

STATE NEWS WEEKLY SUMMARY CONTINUED



confidential intermediary might be helpful, both to the birth parent and the adopted adult.

Other ideas that came out of the public hearings included counseling for birth parents, before and after the adoption takes place; making all adoption records open to the adoptee at age 18 and allowing adoption agencies to have access to Department of Human Services records concerning the child to be adopted.

Aiming at the 46th legislative session, members agreed to call in sub-committee recommendations by Dec. 1. Two more meetings are scheduled, Dec. 12 and Jan. 9, to finalize recommendations into legislative language for chairman Roach and co-chair Sherri Finik, executive director of Adoption Affiliates.

The next meeting is set for 10 a.m., Thursday, Nov. 21, in Conference Room 512-A at the State Capitol.

—GERRY CHERRY
10/10/96

FOOD STAMP IMMIGRANT RESTRICTIONS DELAYED

■(OKLAHOMA CITY) Oklahoma will comply with delays in implementing immigrant participation in the federal food stamp programs, according to an Oklahoma Department of Human Services official.

DHS Director George A. Miller said, "We received word late Friday that the budget agreement, signed by the President September 30, contains a provision delaying implementation of the food stamp immigrant restrictions until April 1, 1997."

In August, 2,068 of the 368,112 persons receiving food stamps in Oklahoma were alien immigrants or one half of one percent. Food stamp payments to all Oklahomans totaled \$25.9 million.

Public Law 104-193 bans legal immigrants from receiving food stamps until they become citizens of the United States.

The agreement exempts any person who was receiving food stamps on August 22 or before, the date the new welfare reform law was enacted, from the new immigrant restrictions until April 1, 1997. Immigrants who are due for food stamp recertification prior to April 1, 1997 will be recertified using the old immigration eligibility rules in place prior to August 22.

States will then have from April 1, 1997 to August 22, 1997, to recertify the eligibility of such immigrants using the new restrictions.

The Presidential agreement does not affect eligibility of immigrant applicants since August 22. New applicants will be subject to the new immigrant restrictions mandated in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, i.e., most immigrants coming to the United States are banned from the food stamp program for a period of five years.

—OKLA. DEPT. OF HUMAN SERVICES
10/10/96

MILITARY & VETERANS

OKLAHOMA VETERANS COMMISSION DECLARES EMERGENCY

■(GIT) In a special meeting Thursday, the Oklahoma Veterans Commission declared an emergency to replace flooring at the Oklahoma Veterans Center in Norman.

Due to an excess of moisture in the foundation, 14,000 sq. ft. of flooring will have to be sealed in order for it to be tiled. Tests conducted by the Construction and Properties Division of the Department of Central Services show that it could take at least six to twelve weeks for the foundation to dry enough to lay flooring, if it dries at all.

According to Richard Heuckendorf of CPD, the general contractor on the project will not be used to seal the floor, instead Central Services will contract the work themselves in order to save time and money. Seal-Flex Inc., a California based company will provide the sealant. Because there is no flooring contractor in the state of Oklahoma licensed to use this, Alpha Omega Flooring of Plano, Texas will be used.

The cost of the sealant will be approximately \$1.90 per sq. ft. and comes with a five year warranty. The new tile will cost about \$5.00 per sq. ft. for a total estimated cost for both sealant and tile of about \$75,000 to \$100,000. This cost is to be withheld from a \$1.2 million retainer put up by the general contractor.

—DUSTIN PYEATT
10/08/96

"A right is worth fighting for only when it can be put into operation."

Woodrow Wilson

speech in Chattanooga, Tennessee

Aug. 31, 1910

OIL & GAS

OKLAHOMA PIPELINE REMAINS CLOSED

■(WASHINGTON) The U.S. Department of Transportation's Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA) ordered a hazardous liquid pipeline between Medford, Oklahoma, and Mont Belvieu, Texas remain closed Wednesday pending review of additional actions directed by the department.

In addition to directing that the line remain out of service, RSPA ordered Koch Pipeline to identify and repair corroded areas and initiate a public education program for residents and public officials along the right-of-way. These actions will continue to ensure the safety of the public living near the pipeline.

—US DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION
10/09/96

REVENUE & TAXATION

RV OWNERS TAGGING VEHICLES OUT OF STATE

■(GIT) Interim study 96-58, an examination of registration fees on recreational vehicles (RV), was on the agenda of the House Revenue and Taxation Committee Tuesday.

Rep. Fred Perry, R-Tulsa, speaking for a change in the cost of registering RVs and travel trailers, reminded committee members of the federal government's luxury boat tax several years ago. After the luxury tax was implemented, the boat industry shut down, Perry said, and people were thrown out of jobs.

"By tripling the tax on RVs," Perry said, we've actually brought a decrease in the number of vehicles tagged in Oklahoma. People drive out of state to tag their vehicles," he added.

"My interest is in seeing more RVs tagged in this state. We're all interested in more revenue for the state," Perry said, before introducing Manuel Jackson, retired Xerox employee and current RV owner.

Jackson has become the "expert" in RV registration, Oklahoma Tax Commission Chairman Bob Anderson said, through active lobbying of legislators and committees for several years to get the price of RV tags lowered, so Oklahomans won't tag their vehicles in Kansas or Texas.

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