

Laws change insurance benefits

By PETER MEAD
Of the Emerald

An act of Congress may spare Oregonians from a new state law requiring auto safety inspections. But 37 other state laws that went on the books Jan. 1 look like they're here to stay.

The law requiring safety inspections, passed as Senate Bill 898, was passed to satisfy federal standards. At present, the federal government can withhold 10 per cent of the highway construction funds appropriated for Oregon this year, unless the state adopts a program of mandatory safety inspections for passenger vehicles.

The federal government singled out this state and three others—of the 19 without mandatory programs—for possible sanctions.

News of this came to the state in August. But state officials have delayed specific measures to comply with the law because bills in the U.S. House and Senate may change the law. SB 898 makes no specific provisions for implementing or enforcing a program of inspections.

A bill has passed the U.S. Senate that would reduce the federal sanctions on states not complying with the inspection laws. If this bill becomes law, the federal government could only withhold 50 to 100 per cent of the State Safety Grant, a much smaller amount than the 10 per cent of the highway construction funds it can now withhold.

The House has passed a bill that would delay any federal sanctions until 1977. That bill calls for Congress to redraft highway safety requirements, based on recommendations to come on Dec. 31 from a report the Secretary of Transportation would prepare.

Both bills now go to joint subcommittees, composed of

members in the House and Senate, who will consider the bills and may send them to both chambers for final approval.

"We will probably not do anything more to even propose (a plan for safety inspections) until we find out how they're doing on the legislation in Congress," said Veneta Howard, information officer for the State Motor Vehicles Department.

Among the other new laws, several change state requirements for insurance.

One law, passed as House Bill 2301, requires protection for babies, at the moment of birth, from all policies and health service contractors. Most already make that coverage, though some cover babies only for the first two weeks or 30 days.

Co-sponsor Mary Burrows, a Republican from District 41, said "one pediatrician told me there were some parents who would never be out of debt from paying for uninsured illnesses of infants." Burrows said support for the bill was so strong "it just went zinging through the House."

Another new law, passed as SB 220, requires some coverage for the treatment of alcoholism by every policy of group health insurance.

Motor vehicle insurance requirements went up, and that may send the cost of premiums up \$8 a year for Eugene-area residents, according to Deputy Insurance Commissioner Jim Crouch.

The new law, passed as HB 2995, increases minimum insurance standards from \$19,000 one person—\$20,000 one accident to \$15,000 one person—\$30,000 one accident.

That amount of coverage should satisfy needs of accident victims in 93 to 94 per cent of the accidents on the highway, Crouch said. But "if you are unfortunate

enough to get into an accident with a family with four or five kids," he said, protection in that amount would be far too little.

In the savings and loan field, HB 2721 became law. For the most part, it revises old legislation. One change students may want to be aware of, however, is that a savings and loan association can make service charges on an account of \$25 or less, that has been dormant for over two years, if the account holder is first notified.

Even the University administration got some help from two of the new laws. HB 2339 and SB 273 revise and change old state laws concerning rules and procedures the University must follow in making contracts.

Procedures on construction contracts is the subject of HB 2339. This law requires a notice of bidding be advertised in at least one trade paper of statewide, general circulation any time any public body will be taking bids on projects estimated to cost more than \$50,000.

A public agency must also determine if an improvement it plans to do itself, with cost estimated over \$50,000, could be done less expensively by a private contractor.

Dist. 40 Rep. and University law Prof. David Frohnmayer said the law "will smooth some of the operating procedures" in construction contracting. It will also help the University get the best benefit of cost and services, Frohnmayer said.

'Increased efforts'

IFC gives SUAB boost, grants budget increase

The Student University Affairs Board (SUAB) received a \$3,500 boost in its 1976 budget from the Incidental Fee Committee (IFC) Monday. The SUAB is the students' representative on the University senate, and had requested a \$4,390 increase.

IFC chairer Jamie Burns attributed the increase to the SUAB's improved performance since last year.

"We recognize that their efforts and energy have increased quite a bit in the last year," Burns said. "Hopefully by putting more money into the board, energy can be transformed into efficiency."

Most of the increase is allocated to raise salaries of the 14 SUAB members from a token \$10 a month to \$40 a month.

The IFC's main argument with the funding proposal centered on the SUAB's Information and Grievance Center. The center, established this fall to act as a focal point for student complaints, has received less input than expected.

To invigorate the center's efficiency, the SUAB requested that the volunteer directorship be funded with a \$75 monthly salary. Chairer Dave Walsh stated that in a recent campaign for a volunteer director, no one applied.

IFC, however, vetoed the paid director on the grounds that first year programs are traditionally unfunded and must first demonstrate their value by voluntary student participation.

In other action, the IFC approved an additional \$350 for the Survival Center to increase office efficiency and to bring noted environmentalist David Brower on a speaking engagement.

The committee also allocated \$270 for the UFW Solidarity Committee to bring UFW vice-president Philip Vera Cruz to lecture to history, sociology and economics classes.

The IFC will meet with the EMU board at 2:30 p.m. today to discuss establishment of a \$25,000 building repair reserve fund. The fund would give the University increased bargaining power in an upcoming state-wide meeting on establishment of a common building reserve fund for all Oregon colleges and universities, according to Burns. If a state wide fund is approved, Burns said, the larger schools may have to pay disproportionate fees.

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