

# Jernstedt supports laws to keep legislators 'civilians'

By Senator

Ken Jernstedt

Over the years Oregon has taken pride in having a "citizens legislature." Primarily this means that we do not have year-round, annual

sessions and that Oregon ranks 33rd among the states in regard to the compensation paid to legislators.

These factors work against our having a "professional" legislature, in the sense that members are paid enough so that they do not have to have any other source of income to

support themselves and their families.

And since our legislators are engaged in business and other activities, they bring expertise from these fields in dealing with problems confronting the state and therefore the legislature.

In the last few sessions we

have had increasing numbers of citizens involved in serving on governmental commissions and committees, and in coming to Salem to testify on proposed legislation.

There is another sense in which I believe that we legislators should be treated equally with other citizens—

and that is in regard to our present immunity from arrest under certain circumstances.

I have introduced a bill which would refer to a vote of the people that section of the Oregon Constitution which gives legislators immunity from arrest during a session or while traveling to or from

the legislature.

In researching the matter, I found that most states have similar provisions, most of which were enacted before the turn of the century. There might have been a good reason back in the days of the wild west. It seems that state legislators traveling to and

from the capitols from far away places were sometimes arrested to prevent them from attending and voting.

Just as an aside, it might be argued that the public would be better served if all legislators were locked up on their way to Salem!

Under the repeal I have

proposed, state legislators would be required to stand up and face the music just as any other citizen would be required to do if caught breaking the law.

A provision of the Constitution which may have made some sense a hundred years ago no longer does.

## Fish & Wildlife, gun control on

### Bellamy's mind

By Rep. Bill Bellamy

Government spending and tax plan proposals have occupied the minds of many Oregonians this session. However, within the last week two bills have emerged in the Oregon Legislature that have drawn even greater numbers of constituent responses.

The Fish and Wildlife Commission structure change under HB 2416 has become one of the issues under increasing attack. Let me assure the people of District 55 that HB 2416 has been amended to take care of the last three objections of the four listed.

The major objections which have been voiced are: (1) The membership of the Commission would be changed so that instead of representing equal populations (Congressional districts), commissioners would be representing geographic areas (Fish and Wildlife Regions). (2) Rather than phasing in this change, the bill requires the new commissioners to be appointed on the effective date of the act. This provision would actually purge certain commissioners caught in the crossfire of special interest groups. (3) Under the bill, at least two members of the Commission would be directly involved in agricultural production. (4) Wildlife would be required to be managed in a manner "that is compatible with the primary objectives of the landowner."

I believe the changing of the districts under the first objection would definitely be in the best interest of Southern and Eastern Oregon. At the present time, the Portland area has 4 of 7 members on the committee. I am concerned that the land area needs to be represented, and not just the population centers.

The second bill, drawing a crowd of 1300 people at the public hearing, is HB 2433. The subject matter of the bill is "gun control" and the opposition seemed to be overwhelming as one recommendation handed down is to postpone action on the bill indefinitely. Almost 350 persons signed up to testify against the bill Wednesday night, while only three people signified that they wanted to testify for passage of the legislation.

What HB 2423 would do is to prohibit the carrying of a handgun in a car without a concealed weapons permit. It would also require that a person applying for a concealed handgun permit must be at least 21 years of age, be a resident of a county and have no felony record.

I believe that the bill will die or be tabled in committee. I appreciate the response from the people of District 55. I will not support the legislation and will continue to oppose any form of gun control and registration.

Anyone interested in contacting my office on these two bills or others can write: Rep. Billy Bellamy-H371 State Capitol Building, Salem, Oregon 97310. Or call toll free 1-800-452-7813 or direct 378-8853.

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