



The school tax equalization problem has again been injected into the legislature. This time it has taken the form of a proposal for state aid in the form of a special tax levy large enough to raise \$20 for every child on the school census. Under the terms of the bill which has been drafted with the aid of the state department of education, the revenue derived from this proposed tax levy would be apportioned among the counties on the basis of total days attendance in the elementary and high schools. The counties, in turn, would apportion the money out to the districts on the basis of teaching units and days attendance in each district.

According to Rex Putnam, state superintendent of public instruction, the measure does not involve a proposal to raise additional revenues for school purposes but only to equalize the revenues among the school districts through state aid which would be expected to supplant, a part at least, of local levies.

Another school bill introduced into the legislative hopper this week by Representative Larkin of Yamhill county, would require that teachers be paid on a 12-month basis. That is a teacher whose pay was \$900 for a nine month term of school would get 12 pay checks of \$75 each instead of nine checks of \$100 each. Larkin frankly admits that one purpose of his proposal is to emphasize the inadequate pay received by Oregon teachers.

Legislators from the sparsely settled wide open spaces of central Oregon are giving a lot of attention to the problem of a more adequate apportionment of the counties' share of state highway funds. The present formula which bases this apportionment on the motor vehicle registration in each county, these legislators contend, is not fair to the more sparsely settled counties which have only a few cars but more miles of county roads to maintain than do the more heavily populated counties. A bill introduced early in the session by Representatives French and Miller and Senator Steiwer changing the basis of this apportionment to that of assessed valuation has met with a lot of opposition from those 17 counties which would suffer loss of revenues under the proposed change. These same legislators, together with other eastern and central Oregon members of the House and senate, are now at work on several other plans under which the apportionment would be based on a combination of factors including the automobile registration, assessed valuation, and mileage of county roads, in an effort to devise a formula that would give a more equitable distribution of this money without doing too much violence to any of the counties now enjoying the more generous subsidies from this source.

There appears to be a pretty well defined sentiment in both branches of the legislature in favor of giving Klamath county a senator of its own. At this time Klamath which ranks as the fifth largest county in the state, is tied with Crook, Deschutes, Jefferson and Lake counties in a joint senatorial district. If Klamath is given its own senator then it will be divorced from the other four counties which will still constitute a joint district. In order to give Klamath a senator, of course, some other senatorial district will have to be sacrificed. And there is where the rub comes in. Two proposals are receiving serious consideration in this connection. One of these involves the consolidation of Josephine and Douglas counties in a joint district with a single senator, thus releasing a senator for Klamath county. The other proposal—and apparently the more popular of the two—involves the abolishment of the present 19th senatorial district comprising Morrow, Umatilla and Union counties. Umatilla county, with a population much smaller than that of Klamath, already has a senator of its own and Union is tied with Walla-walla in a joint district, the combined population of which is also much smaller than that of Klamath. Should this program go through it is probable that Morrow county would be thrown into the 18th district which now consists of Gilliam, Sherman and Wheeler counties.

If at first you don't get what you want just keep on trying. That appears to be the motto of Oregon's lawmakers with respect to their long sought pay increase. Nothing daunted by the fact that the voters have turned down the proposal nine times, the members of the current session have decided to put the issue on the ballot again. Debate on the resolution in both the house and senate indicated that the small margin

to which the opposition was reduced in the last election has given the legislators cause for hope that the next—and tenth—time will find the voter resistance entirely overcome. Only two senators—Ellis of Umatilla and Wallace of Multnomah, and three representatives—Gibson of Lane, Kimberling of Grant and Morse of Crook—voted against the resolution on its final passage this week.

While the ways and means committee has been digging away very diligently at the task of passing on millions of dollars in budget requests it has not yet found an opportunity to get down to brass tacks on the question of shorter hours for employees in some of the state institutions. In the state hospitals for insane, the institution for feeble minded and the two hospitals for tuberculosis patients, attendants and nurses are required to work 12-hour shifts six days a week. Organized labor has been protesting this treatment of state employees for several years. State officials are agreed that these hours are too long under present conditions with employment in most industries stabilized at eight hours or less. The board of control has recommended to the legislature a shortening of the work-week to a maximum of 60 hours—five days of 12 hours each. But to provide this relief will require an additional \$100,000 not provided in the governor's budget. Until the ways and means committee has completed its work of providing for established state activities and has a complete picture of the state's financial situation before it, appropriations are being tentatively approved on the basis of the old schedule. If the final picture reveals a margin of funds available to finance the shortened work week, this relief will probably be granted. If not institution employees will probably have to content themselves with the longer hours although in that event institution superintendents are fearful of wholesale registrations what with employment in private industry now on the upgrade.

The practice of closing the House bill room as soon as the sessions recesses for the week-end aroused a lot of criticism. The first week the House bill room was closed all day Friday and Saturday although the employees continued to draw their \$5 per diem for those two days. The last two weeks the bill room force knocked off work on Friday afternoons. This practice has seriously handicapped those legislators who stay over in Salem to do a little extra

work, inasmuch as they have been unable to secure copies of new House bills. Mailing of House bills and calendars introduced on the day adjournment was taken has also been delayed until the following Monday. With 20 employees on the House bill room pay roll—just four times as many, incidentally as the senate hires—it is felt that no great hardship would be worked on the employees if a few of them stayed on the job to accommodate the legislators if not those taxpayers who might be interested in legislative matters, especially since they are being paid for a seven-day week anyway.

If there is to be any major PUD legislation at this session it is not yet in evidence. Governor Sprague this week transmitted to the lawmakers several suggestions for minor amendments to the 1939 PUD act but inasmuch as those were agreed to at a conference attended by representatives of the Bonneville administration and the Oregon Hydro-electric commission and are understood to be acceptable to the private power utilities, no difficulty is anticipated in their adoption by the lawmakers.

#### Four Models Of Buicks With Shorter Wheelbase On Display

Addition of four new models to the 1941 Buick Series 40 Special line of cars, having new torpedo styled bodies, three inches shorter wheelbase and a six inch reduction of overall length has been announced by the Buick division of General Motors Corporation.

The executive said that the cars have been entered in volume production and deliveries now are being made to dealers with public showing of the new models scheduled this week in showrooms throughout the country.

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