

From Associated Press reports

Budget committee wants specialist cut

SALEM

A budget subcommittee is recommending that the Department of Economic Development lose its motion picture specialist despite Gov. Vic Atiyeh's proposal to spare the agency any cuts.

The same panel agreed Thursday with the governor that the Oregon State Police budget should not be cut. The governor's proposal to add troopers to the agency through use of public utility funds is before a separate subcommittee.

Another budget panel endorsed a plan to spare the Oregon Government Ethics Commission from budget cuts. But the subcommittee rejected Atiyeh's proposal to add funds to the agency to increase its investigative ability.

The full Ways and Means Committee may start acting on budget recommendations today. The Legislature begins its special session Monday with the goal of combining budget cuts and possible tax hikes to prevent a projected \$237 million state deficit.

The Department of Economic Development's motion picture specialist, Warren Merrill, works

to attract film companies to Oregon. Cutting the position and related service and supplies would save an estimated \$73,548.

"Business in the motion picture industry is bad the same as in timber," said Rep. Max Simpson, D-Baker. "There is no activity in Oregon and they may not make a picture here no matter how much we spend on advertisements."

Aid to veterans saved from cuts

SALEM

Oregon veterans in need of extra help for their education will still

be able to get state aid if a budget recommendation is approved.

A Ways and Means subcommittee Thursday agreed with Gov. Vic Atiyeh's decision not to cut the Department of Veterans Affairs educational aid program.

Department Director Staryl Austin said the \$77,786 in the program works out to an average monthly payment of \$35 for participating veterans.

He said the money is used by veterans who have exhausted their federal education benefits.

While \$35 may not go far toward an education today, Austin said the money is a general stipend that can help veterans with related costs.

He said 68 veterans currently receive aid through the program. He said most of them attend Portland State University or Mount Hood Community College.

The subcommittee decision, if upheld by the full Ways and Means Committee and Legislature, means the Department of Veterans Affairs will suffer no cut during the special session. Except for the education aid, the rest of the department's funds come from its home and farm loan program.

Democrats favor income tax increase

SALEM

The prospect of raising income taxes appeared to pick up support Thursday among Democratic lawmakers who'll control next week's special legislative session.

House and Senate revenue committees scheduled final pre-session meetings today to review drafts of bills that will be introduced as the session convenes Monday.

Gov. Vic Atiyeh called the 90 legislators into session to deal with a projected \$237 million budget deficit caused by plummeting forecasts of income tax collections.

There is heavy resistance among the Democratic majority to the 10 percent spending cuts proposed by the Republican chief executive.

The chairman of the House Revenue Committee said Thursday there is increased sentiment for personal and corporate tax boosts, rather than a cut in property tax relief, to avoid budget cuts as deep as the governor's.

Rep. Bill Grannell, D-North Bend, also said a bill to change the flat 7.5 percent corporate income tax rate to a graduated rate scale will be introduced and has an "excellent chance" of passage.

Grannell said the measure would result in a net revenue increase of \$14 million to the state by taxing wealthy corporations more heavily.

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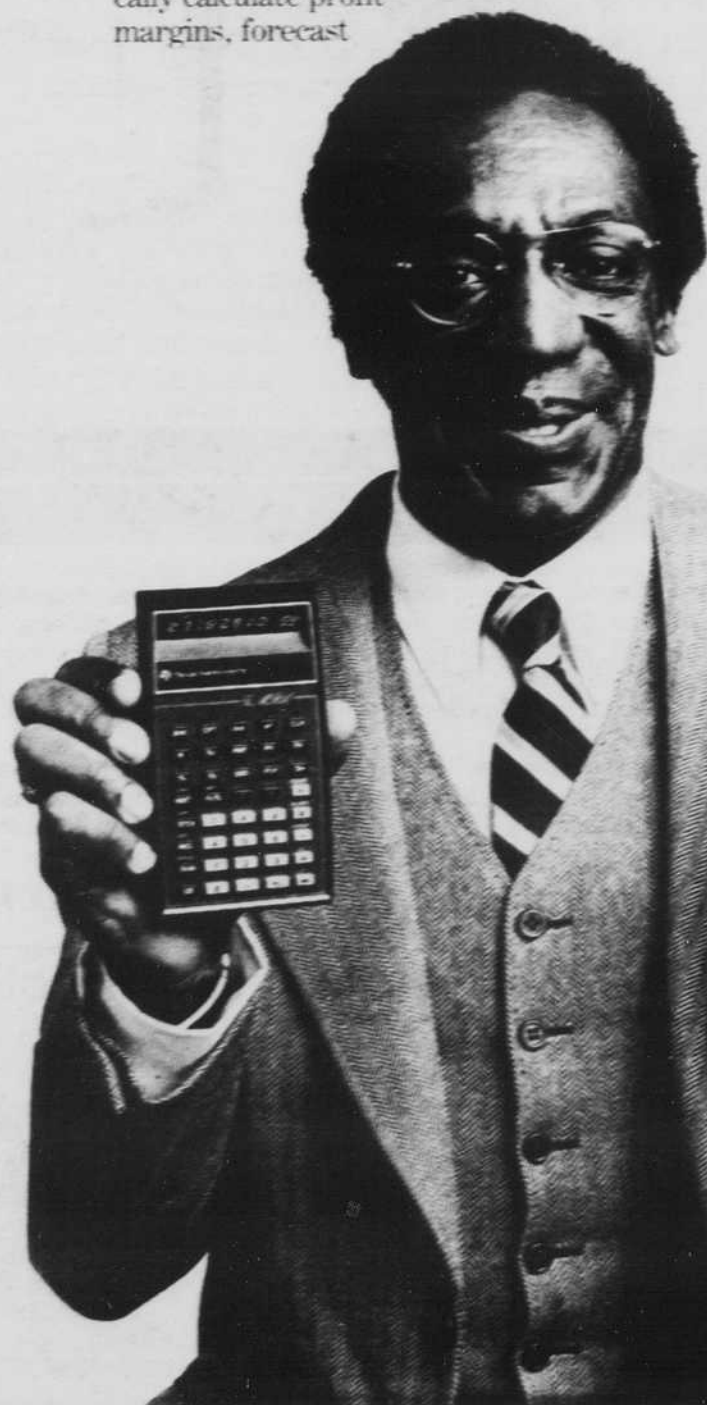
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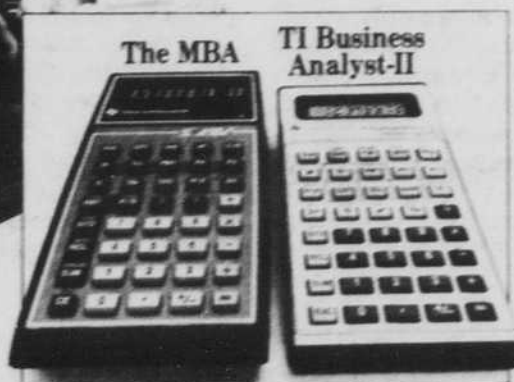


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