Legislative deals may delay session

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By BEN J. PLASTINO
Post-Register staff writer

BOISE — There's some horse swapping going on in the Idaho Legislature that promises to further delay adjournment.

State Sen. Reed Budge, R-Soda Springs, chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee, said the committee would not put out the motor vehicle registration fee increase bill until it received the bill increasing the diesel tax from 8.5 to 9.5 cents per gallon.

"I think it is only fair that the truckers be taxed equally with passenger car drivers." Budge pointed out the Legislature has already approved a one cent gas tax increase, which has already been signed by the governor.

State Sen. Cy C. Chase, R-St. Maries, Senate minority leader, however, is opposed to any diesel tax increase. He contends that truckers do not want this tax.

Budge, however, says that he finds the majority of the truckers feel it is fair for the tax increase.

There is rumor the Senate Democrats will impose a slow down in case if the highway funding is not acted on immediately.

State Rep. John O. Sessions, R-Driggs, House Transportation Committee chairman, said he had hoped the diesel tax bill would have been acted on first in the Senate, but instead the Senate and House leadership referred it to the House for first action. This bill has now cleared the House Ways and Means Committee and is awaiting action on the House floor possibly later on Wednesday. This bill will provide $5 million.