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## Financial industry officials upset over governor's veto

AUSTIN (AP) — Financial industry officials were mystified and consumer activists appalled that Gov. Bill Clements vetoed a broadly supported compromise bill to alter foreclosure procedures in Texas.

"People are hysterical," said Carol Abbasi, owner of an Austin business that helps people re-negotiate loans. Abbasi said she received many calls from worried clients Monday, adding, "These homeowners are ready to slit their wrists this afternoon."

Real estate professionals and consumer groups claim that some Texas lenders have abused their powers by bidding unfairly low amounts for foreclosed property and then suing the borrower to collect the difference.

The compromise bill passed by the Legislature was backed by lenders, consumer groups and real estate developers. It allowed borrowers to request a court hearing to determine

the fair value of a home or commercial property when a lender seeks such a deficiency judgment.

The bill was among 54 rejected Sunday by Clements, who said in his proclamation the foreclosure measure was "unwise and inappropriate."

"This bill has the potential to result in numerous lawsuits and further delay the collection of deficiency judgments," Clements stated. "Such delays and further litigation are not in the state's best interest."

People who represent debtors say the veto will keep bankruptcy rates high in Texas, as borrowers seek escape from lender pressure. Those who have defaulted on their home loans are among those who continue to be at risk from low foreclosure prices bid by lenders.

Lawyer Joe Longley, a consumer lobbyist, said the veto could lead to further litigation over foreclosure disputes. The Texas Supreme

Court, he said, could resolve some borrower vs. lender disputes when it rules on two foreclosure-related cases before it.

Brad Wiewel, a consumer lawyer and former president of the Texas Consumers Association, said, "If you look at his (Clements) contributors and the people who have supported him, he has bitten the hand that fed him."

Robert Harris, president of the Texas Bankers Association, said his industry group had written the governor recommending approval of the compromise bill.

"I'm sure that some fingers are being pointed at us that we had something to do with this," Harris told the *Austin American-Statesman*. "We absolutely did not. When this organization cuts a deal with the Legislature and our opponents, we live with those compromises."

Rep. Terral Smith, who sponsored the foreclosure provision, said the governor's veto will lead to more lawsuits.

"We will end up with court-made law rather than legislative law. It will be costly and we don't know what the rules will be," Smith said.

## Austin will present final case arguments over HL&P project

DALLAS (AP) — After nearly four months, attorneys will present final arguments next week in the civil suit between the City of Austin and Houston Lighting & Power Co. over the South Texas Project.

The City of Austin, one of four owners of the twin reactor plant near Bay City, contends Houston Lighting & Power Co., the managing partner, failed to inform them of problems with the plant. Austin is seeking to remove itself from the project.

Attorneys rested their cases Monday. Because of conflicts with juror schedules, closing arguments have been postponed until June 26.

Judge Clarence Guttard is presiding over the case, which has been taking place since March in a makeshift courtroom set up in a strip shopping center because the Dallas

County Courthouse had no space available.

The 2,500-megawatt plant initially was expected to cost less than \$1 billion and be finished in 1981. But the plant was officially dedicated this spring and its cost is now estimated to be nearly \$6 billion.

When Austin called Mayor Lee Cooke for rebuttal testimony Monday, HL&P attorney Roy Minton grilled him about former city utility director R.L. Hancock's knowledge of the plant's progress.

Minton cited minutes of meetings attended by Hancock during the summer and fall of 1978 that included discussion of some of the problems with the project. Minton also introduced as evidence two newspaper articles printed in 1978 and 1982 quoting council members who were upset with Hancock for failing to inform them about construction problems.

"I ask you honestly, mayor, isn't this the first time you ever realized R.L. Hancock was sitting there at management committee meetings and hearing all that discussion and not bothering you all with any of it?" Minton said.

## Bus driver not indicted for murder

DALLAS (AP) — A Dallas County grand jury on Tuesday declined to indict a 37-year-old city bus driver in connection with the May shooting death of a passenger.

Chauncey J. Plummer, a Dallas bus driver for 10 years, had been charged with murder in the May 24 shooting of David Hayden, 25.

Plummer picked up Hayden and a woman on a downtown street and told authorities that, through his rearview mirror, he saw the woman hand her bus pass to Hayden, who then tried to use it.

The driver told Hayden he could not use the pass, an argument ensued and Plummer ordered Hayden off the bus, police records show. Hayden was shot once in the back with a handgun as he exited.

Plummer told police that Hayden punched him in the jaw before he stepped off the bus.

