

# Negligent Drivers Get Relief From State Legislature

AUSTIN (AP)—A bill that would allow negligent drivers to collect damages in court for accidents in which they were partly at fault was passed by the Texas Legislature Tuesday.

The House accepted minor Senate changes in the measure and sent it to Gov. Dolph Briscoe for signature or veto.

Former Gov. Preston Smith vetoed a similar bill two years ago, asserting it would raise auto liability insurance rates by allowing more accident victims to collect in court.

House members also debated, but then postponed until Thursday, a bill boosting the amount by which Texas motorists must stand good for injuries in acci-

dents they have caused. Some 80 per cent of Texas drivers carry liability insurance to satisfy the financial responsibility requirement.

The bill, by Rep. Dean Cobb, D-Dumas, would increase the limits of liability for injuries from \$10,000 per person or \$20,000 for medical expenses arising from any one accident to \$15,000 and \$30,000. Property damage liability would remain at \$5,000.

Also in the bill is a requirement that insurance companies sell \$250 deductible liability policies to customers who request them in writing.

Cobb said the increase in liability would increase premiums

an average of 7 per cent but the \$250 deductible would offset this and perhaps even bring a saving of 6 per cent.

Rep. Richard Reynolds, R-Richardson, said the liability increase "opens up, pure and simple, an opportunity to increase the fees for attorneys in casualty litigation."

The bill is backed by the State Bar of Texas.

Rep. Ben Bynum, D-Amarillo, said the \$250 deductible would "make it very difficult" for an accident victim to collect that \$250 from the driver who injured him.

Cobb went along with a motion to postpone further consideration

of the bill because "there appears to be a lack of understanding."

The so-called "comparative negligence" bill which was sent to Briscoe repeals a longstanding rule that a driver cannot collect for injuries resulting in part from his own negligence, no matter how slight it was.

Under the "comparative negligence" bill, a jury would decide the percentage of the accident to be blamed on each driver. The damages to be awarded the plaintiff would be reduced by his percentage of blame. If an injured driver's damages were set at \$10,000 and he was found 10 per cent at fault, he would receive only \$9,000.

## Tower Wants Dean To Talk At Hearings

WASHINGTON (AP)—Two Senate Republican leaders said Tuesday they hope President Nixon will reverse himself and let his lawyer John W. Dean III testify at the Senate's investigation of the Watergate incident.

Sens. John Tower of Texas and Norris Cotton of New Hampshire spoke out the same day the top Democrat and Republican on a congressional subcommittee asked Nixon to permit Dean to testify under strict ground rules at hearings on executive privilege.

Tower, who is chairman of the Senate GOP Policy Committee, told newsmen "It's in the best interest of the White House that the whole thing be bared and cleaned up."

Cotton, the chairman of the Senate Republican Conference, said that in nearly half a century of politics he has found it is poor tactics to prolong and drag out "some kind of mystery or scandal."

The faster it is gotten out of the way, Cotton said, the better off the country, the President, and the Republican Party will be.

Reps. William S. Moorhead, D-Pa., and John N. Erlenborn, R-Ill., wrote Nixon that at the hearings on executive privilege no questions would be put to Dean that would "relate to his role in the investigation of possible involvement of White House personnel in the Watergate incident."

Moorhead is chairman of the House government information subcommittee and Erlenborn is ranking Republican on the panel.

## Lacrosse Club Defeated, 6-5

The A&M Lacrosse Association lost a heartbreaking 6-5 match Sunday afternoon to the Houston Lacrosse Club.

With the score tied the Houston team banged home the winning goal with 50 seconds left. The lead had seasawed throughout the match with A&M taking a 2-0 lead at the end of the first period. Houston surged ahead with four goals to lead at half-time. A&M came alive in the final period to knot the score at 5-5 on a desperation shot by midfielder Mike Mohkern.

In the physical contest, A&M was penalized 27½ minutes, about twice as much as the Houston team. Other A&M scorers were Roger Livingston, Steve Hill, Ron Schlitz and Brent Hundley.

The benefit game for muscular dystrophy raised \$95, of which \$30 were donated by each team.

## Marriage Forum Meets Tonight

The Marriage Forum will present Karen Kareipke, a food and nutrition specialist, to speak on "Bargains and Food Buying," Wednesday night in the Memorial Student Center Ballroom.

Kareipke has a B.S. and M.S. in Human Nutrition and Food from Virginia Polytechnic Institute. She is a member of the Texas State Nutrition Council and serves as a specialist in foods and nutrition at Texas A&M, and has advised districts four, five, six and 10 since September 1971.

## Florence Henderson, for Easter Seals:



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