

Bill would increase legislative salaries

AUSTIN (AP) — Lawmakers' \$600 monthly salary prevents many Texans from considering service in the Legislature, the sponsor of a measure to raise legislative salaries to \$1,000 a month told a House committee Monday.

"The only reason you and I are here is because we can afford it," said Rep. Paul Moreno, D-El Paso, to the State Affairs Committee.

"It's that simple," Moreno said. "It does not permit the average working person to come down here and serve in the Legislature."

The proposed legislation — which includes a constitutional amendment

requiring approval by Texas voters if passed by lawmakers — was sent to a subcommittee, along with measures to establish annual legislative sessions.

The Legislature currently meets in regular session for 140 days every other year, and changing that requirement also would require a state constitutional amendment approved by voters.

A measure by Moreno would provide for 120-day sessions in odd-numbered years to deal with general issues, and 60-day sessions in even-

numbered years to deal with appropriations. Proposed legislation by Rep. L.B. Kubiak of Rockdale would set a 40-day budget session in even-numbered years and 100-day general session in odd-numbered years.

Both lawmakers said they are not firm on the number of days in each proposed annual session. But Kubiak added that he thinks the total number of days in session should not be increased if a pay raise is not provided.

"I think we all learned a lesson recently when Congress tried to get a

pay raise," Kubiak said. "I think we learned that the public in the state of Texas is not going to approve a pay raise."

Annual sessions are "critically important" to Texas, Rep. Jerry Yost of Longview said.

Yost, co-sponsor of Kubiak's bill, said lawmakers in the current system are "putting bureaucrats on automatic pilot for 19 months without any legislative oversight."

"They know that we have to go through another election process," Yost said. "Some of us may not return, some of us may not end up on the same committees that we were on before."

"To me, it's very debilitating working with an agency where you don't have a continuing oversight process that allows for them to come back within your term of office and you have the opportunity to sit down and scrutinize what they've done," he said.

El Paso police say devil worshipers desecrated remains of judge, wife

EL PASO (AP) — The remains of a prominent 19th century El Paso judge and his wife were removed from a tomb at historical Concordia Cemetery and desecrated by devil worshipers, police believe.

The vandals burned one coffin and its contents and took the remains from a second coffin.

Police responded about 3 p.m. Sunday to a call that a grave at a cemetery east of downtown had been opened. Sgt. Celso Fonseca said. They arrived to find a tomb marked with the name "Crosby" opened.

"One casket had been burned, with the bones in it," Fonseca said. "The skull wasn't burned. It was there on the end of a cross."

The skull, which had wisps of golden hair and a gold tooth, was found lying on the ground next to the tomb and apparently had been set atop an inverted wooden cross, police said.

An inverted cross and other signs of satanic ritual were found drawn on the outside of the vault, officer Thomas Duran Jr. said.

The individual names and dates on the face of the tomb were obliterated when the stone vault was opened, Fonseca said. But it appears the vault was the burial place of Josiah F. Crosby and his wife, Josephine.

Josiah moved to El Paso in 1852 and served as a prosecutor, state legislator and district judge, El Paso historian Leon Metz said. During the Civil War, he was acting quartermaster general for the Confederate army's invasion of New Mexico.

He lived in Houston and New York for short times before retiring in El Paso and dying in 1904. His obituary at the time said he was entombed at Concordia, the final resting place for some of El Paso's most famous citizens, including gunfighter John Wesley Hardin.



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