

Duncan to take school money problems to state legislature

State School Supt. Verne A. Duncan this week told the State Board of Education he will submit a school finance plan to the 1979 Legislature regardless of the outcome of the property limitation measures on the Nov. 7 ballot.

"The plan must respond to the public demand for an equitable finance system while ensuring that schools and community colleges maintain quality education programs," Duncan said.

"The message from the public is clear," Duncan added. "Major changes in school finance are needed. Even if both measures fail, we still must respond to the public's concern about expenditure limitation and property tax relief."

Duncan said he has been in close contact with Wilson Riles, California state school superintendent, and other educators in that state to see if any elements of California's response to Proposition 13 could be used in Oregon.

Vets may update discharges

Veterans desiring to upgrade less than honorable military discharges can now find an index of cases that have been reviewed by the

Defense Department that may be similar to their own at the Portland Veterans Administration Regional Office.

As an additional service to discharged service persons, the VA has available in 20 cities around the country, including Portland, an index file with brief descriptions of

discharge reviews by the Defense Department.

"The index file up to now has been available only at the Pentagon," explained Mrs. Donna M. Arndt, director of the Portland VA office.

After matching cases in the index with their own military situations, interested veterans

or their representatives should then request copies of case documents (with individual identities deleted) from the Department of Defense.

"The material may be useful in preparing a veteran's own request for a review of his or her discharge," Mrs. Arndt said.

Ullman urges Carter Ok of meat import legislation

Oregon Congressman Al Ullman last week urged President Carter to sign promptly new meat import legislation that was approved in the closing days of the 95th Congress. Carter reportedly is considering vetoing the bill.

Ullman, who is in the midst of a week-long tour of his 2nd Congressional District, said the bill is especially important in Oregon and other meat producing states.

The Meat Import Act is aimed at stabilizing meat prices by reversing a situation in which additional imports are allowed at times when domestic production is high and meat prices are declining.

In a letter to Carter, Ullman explained that the new legislation "introduces a counter-cyclical factor into the formula (under which the level of imports is determined).

"Under this formula, additional imports would be allowed when domestic supplies are low and the market price consequently high. This, of course, will help stabilize meat prices to the advantage of consumers and producers alike."

Carter Administration officials have expressed concern about the bill because it restricts presidential authority to suspend or increase meat import quotas.

Ullman noted that the new formula makes the exercise of executive discretion unnecessary except in unusual circumstances, and that the bill extends discretionary authority in these cases.

Ullman initiated action on the meat bill earlier this year, after the President raised meat import quota levels in response to increases in the price of beef.

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Emergency med tech class set at BMCC

Emergency medical training will be offered by Blue Mountain Community College at the Hermiston Safety Center beginning Oct. 30.

The class is designed to knowledge of personnel who are involved with initial emergency medical care. The course is open to plant safety and industrial personnel, persons responsible for providing first aid treatment, including hospital employees, public employees as well as ambulance drivers, policemen and firemen.

Students may register and pay the \$27 fee at the first class meeting. Classes will meet Mondays and Thursdays from 7-10 p.m.

Tax relief checks are mailed out

Property tax relief checks totaling more than \$92 million were mailed today under the Homeowner and Renter Refund Program (HARRP), announced John Lodbell, director of the Oregon Department of Revenue. The 1977 Legislature changed the annual mailing date of checks to October, so that residents would have the money available to pay property taxes, which are due in November.

Checks totaling \$92,027,760 were sent to 448,502 homeowners, renters and mobile home residents. The average refund amount was \$205. The legislature appropriates money from the state General Fund for the property tax relief program. Checks this year reflect changes made by the Legislature, which increased the maximum refund amount for homeowners to \$655 and for renters to \$328. The Legislature also increased the eligibility limit on household income to \$16,000.

Elderly Rental Assistance payments were mailed along with the HARRP checks. Checks totaling \$2,333,165 went to 3,862 Oregonians, age 58 and over who have annual incomes under \$5,000 and pay 40 percent or more of their income for rent, fuel and utilities. The average amount of refund for Elderly Rental Assistance was \$604.

Persons who qualified but did not file this year for either program may still file. The claim form, 70-R, is available from any Oregon Department of Revenue office.

A separate mailing later in October will send \$50 Fuel and Utility Relief checks to eligible senior citizens.