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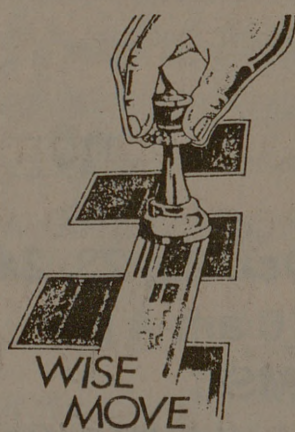
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Retirement program called milestone

New plan benefits Texas teachers

By Shannon Boysen
Reporter

The Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) recently added a new health-care program for retired teachers.

Legislation creating the Texas Public School Retired Employees Group Insurance Program was signed into law in June 1985 by Gov. Mark White and went into effect this September.

The addition is a milestone in the history of TRS, said Bruce Hineman, executive secretary of the program.

Edward H. Wicker, TRS board chairman, said the TRS-Care insurance program will alleviate undue hardship on thousands of retired Texas teachers who dedicated their careers to teaching the children of Texas.

"With the increasing cost of health care, many retirees simply could not afford coverage after they left their active careers," Wicker said.

Hineman said the program will provide basic

coverage to retirees at no cost, while coverage for dependents and surviving spouses of retirees can be purchased. The program also provides protection against catastrophic illness, with either a deductible of \$200, \$2,000 or \$5,000 depending on Medicare coverage.

Funds for the insurance program are automati-
cally deducted from the paychecks of all employ-
ees of Texas public schools, Hineman said.

In September 1985, all active school employ-
ees began contributing 0.25 percent of their sala-
ries to fund the program, Hineman said. In Sep-
tember 1986, the state of Texas began con-
tributions of one third of one percent of the
salary of each active public school employee. The
state's contributions will increase each year until
September 1989, when it will remain at 0.5 per-
cent.

TRS-Care is intended to coordinate with
Medicare, Hineman said. Medicare pays the first

60 percent of the incurred costs, TRS pays 30
percent of the remaining costs and the benefici-
ary pays the balance.

Approximately 85,000 people are expected to
pay into the program with benefits extending
over 550,000 members, Hineman said.

TRS was established by state legislation in
1937 and previously included only a few normal
retirement benefits, Hineman said.

Since September 1985, almost \$18 million has
been contributed by employees.

Rep. Betty Denton, D-Waco, the bill's sponsor
said, "A strong and solvent retirement system is a
key benefit to teachers and an important con-
dition for attracting bright and highly qualified
persons to the teaching profession."

Hineman added that the TRS program is a
feasible alternative to the dwindling Social Secu-
rity program.

Texas ranchers: License law driving away game hunters

Exotic game owners seek new legislation

FORT DAVIS (AP) — Darrell York, who operates a
7,200-acre ranch in the mountains of far West Texas,
says the Texas Legislature added more grief to his op-
erations when it passed a new law requiring out-of-state
residents to pay \$75 for a hunting license.

"I have enough trouble with mountain lions getting
my calves," York told the *San Angelo Standard-Times*.
"I don't need this other problem." He runs 50 head of
registered Texas Longhorns and 80 head of crossbred
mother cows on his ranch 36 miles northwest of Fort
Davis. His exotics are mouflon sheep, wild sheep native
to Corsica and Sardinia.

York is one of several exotic game owners in West
Texas who think that the law violates their rights as
landowners and makes it difficult to attract hunters.

York said he and other ranchers depend financially
on exotic game hunters, who are increasingly choosing
to go to other states, such as Florida, that do not require
out-of-state hunting licenses.

Exotics formerly were considered domestic livestock
and ranchers could do with them as they wished.
Ranchers would report poached or stolen exotics to
their county sheriff, not a game warden.

The law passed by the 1985 Texas Legislature placed
poaching of exotics under the jurisdiction of the Parks
and Wildlife Department.

York would not say how many hunters his ranch at-
tracts annually, or how much they pay to hunt exotics.

State Sen. Bill Sims, D-San Angelo, opposes the law,
and said a number of individuals and organizations
have contacted him asking for a change.

Sims, executive secretary of the Texas Sheep and
Goat Raisers Association, said some association mem-
bers are interested in a change in the law.

"We want to establish that exotics belong to the man
who raises them," Sims said.

Sims wants landowners to decide whether they want
exotics to be livestock or wildlife under the law.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department lobbied
for the law to make it easier for game wardens to en-
force poaching laws and to arrest and charge poachers,
Sims said.

He said he is working with State Rep. Fred Agnich of
Dallas on a proposal for the upcoming Legislature.

However, Agnich has indicated to Fred King, pub-
lisher of the *Hunting Ranch Business* newsletter, that
the problem may be larger since free-roaming exotics
compete with native whitetail deer for feed on over-
grazed land.

Agnich intends to propose legislation to allow unli-
censed hunting of exotics inside high fences on ranches
and farms.

His proposal would make free-roaming exotic game
state property and hunting would be regulated by Parks
and Wildlife.

Sims said exotics should be the property of the
owner, regardless of the side of fence they are grazing.

White says Clements commercial misleads voters with implications

PALESTINE (AP) — Gov. Mark White, campaigning for re-election Monday, said Republican Bill Clements is misleading voters with a television commercial that suggests White is to blame for the mugging of a woman featured in the ad.

In the commercial, a woman tells of the incident and suggests that policies of the White administration might be responsible.

"It's a shame Susan Key was the victim of a crime," White said. "What is also a shame is the hypocrisy of Bill Clements. It's a shame Bill Clements failed to tell Susan Key, and fails to tell the people of Texas, that he vetoed prisons — prisons that

could have held criminals like the one who attacked Susan Key."

The Democrat added, "It's a shame Bill Clements didn't tell her about the 28,000 inmates he personally paroled, including 19 criminals who committed murder and are now sitting on death row."

Responding, Clements said Key volunteered to appear in the commercial because of her strong feelings that something needed to be done "to help bring attention to an unjust criminal justice system."

Clements said he isn't surprised by White's reaction.

"Because Susan Key's story is not an isolated incident," Clements said.

"Unfortunately, her plight has become an all-too-familiar occurrence as our citizens are plagued by an increasing number of felons as the result of Mark White's early release program."

White said that under his administration, prison capacity has been expanded by nearly 10,000 beds and that plans for another 6,500 have been approved.

"We're doing something about criminal justice and the problems Bill Clements left us," White said. "Bill Clements' approach was to cut — to veto needed prison space. Our approach is to build more prisons."

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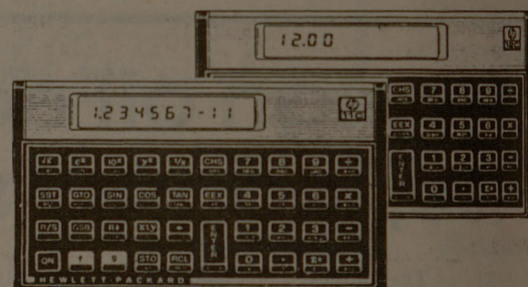


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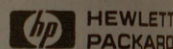
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