

The state

El Paso school district under fire

Lawmaker fights election plan

United Press International
EL PASO — A Texas lawmaker is furious about the single-member election plan a school district sent to the Justice Department because it retains incumbent school board members.

State Rep. Paul Moreno said Wednesday he would never approve of the plan submitted by the El Paso Independent School District.

Moreno is one of the plaintiffs in

the suit which successively sought an end to at-large school district elections. The plaintiffs contend the at-large districts discriminate against Hispanics and perpetuate school board members in office.

The suit alleged single-member districts were unconstitutional because they prevent election of Mexican-American candidates to the board of trustees.

U.S. District Judge Harry Lee

Hudspeth, after a week-long, non-jury trial, ruled that although the district's election system did not violate the Constitution, it did violate a 1982 amendment to the Voting Rights Act.

Hudspeth ordered all school elections cancelled and a new plan developed, calling for seven single-member districts.

The school district's proposed plan calls for seven single-member

districts but includes the controversial provision to keep the incumbent trustees in office until their terms expire. It calls for staggered terms.

Moreno said under the present system, four trustees represent the affluent West side of El Paso, which he called unfair. "None of these people represent the Hispanics," he said.

Legislators argue over teacher scholarships

United Press International
AUSTIN — Witnesses told a House committee Wednesday the state should offer lucrative scholarships to encourage students to become teachers, but one legislator objected such financial encouragement amounted to "buying teachers with mercenary incentives."

The House Public Education Committee held its first hearing of

the special legislative session to collect testimony on teacher training and certification.

The hearings were expected to continue through the end of next week, and no education reform bill was anticipated to be approved by the committee and passed on to the House before June 18.

A bill by Rep. Bill Hammond, R-Dallas, would provide \$10 million a

year in state-financed scholarships for bright students who agreed to teach for four years following graduation.

One committee member, however, said the money would be better spent on raising teacher salaries.

"I'm afraid with those scholarships we would be buying teachers with mercenary incentives," said Rep. Noel Grisham, D-Round Rock.

"I think all the incentive that would be needed (to attract more people into teaching) is a good, respectable, professional salary."

June Karp of the AFL-CIO-affiliated Texas Federation of Teachers said colleges of education should emphasize more "how to teach" courses and fewer theory courses as well as intensifying in-class practice teaching.

Texas PTA House looks at tax options

United Press International
AUSTIN — Seeking to avoid a sales tax hike, a House committee Wednesday explored the option of lifting a variety of sales tax exemptions that Comptroller Bob Bullock says is costing Texas more than \$7 billion a year in lost revenues.

Gov. Mark White has proposed raising the state's 4-cent sales tax by 1-cent to help finance his education reform plan during the special legislative session.

But Rep. Stan Schlueter, D-Killeen, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, said the Legislature should consider canceling some sales tax exemptions rather than raising the tax.

Because of the numerous exemptions added since the 1961 tax was first imposed, Schlueter said Texas' sales tax has become one of the nation's most restricted sales taxes.

Schlueter declined to be specific about which exemptions he favored canceling, but he noted that Texas now exempts all services, such as laundry and dry cleaning, barber and beauty services, amusements,

management consulting, data processing, legal services and auto repair.

"If it's something you just can't live with (lifting a sales tax exemption), just explain to us where we can get the money for quality education."

electricity and some industrial gas and electricity sales.

"When you look at exemptions, you've got to ask yourself why some things are taxed and some things are not," said Bullock. "For instance, we don't tax necessities like groceries or prescription medicines so that we won't put too much of our state tax load on the poor people who are the least able to pay."

Industry groups who stand to lose millions of dollars if their exemptions are lifted lined up to tell the committee why their exemptions should be retained.

Gulf Oil Corp. spokesman Bill Miller said talk of removing exemptions on industrial gas and electricity resales "makes us nervous."

"The Texas economy cannot tolerate an additional selective tax on our industry," he said.

Dr. Gary Williamson, vice president of the Texas Medical Association, said the sales tax should not be extended to include physicians' services and prescription drugs.

opposes proposals

United Press International
AUSTIN — The statewide parent-teacher organization Wednesday went on record against proposals for an appointed state school board, an extended school year and a longer school day.

The Texas PTA said a poll of 2,000 PTA members across the state showed an almost three-to-one opposition to replacing the 27-member elected State Board of Education with a smaller panel appointed by the governor.

"While some of our members questioned the size of the State Board of Education membership, they were not willing to give up their right to elect their representative," Laura Tynes of Waco, president of the Texas PTA, said at a Capitol news conference.

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Around town

Softball registration begins today

Bryan Recreation Division will hold registration for the Recreation Softball Leagues on June 6 through 13. The cost is \$200. For more information call the Bryan Recreation Division.

Summer grads can order announcements

Seniors planning to graduate in August can order graduation announcements in room 217 MSC from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Deadline for placing orders is June 13.

Defensive driving course offered

The Brazos Valley Safety Agency will conduct a defensive driving course Friday and Saturday at the Ramada Inn. Registration begins at 5 p.m. at the Ramada Inn or students can pre-register by calling 693-8178. Cost for the course is \$20.

Driver safety course begins Friday

The TAMU After Hours Program will sponsor a Driver Safety Course on Friday and Saturday. This course may be used to have certain traffic violations dismissed and to receive a 10 percent discount on automobile insurance. Registration is held from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday in room 216 MSC. For more information, call 845-9352.

Registration for MSC Craft Workshops

Registration for the MSC Craft Center's Summer Workshops begins Monday. Anyone over 18 may enroll in the workshops. Classes will introduce you to new crafts of reacquaint you with forgotten skills. Call 845-1631 for more information.

Seminar on single living offered

Single adults are invited to attend a seminar on successful single living sponsored by First Presbyterian Church of Bryan, from 6:30 to 10 p.m. on Friday and from 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. on Saturday. Call 779-7166 for more information.

Classes for childbirth preparation

B.A.B.E., the Bryan-College Station Association for Birth Education, announces the addition of Saturday classes for childbirth preparation. B.A.B.E. classes are designed to help expectant couples make their child's birth a "special delivery." For more information on the schedule of classes, or to enroll, please contact Rita Jo Crossdale at 779-3761.

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