

# Lawmakers attempt to relax state telephone regulations

## Legislative plan to also try to increase local competition

AUSTIN (AP) — Talks on revising Texas telecommunications law have failed to generate a legislative plan, and two key state lawmakers have moved to take over the job.

The question is how to introduce competition into local phone service in exchange for relaxed state regulation of the rates and services of local phone companies, primarily Southwestern Bell Telephone Co.

Would-be competitors do not want Southwestern Bell unleashed too quickly because, they say, it could use its market domination to put them out of business. The phone company had revenues of \$8 billion in 1993.

The Texas Telephone Association, whose dominant members are Southwestern Bell and GTE Southwest Inc., on Wednesday blamed those who sat across the table from them, especially AT&T, for the impasse.

"Companies like AT&T have put their own greed ahead of an agreement to negotiate in good faith," said Glenn Smith, spokesman for the association. "In at least 18 states, AT&T has opposed any move to reform telecommunications regulation."

Vaughn Aldredge, spokesman for AT&T, rejected the charges. He said the association's negotiators "were giving ground a tiny millimeter at a time" and trying to delay consumer safeguards "to way in the future."

They even disagreed on whether their legislatively appointed work group had made progress on a proposal the Legislature could adopt next year. Smith told the Austin American-Statesman that "substantial progress" had been made on many points, while Aldredge said progress "was so incremental as to be almost nonexistent."

Rep. Curtis Seidlits, D-Sherman, and Sen. David Sibley, R-Waco, co-chair the Joint Interim Committee on Telecommunications, which was studying overhauling the state's regulations. The Legislature, which convenes in January, will consider the committee's recommendations.

The lawmakers had hoped negotiators representing business and consumer interests could draft a plan that would avert a legislative battle. Seidlits and others said a major stumbling block is determining whether would-be competitors or those who want to offer electronic services that require use of local phone networks must use their own equipment. They also battled over how large a market those would-be competitors must serve.

Although some negotiations continue, the two lawmakers ended formal talks this week by hearing what Seidlits termed "final arguments" from the main parties.



## Music soothes the savage beast

Listening to some familiar tunes, Selena while roommate, Tiffany Bradford, a senior English major from Fort Worth Harlingen, relaxes Thursday afternoon strums her new guitar.

Shelly Hall/Special to The Battalion

# Clinton administration helps Texas Border Patrol combat immigration

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — The Clinton administration is adding 700 Border Patrol agents to the Southwest border and making permanent the intensive immigration crackdowns in El Paso and San Diego, U.S. Rep. Lamar Smith said Thursday.

"The fact that the administration is willing to put more personnel in that strategic sort of frontline position I think is a good step and I am encouraged by that," said Smith, R-San Antonio.

Smith likely will become chairman next year of the Immigration Subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee. Immigration and Naturalization Service Commissioner Doris Meissner visited him Tuesday and told him of the stepped up attention the agency is giving the U.S.-Mexico border, he said.

Border Patrol crackdowns in El Paso and San Diego, where two-thirds of illegal entries to the United States occur, have featured the assignment of more agents and the use of special equipment to detect illegal migrants.

Smith said Ms. Meissner told him those operations would become permanent.

She also informed him that 700 agents will be added to the approximately 4,500 assigned at or near the Southwest border.

There are an estimated 2.5 million illegal entries into this country each year.

"The United States is the only civilized nation in the world that does not have adequate control of its borders," Smith said.

The Clinton administration still must address the root causes of illegal immigration, Smith said, referring to the "twin magnets" of easy access to jobs and federal benefits that attract illegal migrants.

Smith stopped short of endorsing a national version of Proposition 187, the California measure voters approved Nov. 8 that curtails health, education and welfare benefits to illegal residents. But he said the Immigration Subcommittee likely will hold hearings on similar proposals to cut off federal benefits to illegal migrants.

## Student Regent

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Fernandez disagreed about the past year being a miserable time and said he has enjoyed his time on the Board, even during the tough times.

"It has not been a miserable time," he said. "It's not easy but it's not miserable."

Regent Billy Clayton said he thought that if a student sat with the Board it would help them to understand the problems they face.

O'Connor said students would need total commitment and they should not take time away from their education. O'Connor said he supported student representation but didn't know if he would support a student member of the Board.

Clayton said he would like to have a faculty liaison on the Board.

Dr. Mark Weichold, speaker of the Faculty Senate, said he liked the idea of having a faculty liaison.

"This would resolve the communication problem" Weichold said. "It would be a direct path."

The student ex-officio member would be elected from within the Chancellor's Student Advisory Board, which was formed in 1984. Funding for travel and correspondence of the student would come from the elected student's university.

