

Tuesday, February 26, 1991

The Battalion



JAY JANNER/The Battalion

## Cultural celebration

Rahila Rana, a senior math major from Pakistan, faces Mecca Annual International Week in the MSC Monday. The International Buffet will be Thursday in the MSC at 6 p.m.

## State lottery loses winning numbers for spot on ballot

AUSTIN (AP) — A state lottery proposal failed to find the winning number in the Texas House on Monday.

Despite last-minute lobbying by Gov. Ann Richards, House members voted only 90-56 for the lottery proposition.

Because starting a lottery takes a constitutional amendment, two-thirds of the 150-member House was required to vote to place the question on the ballot for voter ratification.

Speaker Gib Lewis indicated that under House rules, another vote could be taken later. But he said changing enough minds would be difficult.

"Ten votes (to reach 100), that's a big swing," Lewis said. "It's going to be very difficult to do."

The governor's top lobbyist, Jim Parker, said Monday's failure was a major setback that likely would keep the lottery question off the May 4 election ballot. "I think May 4 is an impossibility now," he said.

The secretary of state had said both the House and Senate had to approve the lottery by Friday to qualify for that election.

Although lottery backers had insisted that the gambling game's revenue wouldn't be a cure-all for the state government's projected \$4.6 billion deficit, Richards charged that lottery opponents had "assured the necessity of a sizable tax (increase) bill."

"I hope that the 56 members of the House who voted against this bill will now join together to find the necessary new revenue to meet the needs of this state," she said.

Backers argued that a lottery would raise \$731 million in its first year of operation, money needed to help offset the 1992-93 state deficit. Besides, opinion polls show the public favors the game, they said.

But opponents called the gambling game a "sleazy ... smelly" way for the state to raise money, saying it preys on the poor and encourages gambling.

Rep. Eddie Cavazos, D-Corpus Christi simplified the issue.

"There's two reasons to pass a lottery," he said. "People want it. We need the money. It's simple."



Gov. Ann Richards

But Rep. Glenn Repp, R-Duncanville opposed the lottery.

"What scheme could the government devise that is less honorable than to take from the poor to give to the rich and tell them they're having fun while it's being done?" he said.

The lottery's chief sponsor, Rep. Ron Wilson, D-Houston, noted a recent opinion poll showing 76 percent of Texans favoring a lottery.

"The main argument is ... do we think that the people of this state are qualified to determine for themselves," Wilson argued.

Monday's vote capped weeks of intensive lobbying, led by the governor, who had declared the issue an emergency and personally testified to both House and Senate committees.

One lawmaker who has resigned, Rep. Barry Connelly, R-Houston, even returned to the House to vote for the lottery. Connelly's resignation doesn't take effect until his successor is elected and sworn in next month, but he said he hadn't cast another vote during this session.

Lobbyists hired by lottery game companies urged lawmakers to pass the bill, while the Baptist Christian Life Commission led those opposed to it.

Complaining about the pro-lobby campaign, Rep. Fred Hill, R-Richardson, said: "This issue really has nothing to do with good government. It boils down to one simple, old-fashioned motive — greed."

## State bill tackles vandalism at animal testing sites

AUSTIN (AP) — It would be a criminal offense to intentionally interfere with animal research facilities under a bill passed Monday by the Texas Senate.

"If we can discourage people from doing something like this, we want to," said Sen. Bill Sims, D-San Angelo, sponsor of the legislation.

Among the measure's supporters is Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Sims said.

On July 4, 1989, animal rights activists broke into a Texas Tech sleep research laboratory, taking several cats. Equipment was damaged, windows broken and messages spray painted on the walls.

"Everybody that's related to research has been lobbying about this one," Sims said.

Those who oppose using animals in research contend it inflicts pain and is used even when not necessary to achieve a medical breakthrough.

Sims said those who damage facilities can be prosecuted under current laws. But he said his measure, which creates the specific criminal offense, is tougher.

Under his bill, it would be a Class A misdemeanor to enter an animal research facility without the owner's consent, or to make markings on it. It would be a third-degree felony if the offender caused bodily injury to someone else or carried a deadly weapon.

A Class A misdemeanor is punishable by up to a \$2,000 fine and a year in jail, while the felony can be punished by two to 10 years in prison and

up to a \$5,000 fine.

Punishment for tampering with a facility, damaging it or removing an animal would depend on the amount of monetary loss.

The bill was sent to the House on a 30-0 vote.

Other measures approved Monday by the Senate and sent to the House would:

- Require plants and trees displayed in the Capitol and on its grounds to be indigenous to Texas.
- Give state employees the right to voluntarily designate any portion of their earned income to a charitable organization or state employee organization.
- Create a new county court-at-law in Webb County on Jan. 1, 1993.

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