Environmentalists face tough legislative session

By GREG WASSON
Of the Emerald

The cynical prophecy is that the environment and legislation to protect it will eat it this session. Nancie Fadeley, D-Eugene/Springfield, agrees those cynics might be right.

"It could be that my greatest contribution this session will be killing bad legislation. That's where efforts will go, rather than innovating new legislation."

But Fadeley warns against adopting too pessimistic an attitude.

"I do believe we have some good things going for us. The more people realize that our energy sources are limited, the more cooperation we get."

Fadeley has chaired the House Environment Committee since 1973. Her husband, Sen. Ed Fadeley, D-Eugene/Springfield, chairs its Senate counterpart. He agrees that the next session could be tough for the environment, and contends development of energy alternatives is the environmental program that will be most easily accepted.

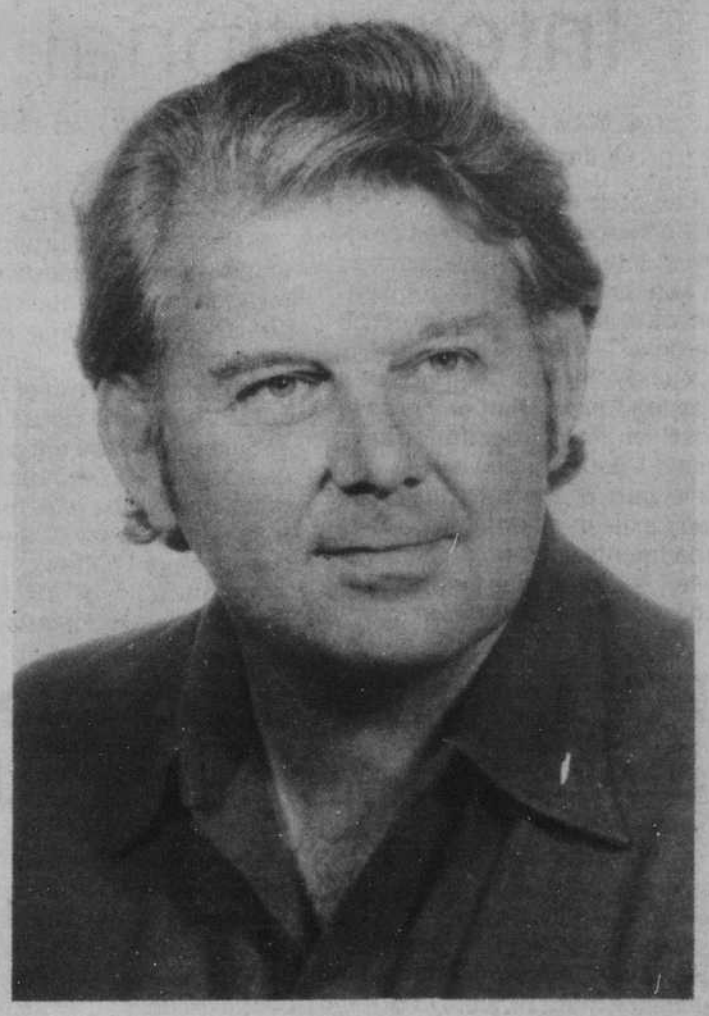
"It's a good thing for state funds to be used to support development of alternative energy. It's something this committee will look at seriously."

Fadeley plans to legislatively create a loan program like the one rejected by voters in November, 1977. That ballot measure would have created a loan fund of more than $400 million to support development of non-nuclear energy sources. Fadeley plans to restrict utility access to the loan fund this time around.

Both Fadeleys call conservation the cheapest and most readily available form of energy and support domestic use of solar power. Under a program approved by the 1977 Legislature, homeowners installing alternative energy generation that supplies over 10 percent of their home's electrical demand are eligible for state tax credits covering 25 percent of the system's total cost.

Sen. George Wingard, R-Eugene, says those credits represent a state investment in solar power. Wingard has introduced a bill to, as he says, "protect that investment.

"In many cases a person in a subdivision without the basic protection that this bill provides could easily lose the use of that collector by someone building a three or four story building across the street, or planting a series of poplar trees in front of the collector."



Ed Fadeley

Atiyeh plans to slash Human Resources budget

Committee members denounce reduction in social services

By DANA TIMS
Of the Emerald

SALEM — Gov. Vic Atiyeh's proposed human resources budget is not yet spelled out in line item form, but a summary of proposed cuts has prompted some of the governor's former Senate colleagues to react with skepticism and disbelief.

Dollar-saving ideas such as allowing hospitals to boot patients out onto the street five days sooner than previously allowed caused members of the Senate Health and Welfare Committee Monday to dump a bucket of caustic remarks on new department director Leo Hegstrom.

Hegstrom read to the committee the outline of goals and priorities in Atiyeh's proposal. The main feature of the budget, he said, is that it will "hold the line on inflation."

