

Here is a Listing of 13 Bills Introduced at OSEA's Request

Editor's Note: Following is a list of bills introduced in the 1973 legislature at the request of OSEA. Blanks indicate either the bill number was not available or the bill was not printed as this issue of The OSEA News went to press. Printed bills can be expected in about 10 days. A further listing will be made in OSEA's Legislative News Bulletins when the bills are printed.

Please note this list does not include salary and fringe benefit bills to be introduced and supported jointly by OSEA and the Executive Department as result of the collective bargaining contract detailed on pages 1-6-7-8-9.

House Joint Resolution _____ (Reps. Fadely and Gwinn). Would require the Personnel Division to review job classifications, tests and qualification requirements and revise or remove provisions which would discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, cultural background, or sex. It also would require a quarterly report to the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House.

House Bill 2551 (Reps. Dereli, R. Stults, and others). Clarifies power of the Public Employee Relations Board to reverse agency disciplinary actions when in the board's judgment the action was not in good faith for cause.

House Bill 2552 (Rep. Dereli, Sen. Carson, and others). Would place Corrections Division employees whose duties include custody of criminals in police classification for retirement purposes.

Senate Bill 301 (Sens. Hoyt, Howard). Adds "low option" combined basic and major-medical plan to the plans to be offered by the State Employees' Benefit Board with employer contribution. Allows retired employees to continue plans without a state contribution. Gives SEBB authority to provide Medicare supplement plan to retirees.

Senate Bill _____ (Sen. Burbidge, Rep. Rieke). Would permit payroll deduction for automobile insurance premiums on plans endorsed by a state agency or employee organization and having 1,000 subscribers.

Senate Bill _____ (Sens. Heard, Wingard). Clarifies the right of academic employees to a hearing under the Administrative Procedures Act.

House Bill _____ (Reps. Skelton, Ingalls). Gives academic employees access to personnel records when appealing denial of right, privilege, or property interest.

House Bill _____ (House Labor and Industrial Relations Committee). Repeals the general prohibition against public employe strikes, but prohibits strikes where PERB impasse procedures have not been exhausted or where a strike would affect public health and safety. Provides binding arbitration in health and safety cases.

Senate Bill _____ (Sen. Roberts, Rep. Hansell, and others). Omnibus PERS improvement bill developed by the Public Employees' Retirement Conference.

Senate Bill 297 (Committee on State and Federal Affairs). Public Employees' Retirement Conference bill to allow legislators denied PERS membership by erroneous legal opinion to make back contributions and receive service credit.

House Joint Resolution _____ (Reps. Roberts and Paulus). Would amend Oregon's constitution, upon favorable vote by the people, to allow state employees to serve in the Legislative Assembly.

House Bill _____ (Reps. Densmore and Martin). Would re-define "employer" in state service for collective bargaining purposes.

House Bill _____ (House Labor and Industrial Relations Committee). Exempts PERS benefits from deduction from unemployment insurance benefits.

Subjects on which OSEA intended to submit bills but instead will support other bills on the same subjects: right of public employees to return to their job after campaigning for or serving in office; state tax credit for contributions to candidate support organizations; creation of an office of ombudsman; collective bargaining law improvements; service fee for representation of non-members of labor organizations in collective bargaining.

Task Force Says Pen Officers Face Pay, Training Problems

Some serious problems have been found to exist at Oregon's Penitentiary and correctional institution by a special legislative task force.

It was appointed last summer by the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House in response to a resolution drafted by OSEA and adopted by Corrections Division employees. It asked for an investigation of employe complaints that were made following the death of a correctional officer at the penitentiary from stab wounds.

The task force, which recently completed its report, reached the following conclusions from its inquiry:

- Recruitment and retention of staff falls short of what is desirable in public service, or, for that matter, in any important undertaking. It is apparent that employe turnover is high. Entrance level salaries are unattractive and suffer by comparison with the pay of state, city and county law enforcement officers.

- Lack of adequate professional personnel staff

Dismissal of DEQ Chemist Upheld

An OSEA appeal of a dismissal action taken by the Department of Environmental Quality was turned down by the Public Employee Relations Board recently.

A chemist was dismissed by the agency for insubordination after he refused to go on an out-of-town trip of several days duration to collect fallout samples at stations located throughout the state.

He asked OSEA attorney John S. Irvin to appeal the action.

The employe contended the work was outside of his classification and that it was assigned to him for the purpose of preparing his position for reclassification downward.

The board, however, viewed the case as a deliberate refusal to comply with a valid order and upheld the dismissal.

at the penitentiary appeared to be a serious deficiency.

- Changes in emphasis in correction philosophy—preparing inmates to return to society rather than just providing protective custody—involves a transition in thinking with which some correctional staff members do not completely agree or have been able to accept.

- Employe training programs appeared to be exceedingly deficient. With the high turnover rate it would be difficult to have teamwork among staff, at best, but without adequate training it would appear to be inviting inevitable disaster.

- Correctional officers pointed out that the new, more permissive custodial practices tended to make their work more hazardous and emotionally demanding.

"It may be that while Oregon has given strong emphasis to the needs of the individual inmate, it has neglected consideration for educational, emotional and self-fulfilling needs of the custodial staff in close daily contact with the inmates. It appears to the task force that this is the case," the report notes.

It urges the 1973 legislature "to follow up the creative and innovative approach to corrections adopted during the past six years by support of salary, staffing and training request for personnel so that Oregon may avoid the failures so painfully apparent in some jurisdictions."

The task force made the following recommendations:

- (1) Penitentiary budget funds should be earmarked for an adequate personnel program within the institution. Staff members should have the highest degree of professional competency.

- (2) Salary levels for correctional officers at both institution and for teachers at the correctional institution should be upgraded. There should be a reasonable correlation between salaries for correctional officers and law enforcement salaries paid by state, county and city jurisdictions.

- (3) Corrections personnel should be engaged in a continuing educational program to improve skills and broaden their knowledge in the correctional field.

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