

Power bill may short-circuit state wishes

By GREG WASSON
Of the Emerald

SALEM — Last fall, voters approved an initiative measure that prohibits new nuclear plants from being built until a certified waste-disposal site exists.

Two years earlier they enacted a law barring utilities from charging customers for new plants until the plants actually produce power.

But, according to Sen. Ted Kulongoski, D-Junction City, the state's voice has been effectively muted — by the federal government.

The problem, Kulongoski says, is the Northwest Regional Power Bill.

"What they've done is basically said, 'O.K. Oregon, we're going to allow you to retain your local siting option, but if

Washington (state) wants to build nuclear plants, Oregon consumers are going to help pay for them anyway.' "

Assistant public utility commissioner Roy Hemmingway explains how the regional bill will have that effect.

The legislation transforms the Bonneville Power Administration into the power broker for the Northwest, he says. The BPA supplements its hydroelectric power with power generated by Northwest utilities. It then resells the power to all users in the region.

Hemmingway describes the situation this way: "Once the power is in the grid, you can't tell whether it's atomic kilowatts, coal kilowatts, or hydro kilowatts — it's all kilowatts."

"For instance, Portland General Electric right now will buy power from California during a time of shortage. The fact that California may have a whole bunch of things they include in the cost of that power is irrelevant. The cost is still the same, and it's beyond PGE's control."

Hemmingway adds that nothing in the fall moratorium initiative makes the practice illegal.

"The nuclear moratorium says that the commissioner is not to allow a utility to issue stock to generate money for participation in construction of a nuclear plant. But, in the case of purchasing power from California, or the BPA, there is no issuance of stock."

And the prohibition against requiring

Oregonians to pay the cost of plants not yet producing power will likely meet the same fate.

"If the BPA agrees to buy the two Washington nuclear plants on the drawing boards," says Rep. Wayne Fawbush, D-Hood River, head of the House Energy Committee, "Oregon's prohibition against putting construction works in progress in the rate base seems to say that Oregon ratepayers can't be charged anything until those plants are turned on."

But both Fawbush and Hemmingway say it's not that simple.

"The regional bill," explains Hemmingway, "allows the BPA to purchase power and add those costs into the sale price for the rest of the region."

IFC slashes 17 percent from Native American union

By ANN PORTAL
Of the Emerald

After nearly two hours of discussion Tuesday, the Incidental Fee Committee allocated the Native American Student Union \$8,285, about 17 percent less than the NASU had requested, but \$400 more than the ASUO had recommended.

The IFC cut \$1,128 from the group's stipend expenses, but funded \$1,815 for co-directors, which director David West said were "more efficient."

Funding for two telephones, one in the group's EMU office and the other at its off-campus longhouse, drew criticism from the committee. Both eventually were funded.

The two phones are needed for communication between the two offices, West said.

But the IFC balked at funding supplies for two offices and cut NASU's office supply request in half.

The program was allotted \$150 for reference materials in spite of an ASUO recommendation that it be cut 33 percent because only \$8 of the 1980-81 reference fund was spent. The small expenditure was due to an oversight, NASU representatives told the committee, and soon will be spent for magazine subscriptions.

The IFC funded \$4,304 for the program's annual cultural symposium and powwow, but questioned the need for 24 Pendleton blankets to be used as honorarium for dancers at the powwow. An ASUO representative said the blankets were a "fundamental part of the ceremony," and the committee approved the expense by a 6-1 vote.

However, the committee voted to put symposium and powwow funds on reserve until a detailed budget is shown to the committee.

Noting that funds for longhouse maintenance



had not been exhausted this year, the IFC cut \$75 from next year's maintenance request.

But West said the longhouse needs maintenance. NASU members haven't had time to spend on repairs and receive no custodial support, he said.

The committee attached a budget note stipulating that requests for additional funds would be considered next year if the \$25 allocated was spent.

The Philosophy Club, applying for its second year of funding, received \$141, which funded all of the club's requests but airplane fare for a speaker.

"Airfare is something we can afford to scrimp on," said ASUO representative Alan Contreras.

Recreational folkdance, a program meant to provide a "physical, non-competitive activity for all students," received unanimous budget approval from the IFC, which cut only \$3 from the group's request.

"We (the ASUO) think this program is totally wonderful," Contreras said.

Representatives of the Chinese Student Association did not attend the meeting.



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