

## Charges in suicide dropped

**United Press International**  
**HOUSTON** — A judge has dismissed an indictment charging a girl with aiding the suicide of her boyfriend.  
 State District Judge Charles Hearn quashed the indictment against Jean Leann Miller, 17, in the Aug. 27 shooting death of Kent Kretsinger, 18.

Kretsinger's mother had alleged her son was under the influence of Miller, who officials described as a punk rocker who once dyed her hair purple.  
 Hearn ruled the indictment did not charge Miller with enough specific acts in the suicide to hold her on a suicide aiding charge.

# Governor vows to push election of PUC members

**United Press International**  
**AUSTIN** — Gov. Mark White reaffirmed his commitment to have the Public Utility Commission elected rather than appointed, despite a hostile reaction by a House subcommittee.

The House State Affairs committee heard testimony from proponents for White's plan during a public hearing Tuesday night, but recessed until next week without taking a vote.

However, White said he would apply more pressure if the committee wanted it.  
 "If they want more pushing,

I'll be glad to provide it," the governor said. "I think they'll find my commitment is still strong."

Jim Nelson, White's deputy executive assistant for administration, said about 20,000 Texans had written the governor about utility rates, and between 85 and 90 percent favored an elected rather than appointed commission.

"The people who responded to our office, in great numbers, have stated what they want is responsiveness and control," said Nelson. "Their greatest concern is not rates themselves, but the

fact that they feel like they have no control whatsoever in this entire area."

Rep. Mark Stiles, D-Beaumont, praised White for raising the utility issue in his 1982 gubernatorial campaign, but he said the entire state should not be punished for high utility rates in some areas.

"We're fixing to do something that will affect the whole state when the whole state doesn't need its hand slapped," he said.

Stiles, criticizing the elective plan, said utility companies could not be constitutionally barred from making campaign

donations to PUC candidates White has proposed.

"I think the utility companies would buy that election," Stiles said.

Jim Boyle, legislative director of the Texas Consumer Association, conceded that the election of PUC members "will not be a panacea."

But he compared utility rates to two sister states, Louisiana and Oklahoma, that are among the 11 states with elected commissions. Boyle said utility rates are 18 percent cheaper in Louisiana and 8 percent cheaper in Oklahoma.



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- #4 College Students and Adults

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## Bell wants market split

# Texas phone deals told

**United Press International**  
**AUSTIN** — Southwest Bell and AT&T are conspiring to "split up the Texas market" even after the Bell system is divested, a representative of one of Bell's competitors told a House subcommittee.

"The biggest company on earth (Bell) wants to split up the Texas market even after divestiture," said Ray Besing of MCI. "They've come up with an extremely clever plan to carve up the state of Texas market as they see fit and I think the rate-payers are going to pay."

Besing predicted local exchange rates, especially in rural areas and small towns, would

skyrocket as Bell attempted to undercut independent long distance companies such as MCI.

Joining Besing in testimony before a subcommittee of the House State Affairs Committee were representatives from Sprint and Value Line.

Both companies complained that a Senate amendment to a bill to continue the Public Utility Commission eventually would allow a market-by-market deregulation of Southwest Bell and AT&T.

Stan Bickerstaff of the Dallas-based U.S. Telephone, Inc., said under current law the PUC looks at the state as a whole in

determining rates.

But he said language in the Senate-passed PUC bill would chop up the state into 15 "telecommunications markets," giving Bell the option of setting different rates in different parts of its Texas system.

Bickerstaff said that, under the proposed Senate bill, the PUC would not be able to effectively regulate such a system.

The charges were not well received by Bell's representative.

"Frankly, I'm tired of someone who telling you what our intent is," Southwest Bell vice president Paul Roth told the subcommittee.

Roth testified on behalf of the

Senate bill and responded charges that Bell would use vestiture to undercut long distance firms such as U.S. Phone Inc.

But Roth said claims that would rise by as much as \$100 million and hospitals and health care would be unable to offer distance service "are gross distortions of the truth and designed to cloud common sense and inflame emotions."

However, he conceded company plans to file for the largest rate increase in history, probably sometime next summer after the legislative

# Committee OKs state budget

**United Press International**  
**AUSTIN** — Raises for teachers would be limited to small increases already required in a previous law, under a proposed \$30.9 billion two-year

budget approved by a Senate committee.

Public employees would receive a 4 percent raise each year instead of a higher figure recommended months ago by the

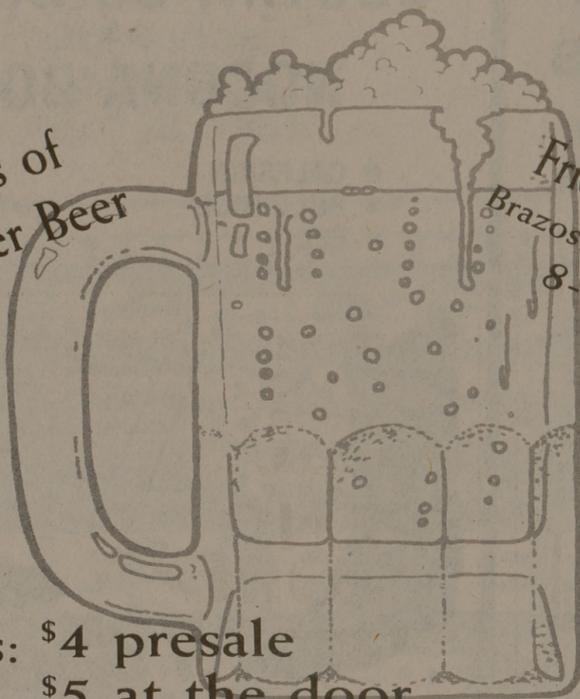
Legislative Budget Board.

"I'm concerned about the money we're not putting into education," Sen. Grant Jones, chairman of the Finance Committee, said Tuesday. "I'm con-

cerned about the money we're not putting into roads," he said. "I'm concerned about the money we're not putting into addressing our water problems and

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