House Rejects Reseate Matter

But Action Is Considered Possibly Moot

By JAMES H. GILLIS
(Times-Picayune Staff Correspondent)

BATON ROUGE, La. — While the Senate was in the process of accepting reapportionment legislation as fiscal in the present legislative session, the House was in the process of defeating three such resolutions as nonfiscal.

As the House was in the midst of this operation, Speaker John S. Garrett said that what the House was doing had become "moot" because members must now accept for consideration the bills given the fiscal label in the Senate.

It is now certain that the House will consider reapportionment legislation and only a vote of a majority of the members will be required for it to pass.

Rep. Richard P. Guidry of Galliano by a vote of 89 to 0 obtained consent of the House for introduction of a concurrent resolution setting a limit of $212.5 million in the total principal amount of bonds to finance the New Orleans Domed Stadium project.

The resolution would limit the amount of bonds issued by the Louisiana Stadium andExposition District Commission to the $15.5 million already sold and the $115 million since authorized for sale. However, the resolution provides that if circumstances clearly beyond the control of the board of commission, such as acts of God, force majeure, strikes, war or natural catastrophe such as hurricanes or other weather disturbances and floods cause need for additional funds for completion of the project once the same is under construction, the approval of the Legislature of Louisiana shall be secured for the raising of such funds through the issuance of bonds.

The resolution further directs the commission "to take whatever steps necessary to insure that the proper completion of the project be effected within the limitations imposed by this resolution, and that the ability of the project to fulfill its purpose not be impaired in any manner whatsoever."

The house also passed 67 to 11 a concurrent resolution by Rep. T. T. Fields of Farmerville to prohibit the trustees of state-funded retirement systems from investing in Domed Stadium bonds without a majority vote of the entire membership of the systems.

BOND CREDIBILITY

Fields said the purpose of the bill was to "dispel the fear that the systems are getting tied up with the bonds of the Domed Stadium."

Later, Rep. Carol W. Bauer of Franklin asked permission of the House under the three-fifths rule to introduce the reapportionment legislation which the Senate admitted earlier in the day.

During the reapportionment debate Bauer told the House that "in Mississippi a federal court has now done what their Legislature could have." Bauer said the federal court plan in Mississippi "is amazingly similar" to the proposed plan for reapportionment of the Louisiana Legislature.

"This is our opportunity to meet our responsibilities under the basic law and the Constitution of Louisiana," Bauer said.

Bauer warned that the state voters "are not going to want you to come back in special session and spend several hundred thousand dollars because you did not meet your responsibilities." He also observed that the voters "are not particularly interested in the legislators coming down here and protecting themselves."

Rep. Richard P. Guidry of Galliano warned that the courts would not accept the plan under which 10 representatives were to be elected from districts instead of the mixture of single and multiple member districts contained in the proposed reapportionment bills.

Following rejection of the resolution to admit the first alternate measure, Rep. Clyde F. Bel Jr. of New Orleans took the floor to oppose the admission of the bill to reapportion the House.

"I am opposed to reapportionment, but I am opposed to reapportionment at this time," Bel said.

Bel contended that final federal census figures on populations by city blocks would not be available until August and it was not feasible to reapportion metropolitan areas without these figures.

Then, noting that sentiment for reapportionment was being sparked by Jefferson Parish elements, Bel predicted the federal courts would not accept the proposed plan under which 10 House members would be elected at-large from that parish.

Rep. Eugene McGehee of Baton Rouge urged members of the New Orleans delegation to vote for the introduction of the reapportionment measure to reapportion the House, reminding them that the Legislature at last year's session had passed a great deal of legislation unfavorable to the City of New Orleans and its administration.

Rep. Jimmy D. Long of Natchitoches said he could not vote for introduction of reapportionment because it would transfer Natchitoches Parish from its present single member district status into a new district with an abutting area from which two representatives would be elected.