

# STATE NEWS WEEKLY SUMMARY CONTINUED



earned by eliminating the House's \$137,000 barber shop, \$18,000 shoe shine stand and \$450,000 post office operations.

The actions, Gingrich said, illustrated the idea that programs existed which could be cut without causing adverse impact on important government services.

—SHAWN ASHLEY  
10/16/96

## APPOINTMENTS TO STATE BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS ANNOUNCED

■(OKLAHOMA CITY) Governor Frank Keating Thursday announced several appointments to state boards and commissions.

The Governor named John Brock of Tulsa to the Oklahoma Capital Investment Board to serve a term ending Dec. 31, 1998. He succeeds David Johnson who resigned. Senate confirmation is required.

Virgil Jurgensmeyer of Miami, Don Ramsey of Jones, Dean Smith of Hydro and Michael Wright of Minco were named to the Industry Advisory Board. Jurgensmeyer will serve a term ending July 1, 1997. Ramsey and Smith will serve terms ending July 1, 1998. Wright will serve a term ending July 1, 1999. This is a new position created by SB 1030.

Steve Kelley and Joe McGraw of Tulsa, Bob Rollins, Willis Wheat and Nancy Leonard of Oklahoma City were named to the Oklahoma Capitol Complex Centennial Commission to serve terms expiring at the pleasure of the Governor. This is a new position created by SB 823.

—THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE  
10/17/96

## HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

### WINDS OF CHANGE BLOW THROUGH DHS, ADVISORS TOLD

■(GIT) "The clock started running October 1 for temporary assistance for needy families in Oklahoma," George Miller, Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS) told the Advisory Committee on Mental Retardation Services Tuesday. Miller gave a broad outline of the changes in human services since welfare reform became federal law.

"AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) no longer exists in Oklahoma.

"We're at a very demanding period in the history of human services. States are being called on to make decisions we've never made before. There are a lot of changes in

Medicaid, changes for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients, we're inundated by problems with child protection services," Miller said, as he outlined the tip of the iceberg that is welfare change in America.

Other changes Miller cited include child support enforcement collection methods to be certified by the federal government, debit cards to be used in place of food stamps and "18,000 AFDC mothers are going to be put to work.

"All these changes extend to people with developmental disabilities," Miller reminded the advocates.

"If you get excited facing difficult challenges, this is the time for you to be happy," Miller added wryly.

To a question from a member of the committee about Medicaid, Miller told of the "catch-22" nature of the new regulation. "If we amend the program to allow people to become self-sufficient, they might not be eligible for Medicaid." A person had to be eligible for Medicaid on July 1, 1996, to be eligible under the new rules.

Discussing the Health Care Association, Miller said the HCA doesn't "have as much discretion as they'd like to because of their mandate. But we'll succeed in making sure their (special groups) needs are met. That's what we're supposed to do and we're going to do it," he added.

Managed care was very much on everyone's mind, and questions about how it would affect special needs individuals in the DHS system were asked. Division Director Jim Nicholson said, "managed care has to be value driven. It can't be driven by someone's definition of medical necessity. It has to be driven by independence and the quality of life.

DHS Director Miller then concluded his remarks on managed care. "Children's Hospital is the crown jewel of the Oklahoma Health Sciences Center. Now, the only patients Children's is getting are the ones managed care doesn't want. I don't know how we're going to teach students in their specialties.

—GERRY CHERRY  
10/15/96

*"It is only the poor who are forbidden to beg."*

Anatole France  
Crainquebille, 1901

## LT. GOVERNOR FALLIN MARKS OKLAHOMA/MEXICO WHEELCHAIR EXCHANGE

■(OKLAHOMA CITY) Lt. Governor Mary Fallin celebrated the partnership between Oklahoma and Sonora, Mexico as the two states begin a wheelchair exchange program. Wheels for the World and Partners of the Americas donated nine refurbished wheelchairs to Sonora during ceremonies held in the Lt. Governor's office Thursday.

"I'm so happy that my office was able to bring these parties together. Now two American organizations with a strong Oklahoma presence will be able to provide much-needed assistance to Sonora," Fallin said.

Wheels for the World, and its local organization, Wheels for Oklahoma City, are organizations dedicated to refurbishing used wheelchairs for distribution to those who cannot afford them. The group began several years ago with a wheelchair drive in Oklahoma City. They now provide wheelchairs to disadvantaged people throughout the U.S., and in several foreign countries.

Partners of the Americas is a partnership of 48 American and 20 South American states that have come together to share trade, economic, cultural, and educational ideas. Through Wheels for America, the partnership hopes to donate as many as 100 wheelchairs this year.

—LT. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE  
10/17/96

## MANAGED CARE TASK FORCE CONSIDERS REGULATIONS

■(GIT) Members of the Senate's Managed Care Task Force were urged to place regulatory responsibility for managed care programs under one state agency and to focus much of their regulator efforts on solvency, rather than quality issues.

David Randel, deputy director of the Ohio Department of Insurance and a representative of the National Association of Insurance Commissioners, made the comments during Thursday's meeting of the task force at the state capitol. Randel said that the Ohio General Assembly was currently considering two pieces of legislation with such a focus.

The comments stand in contrast to those made earlier in the meeting by the panel's co-chair, Mike Duncan, and by task force members during the group's Oct. 2 meeting.

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