

Legislature will get committee's tax plans

Lumber Tax Mandate

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By BEN J. PLASTINO

Post-Register political editor

State Sen. Dane Watkins, R-Idaho Falls, Legislative Council's Tax Structure Study Committee co-chairman, said Monday the information gathered by the group's five subcommittees will be studied late this year to consider recommendations for the 1984 Idaho Legislature.

"I think that as result of the information we get from this subcommittees we can start considering legislation in the next Legislature that will ease the property tax burden and imposed a more equitable tax," Watkins said. "It is the start of a major tax reform."

The property tax subcommittee, chaired by Sen. Vearl Crystal, R-Rigby, will meet Tuesday

at at 9 a.m. at the House Caucus Room to explore what taxes can be imposed other than the property tax.

The intergovernmental relations subcommittee, which Watkins heads, will be the last one to meet at 9:30 a.m. Sept. 23 at the House Caucus Room.

The miscellaneous tax and user fee tax subcommittee chaired by Rep. Rachel Gilbert, D-Boise; sales tax issue subcommittee headed by Rep. Don Loveland, R-Boise; and the income tax subcommittee under Watkins met last month.

Watkins and Crystal plan to leave Wednesday for Coeur d'Alene where they will be the guests of the Idaho Forest Projects Council. They will view lumber plants and holdings in

an effort to become better acquainted with timber taxing proposals. Watkins said the Legislature changed the lumber tax system in the last session. Members of the Senate Finance Committee and the House House Conservation and Resources Committee were invited.

The income tax subcommittee session produced interesting information, Watkins said.

A large delegation was on hand to protest a writ of mandate that sent four persons to jail for failure to file state income tax returns.

This writ was drafted by the Idaho Tax Commission authorizing such action, explained Watkins.

Watkins said the protesters complained it empowered district judges to send alleged violators to jail without due process of law and

that it lacked constitutional safeguards.

"They likely have some cause for complaint and the committee will look further into the matter," Watkins said.

He said such a practice is a departure from past procedures, adding Oregon is the only other state to have it.

Representatives of the Certified Public Accountants also appeared to oppose the Job Investment Credit law on grounds that it incurred so much paper work that it reduced incentives to take advantage of the law.

Watkins invited all interested persons to appear before any of the subcommittees or contact him on any proposals that may be helpful in easing the property tax burden.