



Revival effort fails: Seat belt bill is dead

SALEM (AP) — A bill on mandatory seat belt use appeared dead in this year's session of the Oregon Legislature, after House backers couldn't muster enough votes to revive it Thursday.

The House defeated the bill 30-28 Wednesday.

Sen. Rod Monroe, D-Portland, chief sponsor of the measure, said he would give up on it if the House didn't salvage the measure Thursday.

The Senate-passed version of Senate Bill 355 would have required motorists to use seat belts starting next Jan. 1 or face fines of up to \$50.

A House committee watered

down the bill to merely put the proposal on the ballot, but even that version couldn't make it through the House. Lawmakers reported a flood of mail from opponents of the bill.

Two states, New York and New Jersey, have mandatory seat belt use laws in effect.

Foes of the Oregon proposal to require belt use by all motorists said the public is tired of government mandates and that such a law would be difficult to enforce.

Some lawmakers said the public outcry against the measure has been so great that it would be foolish even to put the proposal on the ballot.

'Nuclear winter' issue debated

WASHINGTON (AP) — Pentagon officials agreed with critics Thursday that an atomic war would cause a "nuclear winter" which might wipe out all life on Earth, but told Congress that's all the more reason to continue President Ronald Reagan's weapons build-up and try to win arms cuts.

"The administration accepts that a nuclear exchange would produce a nuclear winter effect," assistant defense secretary Richard Perle told a pair of House subcommittees.

"We are persuaded that a nuclear war would be a terrible thing," Perle said, "but we believe that what we are doing with respect to strategic nuclear modernization and arms control is sound and we believe it is made no less sound" by the nuclear winter phenomenon.

But astronomer Carl Sagan, one of the chief authors of the nuclear winter theory, said the concept "has policy implications at variance with current nuclear doctrine" of planning to

respond to attack with nuclear weapons.

The nuclear winter concept holds that even a small-scale nuclear war would cause such tremendous firestorms and clouds of dust and debris to be thrown into the atmosphere, that light and warmth from the sun would be blocked and all life would die.

Nuclear winter advocates contend that means atomic weapons thus have no military utility and their use would be suicidal. They argue that the only way to avoid nuclear winter is to eliminate atomic weapons.

Sagan testified that a recent Pentagon study of nuclear winter had caused "no agonizing reappraisals" within the administration about plans to use nuclear weapons to retaliate against a Soviet attack.

Sagan and Perle were testifying before the House Interior environment subcommittee and the House Science and Technology natural resources subcommittee.

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