating told reporters in an impromptu news conference, "then he needs to be out there speaking, talking one-on-one with people and traveling around the country. This was a necessary step for Dole to give viability to his presidential campaign."

The governor, who is the honorary state chair of Dole's campaign, said without the move, the Republican candidate for president was "treading water."

Dole had been expected to give up his post as Senate Majority Leader. His decision to step down from the Senate took many by surprise, including the governor.

Keating, however, called the move a sound decision for both Dole's presidential bid. Although a Dole supporter, the governor said, "There is a problem in the Dole campaign — People don't know who Bob Dole really is."

That, he added, is why the now former Kansas senator needs to devote his full energies to the presidential campaign.

"The Senate," Nickles said, "is losing a great legislator, but the nation will be the winner. "Bob Dole has done a remarkable job as majority leader and he will make a remarkable president. This is a bold and courageous move on the part of Senator Dole. He's going to invest everything he's got in this campaign and I like that. It's the right thing to do."

Keating agreed, comparing Dole's decision to that of the Spanish explorer Cortez to burn his ships at the coast. "This means there is not turning back," the governor said.

Nickles, ironically, is considered one of the leading candidates to fill Dole's seat as Senate majority leader. Choosing Nickles, the governor said, would be a smart move for Republicans, many of whom consider the Oklahoma senator a solid conservative.

"That would be an honor that would rival Carl Albert serving as Speaker of the House," Keating said.