

3 Solons Open Attack On Ways, Means Power

SALEM (UPI)—A two-pronged attack on the powers of the Joint Ways and Means Committee began in the Oregon Legislature Friday.

Rep. Katherine Musa, D-The Dalles, introduced a bill in the House which would repeal the law authorizing the joint committee. The bill was cosponsored by her husband, Sen. Ben Musa, D-The Dalles.

And Sen. Thomas Mahoney, D-Portland, announced he would try Monday to put a provision specifically forbidding joint committees in the Senate version of a revised Oregon Constitution.

Mahoney said he would make the effort at a meeting of the Senate Constitutional Revision Committee, of which Musa also is a member.

The Musa bill would have no effect on action taken by Ways and Means Committee in this session.

"I don't feel I want to cause that much havoc," said Mrs. Musa.

All three legislators said they believe the joint committee is unconstitutional under the article which says each House shall conduct its own business and make its own rules.

The joint committee has been held to legal by several attorneys general, dating back to the 1920s.

Opinion was still under study and would be issued next week.

Under present law, the President of the Senate and the House Speaker each appoint seven Ways and Means Committee members. The 14 lawmakers vote jointly and the chairman of the House and Senate committees take turns presiding.

Musa said he had no objection to the committee meeting together to hear testimony, but he called its powers an "affront" to the independence of the two chambers of the legislature.

He cited the case of the omnibus pay raise bill passed by the Ways and Means Committee and the House earlier this session. The Senate wanted it broken into several bills and sent it back to Ways and Means for that purpose.

However, the senate could not issue instructions to the House members and the committee sent it right back.

"They made us eat it," said Musa.

Musa and other legislators also complained that the committee was using its power to make policy, rather than limiting its activity to fiscal matters.

Members of the committee were on an inspection trip in eastern Oregon this weekend.

Sen. Al Fiegel, D-Roseburg, asked Atty. Gen. Robert Y. Thornton last month for an opinion on whether the committee is constitutional and whether either the House or Senate could bind members of the other by referring a bill to it with specific instructions.

Thornton said Friday that

Fishermen Fight Bill On Merger

SALEM (UPI)—Sports and commercial fisherman interests clashed again Friday at a work session on an administration-backed bill that would merge the fish and game commissions.

After two hours of discussion, the House Fish and Game Committee decided it might have better luck next week.

The dispute centered around how many assistant directors the merged department should have.

Nobody objected that there should be a director.

But that's where the agreement ended.

Isaak Walton League spokesmen said there should be one assistant director, and that his duties should not be spelled out by law.

Commercial fishermen said they want an assistant director legally assigned to look after their interests.

Committee members wanted one assistant director for all fish, and another for all game functions. Then this proposal was split so one assistant director would handle sports fish and game, while the other would handle only commercial fishing.

Conflict Discussed

Game Commission Director Phil Schneider, who doesn't think much of the merger anyway, said the conflicts between sports and commercial fishing interests "will always be with us. Merger won't end that."

He insisted his department look no stand on the unsuccessful fishing on the Columbia. He said if members of his staff "acting as private citizens" favored the ban, that was their privilege.

Fish Commission Director Robert Schoening, whose organization fought the ban and favors the merger, said all fish-sports and commercial—should be under one entity "to protect the resource."

Ted Bugas, representing the Columbia River Salmon and Tuna Packers Association, said commercial interests would be swallowed up in any division that included both sports and commercial fish.

After two hours of conflict, Rep. Wally Priestley, D-Portland, asked for a vote.

House Group Approves Free Texts For High School Students

SALEM (UPI)—The House Education Committee approved a bill allowing school districts to provide free textbooks to high school students Friday in a split vote.

The final "do pass" recommendation came on a 7-2 vote after 55 minutes of debate.

The measure, introduced by Rep. Edward Whelan, D-Portland, was amended with his approval to make the free texts permissive, rather than mandatory.

Efforts by committee members to require schools to provide free books after two or three years were defeated in a session which included eight roll-call votes.

Rep. Carol Howe, R-Klamath Falls, predicted most districts would be providing the books within the time "whether we make it mandatory or not," and he objected to "shoving it down the throat" of local boards.

High school students now rent or purchase their books from the districts, although there are provisions for making books available to students who cannot afford to pay for them.

Whelan said the bill would be sent to the floor where Reps. Howe, Joe Rogers, R-Independence; Ben Fah Hand, D-Milwaukie; Betty Roberts, D-Portland; Joe Richards, R-Eugene; Fritzie Chautard, R-Portland, and James Bedingfield Jr., R-Coos Bay.

Whelan said the bill would add an emergency clause so school boards could include money in next year's budget for the free books also was approved, but later taken out.

Testimony indicated the free books would have an impact of about \$2 a year per student.

Other Bills Approved

The education committee approved four other bills, including one to allow districts to purchase land on installment contracts. The others would require bonds on lease-purchase agreements, allow districts to accept gifts and repeal the law detailing the description of an attendant supervisor.

Other highlights:

Flood Insurance — Sen. Vernon Cook, D-Gresham, proposed an interim committee on water problems which would include a study of the feasibility of flood insurance. Flood plain zoning also would be studied.

Tax Relief — Sen. Don Willner, D-Portland, introduced a bill to give more tax relief to senior citizens. Under present law they can exempt \$2,500 of gross income. He wants to amend the 1963 homestead tax

exemption and substitute \$3,000 net income for the present limit. Willner said not many people would be involved, "but for those who qualify, it could be a tremendous help."

Workmen's Compensation — The House Labor and Management Committee hoped to be able to complete work on the workmen's compensation revision bill next week, and send it to the House floor for action. Committee members hoped to reach an agreement Monday on how to handle bad risks.

Pope Shortens Consistories

VATICAN CITY (UPI)—Pope Paul VI, as part of a campaign to modernize lengthy Vatican ceremonies, has abbreviated the traditional series of consistories beginning Monday, Feb. 22, for the investment of 27 new cardinals.

Instead of four consistories stretching over four days, the pontiff has decided to hold only two—a private one on Monday and a public consistory on Thursday. This eliminates a semi-public and second "secret" consistory.

The 27 new cardinals, whose names were announced on Jan. 25, come from 20 nations including the United States and the Vatican.

The new cardinals include Archbishop Lawrence Joseph Shehan of Baltimore, Md. He becomes the sixth living U.S. cardinal.

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