

State OKs Medicaid \$ for abortions

United Press International
AUSTIN — The state Board of Human Resources Tuesday authorized Medicaid payments for abortions on welfare recipients whose doctors will certify the operations "medically necessary."
The board voted 3-0 in an emergency action to okay government funds for abortions on welfare recipients retroactive to Feb. 19.
The move brings Texas into compliance with the decision of a federal district court in New York that last month ruled unconstitutional the strict limits Congress imposed on use of government funds for abortions.
Dr. Emmett Greif, the Texas welfare agency's deputy commissioner for professional medical policy, said the court ruling gives state officials

no choice but to approve payment for abortions on any welfare recipient whose doctor certifies the operation is necessary in his professional judgment.
The state agency will require documentation before paying, but the decision on whether an abortion is necessary because of a woman's physical, emotional, psychological or familial condition is strictly a matter for her and her doctor to determine, Greif said.
"We have no way of telling a physician how to practice medicine," Greif said. "We can only demand documentation that the law was complied with."
Greif said the new policy will not permit abortions for family planning or mere birth control. He predicted

the number of government-financed abortions will not exceed 1,000 a year.
"I don't see it going up to any great extent," Greif said, noting that the Texas Medicaid program paid for 30 therapeutic abortions during 1978 and 12 in 1979. "I don't anticipate anything like 3,000."
Prior to August 1977 when Congress adopted the Hyde Amendment, the Texas Department of Human Resources used Medicaid funds to pay for as many as 3,000 abortions annually.
Greif said the proportion of the 3,000 performed for medical reasons was relatively small.
The state board voted to direct the National Heritage Insurance Co., which currently administers Medicaid payments for Texas welfare recipients,

to notify doctors and hospitals of the new rules on abortions.
The three-man board decided against any effort to notify welfare recipients of the rule changes.
Commissioner Jerome Chapman estimated it would cost \$80,000 to mail notices to persons eligible for such Medicaid services.
"We feel the money would be better spent on persons who are in need of help," Chapman said.
"We feel the recipients are well aware of the issue through the newspapers, radio and television," Greif said.
Costs of abortions probably will average \$400, Greif said, but the total number will not be large enough to require an increase in the premiums the state pays for insurance coverage on welfare recipients.

Church sues school district

United Press International
AMARILLO — Forty-four pupils who belong to the Worldwide Church of God have filed a \$100,000 federal civil suit against the Amarillo Independent School District, alleging violations of their religious freedom.
The suit challenges the school district's policy, adopted in 1978 over the church's objections, of allowing

only two excused religious holidays per year.
The lawsuit, filed last Friday, alleges the district policy "arbitrarily" interferes with the students' right to exercise their religious beliefs.
The plaintiffs contend further that the policy violates the guarantees of religious freedom set forth in both the U.S. and Texas Constitutions.
Before 1978, the AISD's religious holiday policy was less restrictive. When the policy was changed, Church of God minister Jeffrey Booth asked the school board to reconsider.
"We don't want our children to be penalized for taking off from school for religious observance," he said.
Under current policy, students must make up work missed whether the absence was excused or unexcused. But they "will not be given credit for the work" if the absence was unexcused.
School superintendent Dr. B. J. Stamps says the policy was well considered, however, before action was taken, and he thinks the decision is a good one.

Amoco wins first round

United Press International
CALVESTON — Amoco Oil Co. has won the first round of its battle to exclude striking employees from a federal team investigating a Feb. 13 Texas City refinery accident and will try to extend its victory today.
U.S. District Judge Hugh Gibson Monday granted Amoco a temporary order denying the Occupational Safety and Health Administration search warrant for the plant. Gibson planned a hearing Wednesday to consider extending the ban.
The company objects to OSHA's plans to bring striking union employees into the refinery to help with the inquiry. Company officials vowed to disobey if OSHA is given a search warrant under those circumstances.
OSHA answered that the law requires a worker to be involved in any accident investigation.
The union has been on strike since Jan. 8 and management and contract technical personnel have been running the Amoco refinery. The accident occurred Feb. 13.
The company contends no union member was on the job when the accident occurred and therefore no union member should be included in the investigation.

Police admit to vulgarity

United Press International
AMARILLO — Jurors who heard undercover agents testify they drank beer, used vulgar language and exposed themselves before arresting a prostitute, Tuesday assessed the woman a maximum \$2,000 fine and one year in jail.
The Potter County Court-at-Law jury deliberated about half an hour before assessing punishment for Brenda Faye Ransom, 25, who had been convicted of prostitution previously.
During testimony Monday, two agents for the Potter-Randall County Metro Organized Crime Unit said they bought beer and took some to Miss Ransom's residence "to have booze" on their breaths.
Ultimately, "to prove we weren't cops," the men admitted unzipping their trousers and exposing themselves.

Department adds catfish

United Press International
WASHINGTON — The Agriculture Department issues reports on production of a variety of items ranging from mushrooms and popcorn to cows and pigs. Now it has added catfish to the list.
The department issued its first periodic report on catfish farming Monday, reflecting an increased interest in fish farming, or aquaculture.
A bonus is the report's new retail-price index for fish products. An index of 17 canned and frozen-fish products rose 0.2 percent from December to January to a level 12.5 percent above a year earlier.
Prices for whiting, cod and haddock fillets as well as canned chunk light tuna rose substantially, while prices for halibut steak and fish sticks dropped.
The new "Farm-Raised Catfish Processor's" report said domestic production of farmed catfish processed during January totaled 3.5 million pounds, up 16 percent from a year earlier.
Freshwater catfish imports, which all came from Brazil, totaled 1.6 million pounds.

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3 Lb. Jar **2.09**

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Fresh Frozen ... Lb. **49¢**

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Safeway Smoked Sausage
Regular or Hot ... Lb. **1.78**

Loin Strip
Boneless Whole Only (Tenderloin, Whole Only ... Lb. \$4.29) ... Lb. **3.49**

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Fresh, Frozen ... Lb. **49¢**

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- Corn Syrup Garden Club, Light 32 Oz. Jar **85¢**
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