

Batt sees bill compromises

By BEN J. PLASTINO
Post-Register political editor

BOISE — Lt. Gov. Philip E. Batt predicted Friday a compromise will be reached on legislative reapportionment, releasing the legislators to turn to the important task of financing state government.

He said there will be some shifting of legislative district boundaries in the three legislative districts bordering Pocatello that will meet with general approval.

"Actually, it won't be much different than the reapportionment plan approved in the July special session," he said.

He said he looks for a general agreement that will enable approving a reapportionment bill the coming week.

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"I believe legislators overestimate the differences created by moving areas in different districts," said Batt. "It is my opinion that a good legislator will be re-elected in any district."

In other matters, he said the Right-to-Work proposal "will be an even wash" concerning his own candidacy. By that he means the effects will not greatly affect his chances one way or another.

"There are other things that are more important but I anticipate it will be a factor," said Batt.

Batt said he has already raised \$130,000 for his campaign to give him a hefty boost for his primary fight. He said polls now show him to have a strong lead in the primary and also indicate it will not be easy but that he could beat Democratic Gov. John V. Evans.

Whittom reveals coolness to race for Congress

By BEN J. PLASTINO
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William F. Whittom, Rupert mayor and Idaho Farm Bureau state information director, said Tuesday he likely would not enter the 2nd District congressional race as encouraged by some Democrats but didn't close the door completely.

"I'm flattered and it may be something down the line but right now I'm busy with the Idaho Farm Bureau business, Rupert municipal affairs, and my own livestock raising operation."

He said the Washington Public Power System plans for terminating two nuclear reactors are adding to the worries of cities in Idaho. Whittom said he is a conservative Democrat and often does not agree with Democrat policies on the national level. He said, for example, he is strongly opposed to any gun control legislation.

He added he is in no financial condition in view of the depressed agricultural economy to consider such an expensive venture. Further, he said, he would need to be assured of adequate campaign financing and no primary contest. Neither of these prospects appear in his favor at this time.

Whittom said Robert Crabtree, Pocatello, with the Idaho State University School of Vocational-Technical Education, is mentioned as a primary candidate and he understands there may be others.

He said offers of campaign funding have been made to him up to the present time.

Whittom agreed that the present Republican, Rep. George V. Hansen, is vulnerable.

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Legislative limelights . . .

Emotional proposals sharpen partisanship

By BEN J. PLASTINO
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The 46th Idaho Legislature is off to a rocky start by first tackling two deeply controversial issues that will leave a bad taste for the remainder of the session, no matter how they are finally resolved.

The first, which was expected, is legislative reapportionment which only the lawmakers and political leaders are mainly interested in an effort to increase their strength for the next Legislature. It is, however, of no more than passing interest to most other people who likely don't even know the number of their district, what area it embraces and their senator and two state representatives who represent them.

The second is far more reaching and was not expected to be acted on so soon or not at all. It is the Right-to-Work Law which most voters are deeply interested in and could be one of the main issues in the coming campaign.

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Democratic Gov. John V. Evans has vowed to veto both the present reapportionment and Right-To-Work bills which have vaulted the House by almost identical votes, reapportionment by 49-20 and Right-to-Work by 50-20. The Right-to-Work bill passed the Senate Friday 21-14 but faces an almost certain veto Monday by Gov. John V. Evans. The legislature likely will reach a compromise on legislative reapportionment by juggling a few boundary lines in the three districts in the Pocatello area and the Senate will not even act on the House-passed version.

The announced Evans views now indicate what the Legislature has done to these two bills this session has been wasted motion. His anticipated veto on Right-to-Work will be easily overridden in the House but will be sustained in the Senate where the Democrats have a majority of one to prevent a two-thirds over-

ride vote. In fact, it would be no surprise to see some Boise Republican join the Democrats to sustain the veto. Two of these, Sens. Edith Klein and Vern Brassey, voted against the measure Friday.

The Republicans control the House 56-16 and the Senate 24-12 but these figures are misleading. On frequent occasions, between 15 and 20 moderate Republicans join the Democrats in the House to pass what many view as progressive legislation while in the Senate some six to eight of the more moderate Republican senators cross party lines on some matters.

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It thus appears that what the legislators are doing in many matters are highly politically motivated and seeking to gain advantageous position for the coming election campaign leading to the May 25 primary election and the Nov. 2 general election.

The Right-to-Work Law is wrapped up in many ramifications that should furnish considerable fodder for the coming campaign.

The Republicans believe they have a prime issue which could oust Evans but this is a two-edged sword as such an emotional issue will attract many heretofore disinterested voters among the laboring people that could work against the Republicans. Anyway it happened in 1952 when a Right-To-Work proposal was presented to the people and was narrowly defeated but it also led to ouster of many Republican incumbents.

It will be with relief that these two proposals be settled so that the legislators can get down to the more productive task of settling the budget. This year, the financial controversy should not be as divisive. The revenue projections of the governor and the Legislature are less than \$3.5 million apart. This isn't much, as compared with the \$16 million difference last year.