Legislature passes key measures in final days

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A number of important bills were passed but almost unnoticed in the final windup flurry of the Idaho Legislature last week.

Included was a second bill that would make local land-use planning optional but faces a likely veto by Gov. John V. Evans.

House Bill 741, which would allow county commissioners and city councils to choose whether to comply with 1975 Local Land Use Planning Act, was approved on a 19-16 almost straight party line vote.

Earlier, the Senate gave final legislative approval House Bill 641 which would allow county and city officials to vote on the same option.

Both bills were sponsored by Rep. Lyman Winchester, R-Kuna.

In the debate Sen. James Auld, R-Boise, said about 17 percent of the cities and counties have not complied with the act but Sen. John Peavey, D-Carey, said the 1975 planning law does not dictate what kind of local plans must be adopted.

He also said the law is supported by the Farm Bureau Federarion because it protects farms, feedlots and dairies from encroachment by housing development.

The Senate also passed a $215,000 compromise to finance the divison of Economic and Community Affairs. It augments $129,000 passed earlier but Gov. Evans said this would only allow administering the $6.5 million federal block grant for community development.

The appropriation brings the general funds total for DECA to $344,000 which is $200,000 below the government budget recommendation of $544,000 but enough to keep DECA operatng.

Sen. David Little, R-Emmett, JFAC co-chairman, said the new bill would support six positions for administration, industrial location and businsess asistance, economic data compilation and distribution, and international trade development.

Only two senators opposed the measure, Sen. Dean Van Engelen, R-Burley; and Walter Yarbrougb, R-Grand View, who said they felt the funding was unjustified.

Sen. Mike Mitchel, D-Lewiston, said the funding will particularly help small business because big business can take care of itself.

Also passed were raises for elected state officials and judges but they were less than originally proposed.

This included governor from $40,000 to $50,000, lieutenant governor from $12,000 to $14,000, secretary of state, auditor and treasurer, each from $28,000to $35,000, attorney general from $35,000 to $42,000, state school superintendent from $28,000 to $40,000, supreme court judges form $43,000 to $47,300 and district judges from $41,000 to $45,300.

The Senate insisted on lower judge salaries from those passed by the House while the House trimmed the salaries for the state officials from those passed in the House.