

Women's rights bills tabled

By NAN HENDERSON
Of the Emerald

SALEM (Special) — Two of the packages of about 15 women's rights bills introduced this session were tabled last week in legislative committees.

And women's rights lobbyist Gretchen Kafoury indicated Monday that women's groups are upset about the action — especially because, they were not informed that either committee would be considering the bills last week.

One bill (HB 2630) required all state subsidized or tax exempt hospitals to allow their facilities to be used for performing abortions or sterilizations, and the second measure (SB 540) guaranteed that any person could retain her or his surnames upon marriage or be awarded any name at the time of divorce.

The House State and Federal Affairs Committee tabled HB 2630 without discussion during a Wednesday meeting. Committee Vice Chair Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Portland) said in an interview that though he was not present when the committee tabled the bill he saw several problems with the measure.

"The broad question we were considering is the constitutional issue of the state subsidizing hospitals that discriminate on the basis of religion, but unfortunately the issue is not as clear cut in the constitution as discrimination on the basis of race," Blumenauer said, referring to religious hospitals which refuse to grant abortions or sterilizations but are subsidized by the state.

"The second problem is that if these hospitals lost their tax exempt status they would pass the increase in taxes on to the consumer," he continued. "And

they still would not have to perform abortions," he pointed out.

Blumenauer said this alternative showed that the bill would not have solved the real problem which he sees as providing facilities for abortion in communities that have only religious affiliated hospitals serving large areas.

"But the committee shouldn't have acted with such dispatch because this is a problem which needs to be addressed," Blumenauer said. He suggested that the legislature investigate ways to establish abortion clinics "adjacent to existing facilities."

The Portland legislator also said that when new hospitals are requested in the future persons reviewing those requests "should make clear that hospitals will have to fulfill the full range of needs in a community."

He indicated that he received several hundred letters against the bill and only a few in favor of the measure.

Kafoury, who is a paid lobbyist for about six Portland feminist organizations which have formed "The Equal Rights Alliance," said she is not surprised that the House committee tabled the bill.

"The anti-abortion lobby had their forces mustered up well," Kafoury said. She observed that since court rulings have established the legality of abortions, the anti-abortion forces "must deal with measures such as HB 2630 which have a new twist."

The women's rights lobbyist said that since the bill has been tabled, women across the state will be forced to continue pouring into Portland to have abortions. She indicated that a few Portland hospitals provide the only abortion facilities available to most women in the state and

noted "the Springfield hospital can't even keep up with the demand in the Eugene area."

Kafoury said, however, that she was surprised to learn that the Senate Judiciary Committee tabled SB 540 Thursday. And she indicated she will begin lobbying to have the bill "taken from the table." She said that though women can now legally retain their names upon marriage "there are still a lot of hassles — with voter registration clerks and in requesting credit, for example, example."

"SB 540 made it very clear that it is legal to retain your name upon marriage and more importantly that you can legally regain your maiden name when you get a divorce," Kafoury said.

She said persons requesting their original name when granted a divorce now face problems "because whether or not you get your name back is left up to the judge. If you have a good judge you get your name back and if you don't you don't get it back," Kafoury said.

The motion to table SB 540 came during the Thursday committee meeting when some committee members expressed concern that property transactions will be confusing if husbands and wives have different names.

And though some of the committee members referred to testimony given to the committee by women who had dealt with judges who refused to grant them their maiden names after divorces, most members indicated they saw no need for the bill.

Kafoury disagrees with the committee sentiment and said there is another bill currently in the House Judiciary Committee that deals with the same issue.

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Native American art shown

Paintings, graphics and sculpture by Native American artists from throughout the United States make up an exhibition on display in the EMU Art Gallery at the University through May 5.

The exhibit is the second annual Contemporary Indian Art Exhibition sponsored by the Central Washington State College's Ethnic Studies Program.

The annual art program is designed to provide the public with exposure to contemporary art and to encourage young Native American artists. It is also aimed at dispelling myths that Native American art is comprised solely of beaded handicraft and that Native American painting is restricted to flat-style, spatial representation.

Initiated a year ago by the CWSC Ethnic Studies Program director, Alex Kuo, the traveling exhibit attracted so much attention

that requests to display the art this year from more than 150 schools had to be turned down.

The schedule for this year includes showings in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Montana.

Some of the artists shown have won national and international honors. Among them is Solomon McCombs, a Creek artist who has served as a U.S. State Department art ambassador to a number of African and Asian nations.

Fritz Scholder of New Mexico, one of the leading "new Indian artists" is represented in the show. He has won many awards for his work. He has lectured on Native American art in Europe and his works have been included in major exhibits throughout the world.

At the University the exhibit is sponsored by the EMU and the Native American Student Union.

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