

the OSEA news

The monthly publication of the Oregon State Employees Association

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OREGON
STATE
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"I think we should submit a General Council resolution demanding the legislature to pay more attention to our resolutions."

From the....

Executive Secretary

New Programs Needed

Representatives of employee associations in 14 western states met in Portland June 11-13 at the annual meeting of the Western Assembly of Governmental Employees (WAGE). In a "legislative roundup" session which we chaired, it became very apparent that the pay and fringe benefits package for Oregon state employees adopted by the 1971 Legislature surpassed that of any of our counterparts.

Whether represented by independent associations or AFL-CIO unions, state employees all over the west faced tough going in state legislatures this year. In our neighboring state of Washington, for example, employees represented mainly by unions got no pay increase, with merit raises denied to many. California, with a strong association, and sizeable union units, at last report was fighting for a five per cent adjustment in the face of Gov. Reagan's stand against any increases.

"Fiscal crisis" and "taxpayer revolt" were common terms in every state. Present salary systems, particularly step increases, were under fire in most of them. Citizens in all states continued to demand broader programs and greater services, while they and their legislative representatives stood pat against revenue measures needed to pay the bill.

These comments are intended neither to boast of OSEA's legislative accomplishments nor to suggest employees make the best of what they got by looking at what others did not get. On the

contrary, we feel our Association and other public employees must find better ways of educating legislators and the public on the value of the services they are receiving, and the responsibility for paying adequately for them.

There are no indications that the state's fiscal condition is going to be any better for the next legislative session than the last one. It may be worse. That is why the support of every member is needed for OSEA's new community relations, year-around lobbying, political education and political action programs.

Make Yourself Heard

The position of OSEA on many important matters in the last legislative session was determined by resolutions adopted at previous General Councils. On one controversial subject in the 1971 Legislature, OSEA took no position because of the absence of a policy resolution from the General Council.

Deadline for submission of resolutions for this year's General Council is July 31. While resolutions generally come from chapters, there are many ways that individual members can initiate resolutions: through chapter and district officers, Association officers and board members, and by petitions signed by General Council delegates.

There is a tendency to hold up submission of resolutions on legislative matters until the General Council immediately preceding a legislative session. Actually it would be better to submit these matters now, while the experience of the past legislative session is fresh in mind, and so a year and a half instead of a few months can go into preparing and "selling" the legislation for the next session.

Now—and before the July 31 deadline—is the time for OSEA members to make their ideas heard.

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