

# AUSTIN

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# REPORT

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IT WAS tough and hard, but the House finally passed a revision of the open meetings law, modified to include some changes insisted on by the Municipal League. Speaker Daniel voted on some of the issues, and on the losing side of the vote which put on Rep. Hutchinson's amendment to say that if a citizen knowingly and falsely complains about a secret meeting of a public body, he can be fined or jailed just like the public official can be. Passage of Rep. Carl Parker's HB 3 on open meetings was followed by Rep. Head's HB 5, to put tax and appropriations conference committees under a statute prohibiting them from doing other than adjusting the differences between the two Houses. This got Daniel's reform program well on its way. HB 2, lobby registration, came out of a State Affairs subcommittee, and may be voted on this week. Another, HB 10, the newsmen's shield bill, came out of committee, 16-4, after Daniel himself testified for it.

CONSTITUTIONAL revision ran into a bit of a delay when the Senate refused to accept House amendments which would have permitted "veto" of the 37-member commission as a whole by 91 members of the Legislature. The 20-10 vote came on Sen. Creighton's motion, for which he argued that the veto of the people selected by the six top State officials was bad, and that the "McGovern Rule" provision that sex, race and geography should be proportional on the commission was unworkable. So SCR 1 was in conference over the weekend, after passing the House 144-1. The Senate has passed SB 1, Wolff, giving the Commission \$900,000 with which to operate up to its reporting deadline Nov. 1.

THE House voted approval of Rep. Truan's bill extending the life of the Gov.'s Human Relations Cmte to Aug. 31, after Truan assured the House that Gov. Briscoe wants the committee and favors a new permanent commission with stronger powers. The House tacked on an amendment allowing Briscoe to appoint all new members to the 50-member committee. Bills engrossed by the House included HB 82, Williams, establishing airport security forces; HB 92, Kubiak, delaying use of the quarter system in public schools until the '75-76 school year; and HB 120, Grant, allowing 18-year-olds to serve on juries...The Senate quickly confirmed Gov. Smith's UT regents, Allan Shivers, Ed Clark and James Bauerle by big votes, so the talk of a fight against them was just talk. The Senate seems to have agreed that the Federal revenue-sharing money will be wiped out by the new Federal welfare law's reduction of State aid. So it forgot about the idea of financing new-college buildings from revenue-sharing. SB 2,

Schwartz, to permit \$40,000,000 in tuition bonds for UofHouston's Clear Lake campus, and \$7,500,000 for A&M's Maritime Academy and Moody College of Marine Science, was engrossed, with six noes. Some of the nay-sayers had objected because they felt it would imbed in bond indentures the full-tuition charge being levied against part-time students. Senators are spending their time in committees, which are going full-blast...SJR 3, Gammage, limiting governors to two consecutive terms, got out of committee, but couldn't muster the votes to suspend and take it up.

HOUSE committees got rolling, taking up dozens of bills. UT Regent Frank Erwin told the Education Cmte bills by Rep. Kaster to lower tuition and fees for part-time students would leave colleges short of needed money to pay their building construction bonds. The Intercollegiate Student Assn said minimum tuition fees make it hard for working people and minority students to meet college costs...State Affairs took up proposals to give disabled veterans free license plates and to give retired servicemen bonus points on civil service exams...Intergovernmental Affairs looked at Rep. Cavness' HB 63, allowing cities and counties to issue tax-free revenue bonds to help industry finance construction of air pollution control equipment. Labor heard and approved HB 185, giving collective bargaining rights to firemen and policemen. Houston Mayor Louie Welch opposed the bill and another bill (sent to subcommittee) providing collective bargaining and compulsory arbitration for Houston firemen. Judiciary sent to subcommittee HJR 7, Rep. Miller, a constitutional amendment to give single adults homestead protection. House Administration held a "rap session" to hear complaints and suggestions, so Rep. Poerner recommended a new State office building for legislators' offices, and Rep. Sanchez suggested adding a barber to the House staff, saying members find it hard to work in time for haircuts.

ENVIRONMENTAL Affairs approved HCR 1, Nichols, asking Atty Gen. Hill to sue to recover federal funds for water pollution control impounded by Pres. Nixon. The Water Quality Board reported that Texas' share of the \$6 billion impounded by the President would be \$138.5 million--but that the State would only get \$55 million with the impoundment. The committee also took up legislation by Nichols and Denton requiring State agencies dealing with pollution to make monthly reports on pollution complaints and on action taken. Among new bills: HBs 211 and 212, Lewis, requiring the Board of Control to buy recycled paper where possible and collection of State wastepaper for recycling; HB 213, Menefee, allowing counties to set pollution control standards tougher than the State's; HB 219, Clayton, starting the State fiscal year on July 1 beginning 7-1-75; HB 222, Clark, State-supported drivers' education; HB 225, McAlister, vocational education centers in Lubbock, Coleman, Kerr and Haskell counties; HB 235, Denson, increasing workmen's compensation benefits; HB 242, Allred, group auto insurance; HB 244, Thompson, semi-monthly State pay checks; HB 263, Von Dohlen, requiring proof of liability insurance to get license plates; HB 279, Sanchez, exempting Texas from Daylight Savings Time; HB 302, Hendricks, renaming the Highway Patrol the "Texas State Troopers"; HB 317, Felix McDonald, allowing paternity suits and requiring child support of

illegitimate children. Reps. Waters, Washington and Baker's HB 281 is sure to draw fire--it allows persons over 18 to possess marijuana for private use, prohibiting use in public, making it a felony (up to three years) to sell or give marijuana to a minor and making it a misdemeanor for a minor to possess marijuana.

