

Panel stalls action on evaluation bill

By DANA TIMS
and GREG WASSON
Of the Emerald

SALEM — Student and faculty lobbyists came equipped with their standard batteries of arguments for and against HB 2831, the faculty course evaluations measure. But Tuesday's battle ended prematurely, before more than a couple of shots had been fired.

The bill was scheduled for its first hearing before the Senate Education Committee, where it died last session. Two hours before the hearing, members of the Oregon Student Lobby were informed that the Senate would convene for its first afternoon meeting this session.

"Common practice is to continue a hearing the next day," said ASUO lobbyist David Jennings. "But we were told 'certain parties' couldn't attend, so the hearing has been rescheduled for next week."

Jennings admitted that the delay will hurt the bill's chances, because the session may end by July 1.



The Education Committee, chaired by Rep. Cliff Trow, R-Corvallis, decided, in light of the afternoon session, to hold a mini-hearing on the bill.

Committee Assistant Noam Stampfer read a new fiscal impact statement on the proposal that concludes there likely will be no added state general fund costs resulting from implementation of the bill.

Rep. Jim Chrest, D-Portland, a co-architect of the amendments that resulted in the compromise that carried the bill through the House, told the committee he was disappointed at the apparent collapse of the agreement.

The fiscal impact of the bill has been a central point of dispute. Two estimates, submitted by the State Board of Higher Education and the OSL, differed by up to \$190,000.

"I know how controversial this issue

is," Chrest said. "I feel now that I was misled. The compromise was worked out. Now I'm told there is opposition from some place in higher education."

At that point, Trow recognized Stoddard Malarkey, lobbyist for the Board of Higher Education, who stated that the faculty had not been represented during the negotiations that led to the compromise.

Chrest appeared surprised and said, hesitantly, "Maybe I was wrong."

Malarkey noted that Charles Duncan, journalism professor at the University, had been present during the talks. But he added that Duncan is the University's legislative liaison, not a faculty lobbyist.

Before another word could be uttered, the senators were off to session. The saga of HB 2831 will continue next week, just a little closer to the session's final gavel.

On the other side of the Capitol, the House was engaging in parliamentary juggling. Returning a bill to committee is a device often used to kill legislation, but allow the full body to avoid going on record.

It's a tool the House has used both

times major insurance legislation has reached the floor this session. Last week it was used to thwart HB 2445, legislation banning discrimination in insurance rates and policies on the basis of sex. Tuesday, the maneuver frustrated proponents of HB 2795, a measure establishing merit insurance, a plan where costs are computed on an individual's driving record rather than on age, sex, marital status and similar factors.

A major impact of the bill would have been to decrease insurance rates for young drivers. Rep. Mae Yih, D-Albany, carried the bill on the floor and labelled current practices "discriminatory."

"Insurance companies justify the traditional system by pointing out that young drivers, as a class, have more accidents than older drivers. Insurance spokesmen fail to point out that in 1976, 93 percent of the 15- to 24-year-old group had no accidents."

Yih called it obviously unfair to punish the majority of young drivers because of the accidents of the seven percent. She promised to offer amendments to the bill which will make it palatable to enough members to pass.

Senators again say no to House nuke moratorium

Analysis by
GREG WASSON
Of the Emerald

SALEM — Once more, the Senate Committee on Environment and Energy has refused to pass the nuclear moratorium, HB 2570. Despite amendments offered by nuclear foes, the bill still sits in committee. Further compromises must be made.

For many, the utilities have become the "other side." Pacific Power and Light and Portland General Electric are the "they" in numerous "we-they" theories. PGE chief lobbyist Doug Heider calls this session "the toughest one yet."

The legislative fight against the atom went well for anti-nuclear forces in the House. As HB 2570 passed the lower body, nuclear plants were barred in Oregon until the federal government begins construction on a waste repository. In the Senate, though, the lobby faces strong resistance.

Still, one of the most active anti-nuclear legislators, Rep. Rick Bauman, D-Portland, pledges that the nuclear juggernaut will be slowed. "Our support in the House is firm. On the floor of the Senate, I think we have plenty of votes. But the alignment of this committee makes it difficult to get the bill through. We're just going to have to do some parliamentary juggling to get around it."

Tuesday, Sen. Ted Hallock, D-Portland, moved that HB 2570 be lightened to a 2-year-mora-

torium, but even that didn't appease pro-nuclear senators.

And one member of the panel, Sen. Charles Hanlon, D-Cornelius, suggested that the House already has the Senate moratorium, SB 899, a bill which mandates at least a one-year delay.

"They've got a bill which we considered carefully," held Hanlon. "If they want to try some changes, I think it's up to them."

Chairer Ed Fadeley, D-Eugene, responded that 2570 has become a special number to many constituents.

"I would think that a two-year moratorium will pass and we are just quibbling about what's to be included in the language in the appropriate number of the bill. The identification of the moratorium with HB 2570 is so high, that some will only be interested in us using that number."

The committee seemed unmoved by Fadeley's argument, but Sen. Ted Kulongoski, D-Junction City, says action in the Senate isn't over.

"Some of the people who voted against the bill today," predicted Kulongoski, "will come back in a couple of days with a proposal."

But if the focus does move to the House, its Committee on Environment and Energy still possesses SB 899. One possibility is that the committee will change 899 into a mirror image of 2570 and send it to the floor

where, if passed, it would go to the Senate for concurrence. A vote to concur doesn't get

routed through a committee, but stays on the floor. Anti-nuclear lobbyists are confident

they have sufficient votes on the Senate floor to pass a strong moratorium.

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