

Legislators change schedule

Rep. Paul Walden
District 56

As I discussed with you last week, the House went on its new Committee and "regular" House schedule during the past week. Committees met for all day sessions on staggered schedules (for example, the State & Federal Affairs Comm. met just one day while Judiciary met twice, Tuesday and Wednesday) leaving about two-thirds of the 60 Representatives free some days and busy the next.

The Speaker also announced a special Saturday session which caught both Democrats and Republicans by surprise. I, personally, was excused from the Saturday session since I had speaking engagements in Dufur Friday night, The Dalles Saturday night, and again on Monday noon.

Looking to action in both houses and in committees... no bills were acted upon in the House as of Friday morning. About 40 bills were on the agenda for Saturday. Meanwhile the Senate passed a bill which was supposed to require "open" government meetings; however, it has been criticized as encouraging just the opposite because it exempted some meetings several legislators thought should be "open."

The Senate also passed to the House a bill to allow acupuncture at the University of Oregon Medical and Dental Schools. A bill to amend Oregon's constitution to allow legal lotteries by some charitable groups was defeated, but later referred to committee.

The House Consumer Affairs Comm. met once during the week, passing out one bill to prohibit the "reproduction for sale and sale of any sound recording without the consent of the owner of the master recording." It also approved and sent to the House a bill modifying the provisions in Oregon law relating to payment of race track betting proceeds for track improvement and to horse owners.

The House Education Committee met once and passed one measure while tabling five. It held hearings on 10 bills. The most significant development was passage of a bill which would require the Governor to appoint two college age students to the State Board of Higher Education. The Committee also passed and sent to the House a bill extending the time polls are required to be open for school bond elections from the existing 2 p.m.-8 p.m. to 8 a.m.-8 p.m.

The House Human Resources Comm. considered 8 bills during its one meeting last week. It passed to Ways & Means, HB 2257, creating standards for statewide licensing of emergency health care systems (ambulance service). Early in the session I sent copies of this bill to the fire chiefs in our District. They supported the provisions of this piece of legislation, expressing the view that in many areas of the State the degree of emergency treatment will be improved.

The House Judiciary Committee was one of the busiest panels during the past week. It met twice, eight hours each time and took action on 11 bills. It passed eight, tabled three and held hearings on about 22 more. Among the approved bills was one revising Oregon law pertaining to the powers of the State Medical Examiner and the entire procedure of investigating suspicious deaths. The committee tabled a measure requested by the Attorney General which would have required candidates for the job of Attorney General to be admitted to practice law first, and would have limited the Attorney General's terms in office to two.

House Labor and Industrial Relations met just once during the week to hear testimony on 12 bills relating to unemployment insurance, workmen's compensation, and other oriented questions. Three bills were sent to the floor for action. One would increase from two cents to five cents the amount an employer is required to set aside per employee each day for the "Retroactive Reserve and Second Injury Reserve" fund. Another would allow persons convicted of a felony to receive compensation benefits and so on under workmen's compensation law.

The House Transportation Comm., of which I am a member, met twice last week to look over 11 bills. The committee passed two bills and tabled three. Of the two which were passed, the most in-

teresting one would exempt pre 1935 autos from contemporary fender requirements if the vehicle is used on "well maintained hard-surface roads" during "fair weather."

REP. ED LINDQUIST

The unprecedented workload in the Oregon House of Representatives last week called for unprecedented action, and the House leadership proved equal to the task.

House Speaker Richard Eymann broke the tradition of daily floor sessions, scheduling them instead only "as needed" to keep legislation moving.

Then he set up a weekly schedule which has committees working full eight-hour days. This is designed to expedite business by permitting intensive hearings and work sessions rather than two or three-hour committee meetings several times a week.

The Speaker even went so far as to call a special Saturday floor session last week—something unheard of this early in the session.

This was necessary because never before in Oregon's history has the Legislative Assembly been faced with 2,400 individual pieces of legislation. That's 25 per cent more than the record number introduced in 1971, and the heavy load demands that much more hard work on the part of legislators. As tough as these issues are, I believe we have a duty to face them before we go home.

Included on this list of long-neglected issues are: tax reform, land use planning, public transit, public employee bargaining, alcohol and drug treatment, land sales consumer protection, open government meetings, cost-accountability in government, reorganization of state departments, revision of the Juvenile Code, traffic safety and a host of others.

Sen. Ken Jernstedt

While the House changed its order of business, the Senate continued to work on approving, rejecting, or returning bills to committees. The House has decided to hold committee hearings all day long and meet as a body only when they have a large backlog of bills. This has resulted in some ill feelings among the House members who maintain they are not kept busy during the week under the new schedule, but are made to return on weekends to vote on bills.