"The budget is a response to our citizens' call for reduced government spending," Hegstrom explained.

The demands of middle-class taxpayers who elected Atiyeh may well be reflected in the proposal, but committee members objected often to the numerous budget cuts and what Sen. Frank Roberts, D-Portland, called "penalizing the poor to curb inflation."

Sen. Vern Cook, D-Troutdale, asked Hegstrom who would absorb the cost of the state's limiting outpatient care to 75 percent of the public building rate (a reduction of about 16 percent). Hegstrom replied that patients not on welfare will pay more.

"So it's only a shift," Cook retorted. "You are placing the burden of the sick indigent on the sick affluent." Hegstrom remained silent.

Atiyeh's proposal slices another $700,000 from the Vocational Rehabilitation Training Program. This amounts to a 2 percent case load reduction.

"What will happen to that 2 percent?" asked committee chairer William McCoy, D-Portland. "Where will they go?"

"No one will be shut out," answered Hegstrom. "We'll just focus more on the severely handicapped than on the less severely handicapped." Several senators laughed cynically at this reply — which may suggest a lack of the senate support Atiyeh might like.

The governor's philosophies, Hegstrom said, are apparent in the proposal. Indeed, another primary goal of the budget is to "restore responsibility, whenever possible, to the individual."

But Hegstrom found little sympathy for a proposed $5.2 million reduction that would allow hospitals to evict welfare patients after 13 days. Under the General Assistance Medical Program, patients formerly received 18 days of state-paid medical care.

"What are you going to do," asked Cook, "just kick people out? Let them wander off and find public charity?"

"I lost touch," replied Hegstrom's assistant Keith Putnam. "It's been a while since I worked in this area."

"If you think anything much is available in the way of public charity," interjected Sen. Roberts, "forget it."

"That figure of 13 days," explained Hegstrom, "wasn't just chosen arbitrarily. We need to save $5 million and that's what this reduction will do."

Sen. Jim Gardner, D-Portland, noted that Atiyeh relied heavily on volunteerism during his gubernatorial campaign.

"By kicking people out of their hospital beds before they can move — is that the kind of volunteerism we'll be seeing during the Atiyeh administration?" he asked.

Other proposed cuts would: cut off state funds to county health departments; eliminate funding for the Multnomah County Medically Needy Project; limit the mentally retarded case load in nursing homes from 320 to 285; and institute a 50 cent co-payment for drug purchases.

Near the end of the hearing Sen. Roberts asked Hegstrom if maintaining the quality of services meant as much in the budget's formulation as reducing the quantity.

"Well," he answered, "when you have a tight budget, when money isn't available, you just have to cut back somewhere."

"I just hate to see the cuts started in human resources," said Roberts.

Judging by the senators' initial reaction to Atiyeh's proposed budget, cuts may not start there.

kevin harden

political rhetoric

Does Jerry Brown have a bad case of the GOPs? California Republicans think so, and his Democratic colleagues aren't pleased.

Brown, whose political languor earned the respect of both Democrats and Republicans during his first term as California governor, seems to be heading up the new "Herbert Hoover School of Tax Breaks" from his Sacramento office.

During a brief inaugural speech last week, Brown told the California Legislature the time had come for a $1 billion federal tax cut, a balanced federal budget and a reduction in the size and growth of state and federal government.

Democrats around the state were incensed. Republicans welcomed Brown into their fold and the state's voters, who returned Brown to a second term, were still trying to figure out Brown's stands on issues solved a year ago.

But Brown, who is not known for his speedy decisions on key political issues, told the public what they wanted to hear. At least what the right-leaning public wanted to hear.

Brown's speech, called "warmed-over Herbert Hoover" by one state labor official, emphasized his support of Proposition 13 fever and his intent to keep the fires of tax cut torches burning.

A lot of people in California were surprised by the apparent about-face on the tax issue. Brown's Democratic supporters were amazed at the call for a balanced federal budget.

But Brown's problem is obvious. He wants to be President so badly he could power a car on his anxiety.

Presidential paths are now all but blocked by Jimmy Carter's "machine." The only avenue left for Brown is the road to the right.

For a politician who championed lower expectations of government — an idea the poor held for years before he was elected — Jerry Brown may have chosen the simplest way to the White House. But it is not without its potholes.

The Richard Nixon Worst Excuse for the Stupidest Error award this week goes to Dick Hansen, manager of Eugene's Valley River Center.

Hansen, who ordered the arrest of Cynthia Kokis, a Eugene woman whose display in the shopping center called for a boycott of the Nestles Company, said the arrest wasn't politically motivated.

Although there were several other booths assembled in the shopping center displaying information about controversial subjects, Hansen said he did not single Kokis out.

Hansen now laments the whole affair and says he hopes it can be resolved "to the satisfaction of all." No charges have been dropped and Kokis still faces trespassing charges in municipal court.