SENATE bills include: SB 11, Wolff, moving primaries back to the old dates, the 4th Saturdays of July and August; SB 16, Kothmann, lobby control; SB 17, Harris, legalizing wiretapping (and of course the Republican senator is getting kidded about Watergate); SB 27, Ogg, bilingual education; SB 34, Herring, new Penal Code; SB 36, Mauzy, comparative negligence in damage suits; SB 33, Moore, firemen's collective bargaining, put in a State Affairs Subcmte after hearing; SCR 20, Hightower, to set up a committee to study public employe-employer relations; SB 120, Hightower-HB 311, Finney, oil and gas unitization; SB 124, Aikin, putting Federal revenue-sharing money in a special account; SB 134, Mengden, to make student service fees at colleges voluntary so students who don't like radical speakers won't have to pay for their appearances; SB 70, Wallace, allowing citizens to file environmental suits, which the court could remit to the administrative agency for action; SB 110, Herring, to set up State control of floodplains so they can qualify for flood insurance; SB 137, Wolff, to let counties outlaw fireworks and SB 197, to outlaw the sale of fireworks in Texas; SJR 1, Schwartz, to say no water district can be exempt from the general law; SB 130, Moore, to let railroads have special law officers; SBs 45-48, Mauzy, the Teachers Assn bills for duty-free lunch hours, secretaries, contracts and consultation with boards; SB 53, Mauzy, the family law code; and piles of insurance bills, marijuana bills and death penalty bills.

STATE employes don't think their salaries compare favorably with those of persons in similar position in private industry, according to a study by Arthur Young & Co. released by the Texas Public Employees Assn. TPEA Pres. Joe Milner said 78% of the employes responding to an attitude survey took that view, but most felt the fringe benefits did compare favorably...Those increased costs expected to result from '72 amendments to the Social Security Act won't show up in the Welfare Dept's budget until the second year of the coming biennium, department officials report, so the amount of State money needed for fiscal '74 will stay around the \$374 million mark. About \$30 million more will be added to the \$425 million the next year. Savings to the State by the Federal takeover of the three adult assistance categories, coupled with fact that the amendments take effect 1-1-74 when fiscal '74 is four months old, will offset increases to Texas in providing more medical assistance--hopefully. The Welfare Board approved a department request to seek legislation to allow court action by the department for child support payments for AFDC children.

AFTER 44 years with the Highway Dept, J.C. Dingwall retired, and B.L. DeBerry took over as State Highway Engineer. DeBerry has 35 years with the department...The "wets" continued to gain in '72, the Alcoholic Bev-

erage Cmn reports, with only 88 counties still totally dry...Agriculture Cmr White told farm chemical retailers and applicators he welcomes legislation to make the pesticide industry more professional...The Board of Control told the Finance Cmte it needs more elevators for the Finance Bldg, and said it would like to have the old Highway, Health and Education Agency buildings when new buildings are built. Using those buildings would save \$3 million a year in rents in Austin, the BOC says. The proposed Tex-AN phone network to tie in State agencies in a super-WATS line got Finance Cmte criticism, since the phone company hasn't told the BOC how many agencies will be served; just that it will cost \$170,000 to install and \$350,000 a month to keep it going.

TO & FRO: Mark White was sworn in as Secy of State, and drew quite a crowd...Atty Gen. Hill took out newspaper ads in Houston asking citizens to offer evidence in an air pollution suit against U.S. Plywood-Champion Papers...Half of the juveniles released from the Texas Youth Council in December under a court order are back as repeat offenders, Dr. James Turman reports...Former Harris County Cmr V.V. Ramsey was convicted of fraud and bribery in the purchase of voting machines...Hank Grover says he'll run for governor in '74 and win...The UT Regents approved transferring four blocks of land in Austin to the Building Cmn for parking...Former LBJ press aide Bill Moyers was hospitalized in Washington with "chest pains." He's 38...Congresswoman Barbara Jordan has been added to the speakers at the National Women's Political Caucus in Houston...A Texas A&M study shows Texas farmers are getting deeper in debt every year...The Municipal League has set up a special advisory council to assist cities in responding to utility rate-change requests...Mental Health Cmr David Wade reports one of every eight Texans is affected by mental illness or retardation, adding that if an Alabama Federal court decision on hospital staffing is applied to Texas, it would cost the State almost \$500 million more annually...Defense Secy Melvin Laird ordered the Navy to concentrate on Texas sites for Project Sanguine, a low-frequency communications monitoring network. Sen. Tower says the Navy is concentrating on sites in Mason, Llano and Burnet counties...Rep. Short was elected chairman of the West Texas legislative delegation...Gov. Briscoe's administrative assistant, Roy Coffee, went to an Austin hospital for tests after reporting chest pains...The Health Dept held a week-long workshop on nuclear power plants...Farm Bureau members met and announced they will oppose any land-use legislation or increase in ad valorem taxes to support public schools...Briscoe ousted itinerary secretary Janelle Sherry, receptionist Jo Hooser and Dept of Public Safety agent Hollis Erwin from the Gov.'s Office. They had been "front office" personnel under Smith...Reps Thompson and Sutton are asking that an acorn from the live oak shading the Johnson family cemetery be planted on the Capitol grounds in memory for Pres. Johnson...Lt Gov. Hobby told the Chamber of Commerce convention Texas will have a net loss of Federal funds, despite revenue-sharing...Republican National Cmte Chmn George Bush will be the May commencement speaker at UT-Austin...Want a bill's status? Dial 475-5700 in Austin.