But Cooke said he had no recollection of details that occurred 10 years earlier when he was a member of the council. He did recall he ordered a November meeting with HL&P officials on the subject. Cooke said it wasn't until that meeting that council members learned project engineer Brown & Root was "fundamentally incapable" of handling nuclear engineering.

"I don't recall being told (by HL&P) that we had a fatal flaw like that in the project," Cooke testified.

Austin's attorney John Hill said later Minton and other HL&P attorneys "took a few things out of context that make it appear R.L. (Hancock) had not fully reported problems on the job," Hill said. "We take sharp issue with that, but that's not the point. When our people went eyeball to eyeball with Houston... what was not being reported to anybody was the absolute destitute condition that the engineering itself was in."

Austin attorneys have argued throughout the case that if the city had known about some of the problems earlier, it would have taken steps to correct them, or perhaps not joined the nuclear project.

## Commission plans to award racing dates to horse tracks

AUSTIN (AP) — Under pressure to get parimutuel racing out of the gate, the Texas Racing Commission plans a July 16 meeting to begin awarding racing dates to horse tracks.

Commission Chairman Hilary Doran said the unusual timing of the 8 a.m. Sunday meeting is the "first reasonable date" available for the date-setting session.

"The bottom line on racing is, 'move it,' so let's get going," Commissioner Demarius Frey said.

Commissioners refused, however, to award the track dates before the July 16 meeting.

Texas voters approved parimutuel wagering on horse and dog racing in November 1987. To date, no races have been run, although eight horse tracks have been granted Class 2 wagering licenses.

One obstacle to early racing is a provision in the state law that requires racing stewards to be peace officers. A bill which would have removed that requirement and allowed the commission to pass the cost of stewards on to tracks failed in the Legislature last month.

The commission staff predicted difficulty in finding enough stewards who qualify under the current law to conduct racing.

Lack of funds to pay travel expenses for stewards who don't live near the tracks compounds the problem, they said.

"I am very, very adamant that we start racing this fall with the best stewards available and not have to hire an inferior person just because we don't have travel money to get better qualified people to the track," Commissioner Hugh Fitzsimons said.

**"The bottom line on racing is, 'move it,' so let's get going."**  
— Demarius Frey, racing commissioner

## Aggie Hostel

(Continued from page 1)  
It covers every meal, special event and course. Everything is just laid out for them."

George Sumner, Class of '42, said the one thing he's been most overwhelmed by during the week is all the changes the University has undergone since he was a student.

"The school and the campus really have changed," Sumner said. "The rooms now are very nice. I used to live in Hart Hall, and now everything is so much better because it's broadened so much. It has to be considered a positive change."

Irwin C. Mark, Class of '41, said he came to Aggie Hostel because his two grandsons are students at A&M. The week's events have been he expected and more, he said.

His wife, Cecil Mark, said she had a friend who is here for this year's Aggie Hostel and that she was shocked at how much the University has grown because College Station was nothing more than a "cow town" when he attended A&M College.

Milton Rhea, Class of '39, said he and his wife decided to come to Aggie Hostel because their three sons, one of whom graduated from A&M

in 1980, pitched in and paid for it as their Christmas present last year.

"The school is about 20 times as big," Rhea said. "It's so large. But it still feels like the same place. A&M has kept its flavor pretty good over the years."

After being away for so long, an alumnus can lose touch with the school, Garner said, and that's why Aggie Hostel has been successful.

"We'll probably want to come back 30 or 40 years after we've graduated," said Garner, who graduated from A&M in 1979. "I know when you graduate from school, the last thing you want to do is come back. But because there's no tests or homework — it's not a true school atmosphere — it's more fun. I guess they come back because of what A&M's all about."

Gayle Schmidt, a professor who teaches Healthy Aging for Aggie Hostel this week and serves on the program's planning committee, said being a part of Aggie Hostel gives her a chance to watch how former students get along with each other and with A&M students now.

"The ones that were here last year are kind of like old timers now and are showing the other ones around," Schmidt said. "They're making friends with each other."

## Day-care center faces allegations of child abuse

AUSTIN (AP) — A three-member Senate subcommittee has been appointed to investigate allegations of child abuse at Santa Nino Day Care Center in Laredo, according to a statement from Sen. Judith Zaffirini's office.

Zaffirini was appointed chair of the subcommittee by Sen. Clark Brooks, chairman of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services.

Brooks, D-Pasadena, also will serve on the committee with Sen. Frank Tejeda, D-San Antonio.

Zaffirini said the subcommittee would invite District Attorney Joe Rubio and members of the Webb County Grand Jury, "who have done a good job of searching for solutions," to testify.

"We know the regulatory system failed the children at that day care center," she said. "We must ensure that such tragedies do not recur."

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