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# the OSEA news

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## Ways and Means Hear Pay Package Bills

All of the bills necessary to implement the state employe pay and fringe benefits package negotiated by OSEA and the Executive Department have been heard by the legislature's Joint Ways and Means Committee or its Salary Subcommittee.

Even more important, the bills appear to be surviving an earlier attack from legislators who said approval of the entire package would amount to a "rubber stamp" by the legislative branch of contracts negotiated by the executive branch.

Following is a status report of the bills as this issue of The OSEA News went to press:

**SB 618:** Would have increased the mileage allowance for private autos used on state business from 9-cents to 11-cents. The Ways and Means Committee, by a 9 to 4 vote, reduced the allowance to 10-cents and gave the bill a "do pass" recommendation. OSEA will continue its efforts to amend the negotiated amount back into the bill.

**SB 619:** Would increase the state's contribution to employe health insurance from $10 to $15 a month. Ways and Means voted the bill out with a "do pass" recommendation.

**SB 620:** Would increase the vacation allowance for state employes one day a year, increase the maximum vacation leave accrual from 200 to 250 hours and permit vacations to be taken after six months fo service. The Salary Subcommittee voted the bill out to the full Ways and Means Committee with a "do pass" recommendation.

**SB 621:** Would permit state employes to observe Saturday holidays on the preceding Friday. The Salary Subcommittee gave the bill a "do pass" recommendation and voted it out to the full committee.

**SB 622:** Would permit state employes upon retirement to be paid for accrued sick leave in the form of an increased retirement benefit. The bill has been held over by the Salary Subcommittee for further study. A "do pass" recommendation is expected.

In addition to those five bills, the Salary Subcommittee has heard presentations on both classified and academic pay raises for the next biennium. No action has yet been taken on salaries, however.

Some items in the package do not require legislative approval. They include an increase in the state's per diem allowance and a new salary administration program, which ends the present 75 per cent limitation on merit pay raises. Those items will be put into effect July 1, the effective date of the contract.

## Bargaining Bill Struggles Through House

A bill that greatly strengthens Oregon's collective bargaining law for public employes was approved by the House of Representatives recently, but not without a struggle.

Supporters of the bill—HB 2263—had to overcome several maneuvers by its opponents which, had they been successful, would have seriously weakened and may have even killed the measure.

The first attempt to weaken the bill came on the floor of the House after it was voted out of the Labor and Industrial Relations Committee with a "do pass" recommendation.

Rep. Lewis Hampton (R-Beaverton) was critical of the bill because it did not provide penalties for strikes and because of its compulsory arbitration provisions. It was also attacked by Rep. Gary Wilhelms (R-Klamath Falls) because it permitted supervisors the option of joining other employes in the same bargaining unit.

Opponents made an attempt to refer the bill to the Local Government and Urban Affairs Committee, a "new committee." Rep. Albert Densmore (D-Medford), chairman of that committee, said voting the bill to his committee "might well be a vote to kill it." As reasons he cited committee workload, the lateness of the session and the possibility of "adjournment fever."

The bill's opponents lost that maneuver when they were able to muster only 27 votes. After further debate, they moved to refer the bill back to the committee that had voted it out, the Labor and Industrial Relations Committee. The motion squeeked by on a 30-28 vote.

Back in committee the bill was amended to include a specified penalty for prohibited stikes, which sponsors of the original bill felt was unnecessary because failure to obey a court injunction is an offense already covered by law. Another amendment was put in the bill prohibiting supervisors from joining with other employes in the same bargaining unit, but permitting them to form their own bargaining unit.

Before the amended version of HB 2263 was voted out of the committee, however, opponents brought a substitute bill in the form of a "minority report" to the floor of the House for a vote.

The minority report weakened the original bill considerably. It was described by Rep. Larry Perry (D-Eugene), who headed a subcommittee that spent two months putting HB 2263 together, as "not a true collective bargaining bill at all." The minority report lost when 12 Republicans joined with 26 Democrats to defeat the measure. The next day HB 2263 passed the House by a vote of 34 to 20.

HB 2263 is a result of a year of work by Gov. Tom McCall's Task Force on Collective Bargaining in the Public Service and months of hearings by the House Labor and Industrial Relations Committee headed by Rep. Glen Whallon (D-Milwaukie).

It places all public employes, including teachers, under the same collective bargaining law. It also permits negotiation of "fair share" agreements to pay for collective bargaining representation services, and provides for payroll deduction of the required "in-lieu-of-dues" fee.

The bill defines legal and illegal strikes, and provides binding arbitration in those cases where the public health, safety, or welfare is involved.

Following approval by the House, the bill was sent to the Senate where it was assigned to the Labor Committee. Sen. Dick Groener (D-Milwaukie) heads that committee.

## Affect of Tax Plan Defeat Unknown

It is not known at this time what affect, if any, defeat of Gov. Tom McCall's tax reform plan will have on the state's general fund.

That's important to state employes because 42 per cent of the money needed to implement the pay and fringe benefits package negotiated between OSEA and the Executive Department for the coming biennium would come from the general fund. The remainder would come from dedicated funds.

Since defeat of McCall's tax plan, the legislature has been looking at various alternative methods of increasing basic school support, thereby providing property tax relief. Those methods range from using additional money from the general fund to increasing corporation taxes.

OSEA's Board of Directors took a strong stand in support of the McCall tax plan. Following its defeat at the polls, the governor sent this letter to Executive Secretary Thomas C. Enright:

"I regret not having the opportunity to thank OSEA and you before now for your campaign efforts. The tax election news arrived last night, and it was not favorable to our side.

I'm still going to plug away for as much tax relief as it's possible to get. I've advised legislative leaders that I'll help any way I can to develop a workable alternative. But I've said that whatever alternative plan is developed still must abide by certain criteria I've announced:

The tax structure should be based on ability to pay, substantial property tax relief should be provided for renters and homeowners, the schools should receive a great deal more financial help from the state, and the tax burden should not be shifted from business to individuals.

I have no way of predicting how it will all turn out. Defeat was saddening, but not the end of the line. Someday voters may look back and wish my program had been adopted, but I guess it was just too soon. So, for now, we'll have to try something else. Again, thanks for your assistance."

*He Counted Out the Money*

**Standing in the lobby of Salem's Pentacle Theater during intermission, District Nine Director Walter Schmidt counted out $155 that was earned for Citizen Action by State Employes—OSEA's political action arm—by one night's performance of the play, "The Andersonville Trial." He gave the money to Howard Walp, who is chairman of the CASE Administrative Committee. Myrtle Jarvis, left, a member of the committee, and Jeanette Koehler, assistant director of District Nine, helped Schmidt organize the fund raising event.**