

DFW suburbs criticize expansion of airport

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUSTIN — The Texas House gave preliminary approval Thursday to a bill that would clear the way for a major expansion of Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport, despite objections from several affected cities.

The bill, tentatively approved 114-17, would allow the DFW board to control development of airport land in Grapevine, Euless, Irving and Coppell. The first three cities have filed a lawsuit charging that they have zoning authority over the airport under the state's home-rule law.

"This is the big guy stepping on the little guy," said Rep. Will Hartnett, R-Dallas, who also represents part of Irving. He charged that the bill would set a "dangerous precedent" by eroding cities' rights.

"This proposed legislation is throwing acid on the armor of cities," Hartnett said. Several other lawmakers said they did not oppose expansion, but wanted the cities to be given proper consideration.

But backers said the Texas Municipal Airports Act of 1947 intended for an airport board to control the development of airport-owned property, and that cities' rights wouldn't be harmed by the measure affecting DFW.

They also said the airport needs the expansion project, which includes two new runways, and that it had been stalled by the cities' action.

"Transportation, water and land are your three ingredients for growth and expansion, and if we were going to be restricted on transportation, especially international transportation, it was going to handicap North Texas," said Rep. Kim Brimer, a sponsor of the measure. "It was a critical move to get this expansion moving."

Clinton slashes job budget to appease Senate filibuster

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — President Clinton began pruning billions of dollars from his \$16.3 billion jobs bill Thursday to make it more acceptable to filibustering Senate Republicans, whom he urged to help shape the package.

"I am willing to compromise so long as we keep the focus on jobs, keep the focus on growth, and keep the focus on meeting unmet national needs," Clinton said at a Rose Garden ceremony.

But as Clinton reached out to the GOP, there were new threats of Democratic defections that clouded his chances. Sens. Russell Feingold and Herbert Kohl, both from Wisconsin, raised their own objections to the program.

Two other Democrats, Sens. Richard Shelby of Alabama and Robert Kerrey of Nebraska, also have declared their opposition.

"Our opponents have been

asking for a smaller package," Clinton said of the Senate Republicans. "And today I ask them to join me in determining exactly what kind and what size package Congress can approve that actually meets the needs of the American people."

Hoping to avoid his first major defeat in Congress, Clinton asked Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell of Maine and Senate Appropriations Chairman Robert Byrd, D-W.Va., to open talks with Senate Republican Leader Bob Dole.

"Let's see if they can talk it out," Clinton said.

Dole and Clinton talked twice by telephone on Wednesday. The senator said he told the president the two sides had "a fundamental difference" over how the measure would be paid for. Clinton wants to borrow the money, thus boosting the budget deficit, but Republicans want to pay for it by cutting other programs.

State News Briefs

Ross Perot blasts federal spending

LUBBOCK (AP) — Ross Perot told a Tax Day audience Thursday that arrogant federal officials think "tax money falls from the sky."

Perot had sounded the trumpet of deficit reduction in his campaign for president last fall. His volunteer organization, United We Stand, America, keeps the deficit and taxes a top priority.

"We were told in 1990 we would have to pay more taxes but they would balance the budget, pay off the debt and everything would be just fine," Perot said. "We were conned."

A quiet audience of about 2,700 people broke into cheers when Perot blasted what he termed outlandish spending by Congress.

"When you're \$4 trillion down, you can't shoot from the hip," Perot said, mentioning limousines, vacation resorts and other tax-funded perks for government officials. "You've got to spend every penny very carefully."

'No-new-taxes' bill wins House

AUSTIN (AP) — A no-new-taxes, \$67.5 billion state budget proposal to fund state government over the next two years was expected to go to a legislative conference committee after winning final House approval Thursday.

The bill first goes to the Senate, which earlier passed its own budget proposal that's \$2.2 billion higher. It is anticipated that senators will reject House budget amendments and call for a conference committee to work out differences.

The current 1992-93 state budget is \$62.7 billion, 7.6 percent less than the House version of the 1994-95 budget, and would not require new taxes. The state comptroller has

said revenue will grow over the next two years, and has also proposed cost-cutting measures to lawmakers.

The House spending plan includes \$37.7 billion in state general revenue, with the rest coming from dedicated taxes, fees and federal funds. The Senate bill's general revenue total is \$38.9 billion.

The Senate version assumes that more money will be made available through the Legislature enacting the comptroller's money-saving ideas.

Senators outlaw 'canned hunts'

AUSTIN (AP) — State senators Thursday approved a bill aimed at outlawing "canned hunts," the practice of setting up the killing of wild animals that have been kept in captivity.

"This is a blight on Texas. It's a shame that we have allowed it to continue as long as we have," Sen. Mike Moncrief, D-Fort Worth, said.

Under current Texas law, canned hunts are legal unless the animal involved is listed as federally endangered or threatened.

Moncrief's measure would restrict the ownership of certain wild animals, strengthen enforcement, and regulate licensing and inspection of wild animal facilities.

Moncrief said he has seen videotapes of canned hunts that show the animal, which has already been declawed, being shot with a high-powered weapon at close range, just as it is released from its cage. "Then the macho hunter displays his kill," Moncrief said.

Sen. Gonzalo Barrientos, D-Austin, said, "That kind of action is despicable."

The bill seeks to protect lions, tigers, cougars, leopards, cheetahs, hyenas, bears, several migratory birds and similar state-listed endangered species. It would be illegal to kill any of these animals, except where human life is threatened.

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5. \$100 for best sophomore paper not among first three

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For purposes of this contest, freshmen are first-year undergraduate students, and sophomores are second-year undergraduate students.

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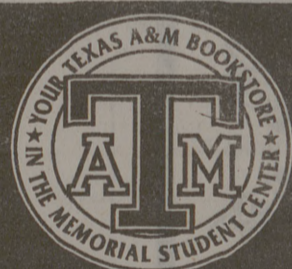
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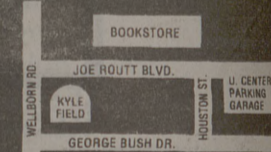
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