A bill to give the public utilities commissioner the authority to regulate speed of trains at all grade crossings in the state was approved by the Senate. The bill would also allow him to control the period of time that trains could block crossings. It is hoped this will help alleviate traffic congestion due to trains.

Another measure concerning the public utilities commissioner was passed by the Senate also, and this would give him the power to regulate intrastate airlines. In order for an intrastate carrier to operate, it would have to obtain a permit from the commissioner. He could also regulate the routes and fares. Airlines which operate between Oregon and other states are regulated by the Federal Government.

The Senate returned to committee a bill making major changes in Oregon's criminal procedure code, Senate Bill 80. The 150 page document is the first major modification of the procedural code since 1864. The Criminal Law Revision Commission spent 16 months preparing the bill.

The controversial land use planning bill, SB100, was to be voted on by the Senate this week, but was returned to committee at the request of the Senate Environment and Land Use Committee Chairman. The bill was then voted out of committee again at the end of the week.

A bill to lower the age of majority to 18 drew considerable interest in a committee hearing this week. The main topic of discussion was over lowering the drinking age. Sponsors of the measure told the committee that 18-year-olds are considered by society to be old enough to vote, go to war, marry, sue, enter into contracts and hold public office, and they should be given the right to drink.

Again I would like to remind you to take a close look at the proposed tax plan. The Revenue Department has refigured some of their calculations and this may result in a different tax change than earlier expected by some of you. Considerable question has been raised on local control

under the proposed tax plan. I would just like to explain it in this manner... the preamble to the tax bill only states policy and is unenforceable in the courts. This is the main section which speaks to local control.

I would also like to say that if you consider local control to include the handling of the budget then under the tax plan, the school board will have the right to levy a \$2 per \$1,000 property tax without the approval of the voters. However, if you consider local control to mean that you-the-voter will

have a say in the budgeting of your schools, then under the tax plan you will no longer have this right.

If I can be of any help to you in obtaining material on the tax plan or any bill which is before the legislature, please contact me in Salem care of the Oregon State Senate, or call me at 378-8757.

Rep Jack Sumner

The House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee had before it the following bills; HB 2783 designates certain dogs as public nuisances for

biting persons, chasing vehicles and destroying public property and allows for increased maximum penalties for failure to procure a license; HB 3052 which will exempt mobile slaughter houses from brand inspections; HB 3054 which authorizes brand inspection upon change of ownership of cattle; HB 2631 allows a \$10.00 bounty on coyotes; HB 2633 authorizes government predatory animal control personnel to go upon lands that harbor predatory animals; and SB 106 which

deals with pesticides.

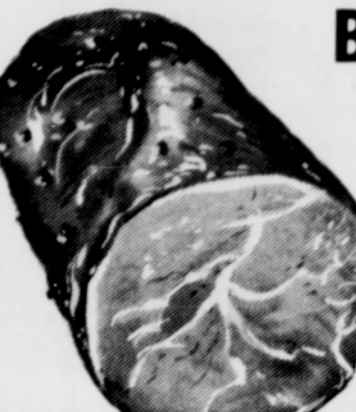
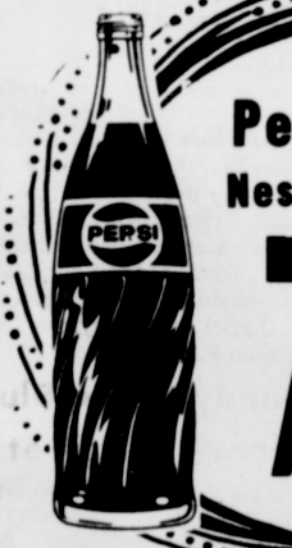
The Environment and Land Use Committee heard bills limiting the use of snowmobiles and off-road vehicles. Hearings were also held on HB 3072, forbidding the granting of easements to pollute the air. During the next few weeks the Committee hopes to begin work on a half dozen land use planning measures, including SB 100.

Transportation Committee members voted to table HB 2960, prohibiting enumeration on a person's motor vehicle

operating records of accidents not involving arrest or citation, and HB 2288, altering classification of operators licenses—the latter despite testimony that the federal government would eventually require the change. HJR 18 reduces the fee for senior citizen use of state recreation facilities; it was reported out do-pass. At its April 24 meeting the committee will hear a bill requiring that the headlights of a new motor vehicle turn on automatically when the engine is started.

House Bill 2789, regarding

withholding of state support for substandard schools not correcting deficiencies, was recommended by the Education Committee. The committee voted to add two students to the State Board of Higher Education. This number was a compromise between student associations and the Governor after both had supported the concept of the bill. A constitutional amendment making the Superintendent of Public Instruction an appointive position was tabled, as were school licensing bills.

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