

Right-to-Work proponent sees Legislature passage

Thurs. Feb. 19, 1989

BY BEN J. PLASTINO

Post-Register Political editor

BOISE — The author of the Right-to-Work law predicted Wednesday his legislation will pass both chambers by comfortable margins.

Rep. John Brooks, R-Gooding, chairman of the Senate Agricultural Affairs Committee, who has spearheaded the legislation the three sessions, forecast the proposal will get between 43 and 48 votes in the House and about 21 in the Senate, nearly all Republican votes.

This would be a majority in view of the 70 members in the House and 35 in the Senate.

Brooks, a well-to-do Gooding farmer, said he had no objections to some of the amendments proposed for the bill which passed the House Monday for general orders, meaning it can be amended. It was beaten 8-11 on a roll call vote in the first test in the agriculture committee on a motion to hold it in committee.

Brooks said the Idaho Freedom to Work Committee is sponsoring the legislation and emphasized it is not connected with the Virginia-based National Right To Work organization. Pete Bratt is the Idaho chairman.

He said the Idaho committee has raised about

\$15,000 to promote the legislation, most of it coming from business and individuals, most of them of \$25 donations each.

Brooks said he is aware that Gov. John V. Evans had threatened to veto the measure and agreed the veto likely would be sustained.

"It may be the governor will change his mind if he gets enough pressure," said Brooks.

Brooks said he could accept some amendments proposed by one of the bill's strongest opponents, Rep. Peggy Bunting, R-Boise.

One would include a provision specifying that it shall be unlawful for employers to require any employee to abstain or refrain from membership in any labor union or organization. Another would strike from the bill the language which outlaws union hiring halls.

Patricia McDermott, D-Pocatello, perhaps the foremost opponent to the Right to Work Bill in past years, charged that outlaw of union hiring halls is mentioned only in the Idaho bill and not in any other Right to Work bills and laws in other states.

Miss McDermott said efforts will be made to strike the enacting clause in the motions for amendments, which would kill the measure on a roll call vote.