

STATE AND LOCAL

Finance proposals approved

Associated Press

AUSTIN — The Senate on Wednesday approved a proposal to keep a closer eye on the "cash flow" in the state treasury. It also directed the Legislative Budget Board to consider abolishing or consolidating some of the more than 400 funds now in existence.

Yet another proposal directs the state treasurer to investigate the potential benefits of assisting local government financial managers in obtaining higher interest income.

All three proposals were sponsored by Sen. John Leedon, and were sent to the House without a dissenting vote in the 31-member Senate.

Leedon, chairman of the interim Senate Committee on Agency Funds Management, said Texas has more than 400 funds and "there is now no control over the state funds that are established."

"This is like having 400 bank accounts — it's hard to have money in all of them at the same time," said Leedon, R-Dallas.

One of his resolutions directs the Budget Board to report by Aug. 1, 1986, on whether there are "any funds that can be abolished or consolidated within the general revenue fund."

A Leedon bill would create the State Cash Flow Policy Committee to "monitor and review the state management of its cash flow" and make recommendations to the Legislature.

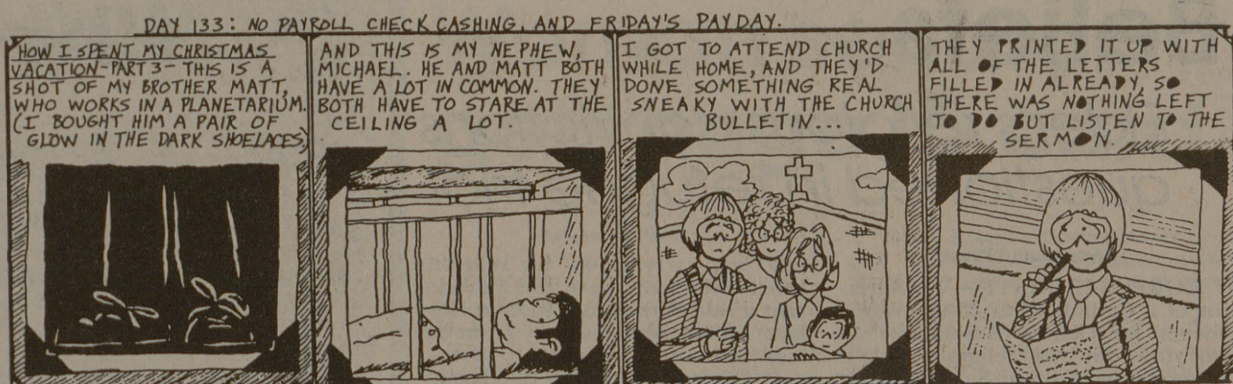
The committee would include the governor, comptroller, treasurer and two members of the Budget Board.

Leedon was asked about the resolution to provide local communities with financial advice, and he said the treasury department would offer assistance in getting higher interest income, with the communities paying the department a small fee to offset the state's cost.

He said State Treasurer Ann Richards felt communities are receptive to the proposal.

Warped

by Scott McCullar



Skillern dead, funeral services set for Friday

Associated Press

HUNTSVILLE — Doyle Skillern's family prepared for his funeral Wednesday as relatives of an undercover officer killed in 1974 said they were pleased the convict had been put to death.

Skillern was pronounced dead at 12:23 a.m., four minutes after Warden Jack Pursley gave the order for prison employees to start the flow of lethal drugs into the condemned man's body, which was belted securely to a gurney. Skillern stared at the death chamber ceiling, looking away from witnesses, said a reporter who witnessed the execution. He coughed violently and attempted to sit up after about 10 seconds, then lay back and was motionless.

His final statement was, "I pray my family will rejoice and forgive. Thank you."

Skillern, 48, was executed for the 1974 killing of Patrick Randel, an undercover narcotics agent who worked for the Department of Public Safety. Trial testimony showed Skillern and Charles Sanne, 51, were trying to sell Randel \$1,000 worth of Quaaludes when Sanne fired six shots which killed the officer.

Skillern was convicted under Texas "law of parties," which states that an accomplice to a killing is as guilty as the killer. He became the fifth inmate put to death in Texas and the 36th nationally since the death penalty was reinstated in 1976.

"It was a great relief when it was all over," Randel's widow, Wanda Randel Hogg of Odessa, said shortly after the execution Wednesday. She said she believes Sanne should die for his part in the killing, but added, "I have no control over that."

Sanne was sentenced to life in prison and could be paroled soon.

An autopsy was performed on Skillern in Houston early Wednesday, said Santos Vitela, a Harris County medical examiner's assistant. The results were expected within three weeks.

Skillern's sister, Mattie Sparks, and brother-in-law William Sparks III claimed the body and scheduled a Friday funeral in the East Texas town of Weches.

James R. Allen, of the funeral home O.T. Allen and Sons in Alto, said services tentatively were set for 10 a.m.

Skillern had selected five family members — sisters Mattie Sparks, Juanita Anders and Mrs. Carriere; his brother, Morris, and brother-in-law, William Sparks III — as the personal witnesses to his execution.

Sparks was the only one to attend the execution. He left the prison Wednesday morning without speaking to reporters.

His niece, Linda Gage of Houston, said in a phone interview that Sparks told family members "just a little" of what went on in the execution chamber. She said her uncle was

too upset to be interviewed.

Randel's daughter, Sheila Randel, 21, who works as a teletype operator for the Department of Public Safety in Midland, said she was glad the execution occurred.

"There are a lot of bleeding hearts in the world and you always wonder if it'll happen," Randel said of the execution Wednesday. "But I'm glad it did. He had to pay for what he did to my father."

Skillern's daughter, Janet Hatch of Hemet, Calif., said she was very upset about the execution of her father, whom she maintained had never harmed anyone.

"They're happy now," she said. "They got what they wanted. He's dead."

This was the fifth execution date for Skillern, an admitted drug user, who said in an interview last week he was not particularly upset with the prospect of dying.

Skillern earlier had been sentenced to a five-year jail term for killing his brother.

Only two inmates currently on Death Row — Excell White, admitted Aug. 26, 1974, and Jerry Joe Bird, who arrived Sept. 16, 1974, arrived before Skillern, admitted March 3, 1975.

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