

STATE NEWS WEEKLY SUMMARY CONTINUED

Commissioners of the Land Office v. Triton Oil Company lawsuit (CJ-95-170), currently pending in Beckham County. Specific information concerning the direction given the staff was not discussed under terms of the executive session provision of the Open Meeting Act.

—SHAWN ASHLEY
11/12/96

MILLENNIUM 2000 PROBLEM TO COST STATE MILLIONS

■(OKLAHOMA CITY) The cost to the State of Oklahoma to modify software and replace hardware in the state's computers in anticipation of the "Millennium 2000" phenomenon could reach \$75 million, Rep. Fred Perry, a 16-year veteran of the computer industry said Friday.

"In the year 2000, date-dependent computer systems may cease operating correctly because those systems were not designed to consider the century change," the Tulsa Republican said.

The dilemma could affect pension benefits, bond and interest payments, security systems, defense systems and even elevators, Perry warned.

Initial estimates from most of 125 state government agencies are that it will cost \$41 million to upgrade equipment to accommodate the date change, Perry said after meeting with Bill Shafer, data processing manager for the Office of State Finance.

According to Perry, Shafer said the Department of Human Services had the highest computer conversion cost estimate at about \$20 million. "However, it is our hope that all of these figures come down as software companies develop new programs to automate the process," he said.

Preliminary cost estimates "don't include any of the educational institutions in the state, which have not yet compiled information to meet the requirements of House Concurrent Resolution 1108," Perry added.

"It is an easy and a vulgar thing to please the mob, and not a very arduous task to astonish them; but essentially to benefit and improve them is a work fraught with difficulty and teaming with danger."

Charles Caleb Cotton
"Lacon"
1825

In HCR 1108, the Legislature directed all state agencies and encouraged all schools, "to begin planning and budgeting for the conversion of legacy systems, programs, databases and security systems, and to begin the process of preparing all state computer systems for the millennium."

The resolution, authored by Perry, directed the Office of State Finance to summarize estimates and plans of the various agencies.

Assistant Vice Chancellor Mary Ann Maletz said the Regents' office distributed survey forms to state universities, colleges and other offices in order to complete estimates and plans for their institutions.

"This issue certainly is one that needs to be planned and budgeted for, to ensure state government functions properly in the future," said Rep. Dwayne Steidley, D-Claremore, vice chairman of the House Appropriations and Budget Committee.

The Office of State Finance is scheduled to deliver a formal report on the costs of Millennium 2000 on Nov. 19, to the House Science and Technology Committee, of which Perry is vice chairman.

—HOUSE MEDIA
11/12/96

FRESHMEN SENATORS TARGET AREAS OF INTEREST

■(GIT) After the swearing-in Nov. 19, Oklahoma's legislators will begin getting organized for the 46th Session. Seven freshmen senators will contribute their expertise and ideas to the legislative process. *Capitol Network News* talked with these seven new members of the senate this week to find out about their preliminary goals.

Sen.-Elect James R. Dunlap, R-Bartlesville, currently a Representative and a veteran of the House since 1989, will now represent senate district 29. He is the only legislator moving from the House to the Senate. Dunlap is a general contractor in the Bartlesville area. He ran for the Senate office, he said, for two reasons. "The current senator was retiring," Dunlap said, and while the "House of Representatives has been very friendly to small business, worker's compensation reform has stalled in the Senate. I want them to realize how small business is," he added.

Because of his business experience, Dunlap is most interested in legislation on small business issues and worker's compen-

sation reform. "I want Oklahoma to be as business-friendly as possible. I'm also interested in franchise issues."

Dunlap is looking for answers, not glory. He said he'll ask for help with small business legislation from more experienced senators, like Senator James Maddox, D-Lawton, whom Dunlap describes as "a true champion of the cause," of small business.

Sen.-Elect Owen Laughlin, R-Woodward, won over Democrat incumbent Don Williams for the district 49 seat. Laughlin, an attorney, ran for the senate post because, "I want to see a place where my children could and would come back to live. We've created an economic environment [in Oklahoma] that makes it difficult to survive."

Laughlin, too, believes worker's compensation reform is a major issue for the legislature.

As a former assistant district attorney, Laughlin was personally involved with the criminal justice system. "We shouldn't be releasing criminals early," he said, and offered a plan. "We've got to make inmates work and build prison space. We can't afford to build expensive penitentiaries. I hope to introduce legislation like that."

Sen.-Elect Robert Milacek, R-Waukomis, is a teacher and former Oklahoma representative. He served in the House from 1976 to 1982, and quit, he said, because his three daughters were growing up and he didn't have enough time with them. Now retired as a high school and college teacher, Milacek ran for the district 19 senate seat because he was, "dissatisfied with the basic philosophy of my opponent," (Senator Ed Long).

His target this legislative session is, "in one word — jobs. Jobs are the key to the welfare of any state. Jobs answer the education and criminal problems," he said. Milacek wants Oklahoma to make Oklahoma's business climate "more conducive for small business," with worker's compensation reform and tax incentives.

Sen.-Elect Mike Morgan, D-Stillwater, survived a challenge to his election by opponent Randy Wedel, R-Stillwater, for the district 21 senate seat, vacated by Bernice Shedrick. Morgan is an attorney who ran for the post because he felt, "Shedrick's leaving office would leave a void, and because friends and family wanted me to." Morgan said he has "no personal agenda to present at the Capitol."

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