No institution could have a student member on the Board for two consecutive years. The student, who cannot be the CSAB chairperson, would be removed from office if he or she failed to attend two meetings. In the event that happened, an alternate would take over.

Elections for the student ex-officio member shall be held in conjunction with CSAB elections in late spring.

The main reasons they were for wanting student representation were:

- Student viewpoint is tant because the Regents and students are direct sumers of the System;
- A student ex-officio can represent the interests of diversified student body inclusive of the System;
- To provide a direct communication between students and the Board;
- The CSAB has shown other capacities confident of professional, time and ability to deal with complex agendas.

After the students presented their proposal, the regents of all university presidents supported the idea and unanimously voted yes.

The Board is expected to on the student ex-officio to the Board of Regents at January meeting.

## Holiday Crime

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their car unlocked, even if only for a few minutes, he said.

"If you're on the road and you pull into a convenience store, roll up the windows and lock the doors," Kretzschmar said. "Some get out of the car and leave it running. That makes it too easy for someone to jump in and drive off."

People should also remember safety precautions during the holidays themselves, Walling said. They need to mark their gifts with their driver license number for identification and record the serial numbers in case the gifts are stolen in the future.

Also, people should not leave their empty boxes on the curb because this advertises to thieves what is inside their house, he said.

To discourage house burglaries, residents should never leave the Christmas decorations or presents in front of their windows.

"This shows off everything a person has," LeMay said. "This helps thieves window shop."

People should be careful with

their credit cards during the holiday season, she said. They should check their bills to make sure no one else has used their card number, tear up the carbon copies of card uses and never leave their cards lying around.

In addition, a person should be careful when using a long distance card, she said.

"When dialing your number, someone could be standing behind you and watching you dial and taking the number to sell it," she said.

In addition to burglary and theft, domestic crimes also often escalate during the holidays, LeMay said.

"People may get under pressure, get depressed and drink more," LeMay said. "You add these together and you're looking at an explosive situation."

LeMay said one important way to decrease the stress of the holiday season and thus possibly reduce domestic violence is to use moderation.

"The main thing is to do everything in moderation," LeMay said. "Do not push yourself too hard. The little things done at home mean more than what you could shop for."

## Regents

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is hopeful about what A&M will receive in the legislative session, in particular the faculty and staff salary increases.

"Per-student funding in general is bad," Weichold said. "We are about 48th, 49th or 50th in the United States, and to get up higher will take a lot of cash. That is hard in these times."

Besides the need for faculty salary increases, the Regents discussed some of the items A&M is considering asking the legislature to fund.

Some of the following special items and initiatives included for Texas A&M University to ask money for were:

- Race and Ethnic Studies Institute,
- Minority Faculty Recruitment and Retention and
- Digital Library.

Although the specific items are still in the rough stages, Texas A&M University is asking the legislature to increase the cap in the group hospital and medical service fee from \$25 to \$75. It is also asking for a clarification about the possibility of building a cogeneration power plant in the future.

The University wants to remove language in the education code that currently restricts Texas A&M's construction of an additional plant.

Thompson would not comment on the possibility of a future cogeneration project but did say, "We're in the process of putting the old behind us."

In other business, the Regents voted to al-

low Texas A&M University to designate to build a student leadership center.

The vote allows A&M officials to take opportunity to seek donors to fund the to be built on 180 acres of land just west of Easterwood Airport.

Regent Chairman Mary Nan West, T. Michael O'Connor and Regent Guadalupe Rangel opposed the passage of the vote.

Rangel said she liked the idea of building the center but did not think enough progress had been done about whether students would pay for the project.

Regents have the option to later re-nate the land.

Thursday's meeting also marked the that System student body presidents and faculty Senate speakers were invited to present a brief overview of what is going on their campuses.

## Kwanzaa

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revenue. In order for revenue the community needs support."

The fifth principal is Nia, or purpose.

"We need to build the community to restore our people to their original greatness," Rochon said.

The sixth principal of Kwanzaa is Ku-

umba, or creativity.

"We need to do whatever we can in our community to leave it more beautiful than it was before," Rochon said.

The seventh principal is Imanni, or faith. This is where all seven principals come together as Kwanzaa, Rochon said.

Kwanzaa is celebrated with family and friends gathered together, Rochon said. There are seven candles and each day a new candle is lit. Each day a principal is read and everyone there discusses what

that principal means to them. On the day the seven candles are lit and the exchanges gifts which they created.

Rochon told people to take the Kwanzaa principals and apply them to everyday whether it be in the black community or other communities.

"We need to give knowledge and re-force our beliefs to our community and other communities," he said. "We rely on the media, Snoop Doggy Dogg CDs."

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