

Letter to Editor

Alaska State Capital

Juneau

March 25, 1966

Dear Editor:

One of the most outstanding pieces of legislation to be considered by this legislature passed the House on Tuesday of this week; the revision of the State's education code. This measure is a substitute for the original bill which was introduced by the Rules Committee at the request of the Legislative Council. The substitute bill was drafted by the Health, Welfare and Education Committee after several weeks of joint meetings with the Senate committee at which they heard testimony from members of the Department of Education staff and other interested educators.

The House worked on amendments to the bill from early Tuesday morning until late in the afternoon. Few substantive changes were made to the bill however, and several controversial amendments were turned down. Among these was one which would have replaced the Commissioner of Education with a "Section 26 Board"—a board which would not come under the auspices of the State Administration. This amendment failed by a vote of 19-28.

Another of the defeated amendments would have eliminated one of the particularly noteworthy sections of the new code—that which permits particularly well qualified children to enter school at the discretion of the local school board even if they do not meet the age requirement.

One of the amendments which did receive House approval was that which extends the required number of school days in a term from 175 to 180. The bill was approved by a vote of 34-1.

HB 328, a measure which would increase legislator's pay from the present \$2,500 to \$6,000 annually, was reported out of the House Finance Committee this week, and will be on the calendar early next week. Four members of the committee gave no recommendation, two recommended that it be approved, and one suggested an amendment which would make the increase a gradual one by raising the pay to \$4,000 in 1967 and \$6,000 in 1968.

Another controversial piece of legislation was indefinitely postponed on a 15-22 vote this week. This was the proposed tax increase on oil and gas production from one to eight per cent. The bill, HB 416, had been stuck in Resources Committee, but after five requests by its sponsor, Rep. Norbert Skinner, to have it transferred from Resources to Finance, the House decided to take it up as a special order of business. There is another oil and gas tax increase under consideration now by the Finance Committee, and this will be taken up by the House before long.

Cordially yours,

Rep. Walter "Doc" LeFevre

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