

Rep. Herman discusses comparable worth

By DENISE WEAVER
Collegian Staff Writer

State Rep. Lynn Herman, R-Centre, said Wednesday he does not believe comparable worth legislation — which would allow the government to set wages to eliminate discrimination against occupations dominated by women — will be passed by the state House of Representatives.

Herman addressed the Centre County Personnel Association during a breakfast meeting on comparable worth legislation, right-to-know proposals and others issues that could have a large impact on places of employment.

The bill defines comparable worth as the monetary worth of one job in a salary system in comparison to the worth of other jobs in that system. Criteria used to determine and evaluate comparability of jobs within one salary system would include skill, knowledge, physical demands, responsibility and work conditions.

Herman explained that the comparable worth bill is aimed at getting the government involved in wage setting and evaluating employees' skills comparable to their jobs.

Herman said he is in favor of equal pay for equal work but does not believe the government should interfere in the private sector by evaluating jobs and setting wages.

"There is job discrimination out there but I don't think comparable worth is the way to measure it," he said. "Personnel administrators should realize job discrimination (can and does occur) and try to avoid it."

Herman also discussed right-to-know proposals, which would protect workers by informing them of the hazards of dangerous products and substances they may encounter or work with.

Route 144 truck traffic discussed

The problem of truck traffic on Route 144 could be alleviated by requiring highway safety improvements such as traffic lights and road signs, state Rep. Lynn Herman said yesterday.

Speaking at a State College Area Chamber of Commerce transportation committee meeting, Herman, R-Centre, explained that state Transportation Secretary Thomas Larson had proposed banning trucks from Route 144.

Herman said the ban would reroute trucks to Route 322, instead of routes 144 or 322, and onto the State College bypass, which is not yet completed.

A long-term consideration Herman mentioned would be to build a bypass around Centre Hall and Pleasant Gap. A truck traffic analysis by PennDOT on the routes has been completed, Herman said, but the results have not been received.

Herman also gave a progress report on the State College bypass construction, saying it is scheduled to be completed in mid-December. The \$1.4 million project, which began in August 1984, will reroute traffic around State College. The Elmwood Street construction is completed and the street is now open.

On other subjects, Herman mentioned that the 496 acres in Rush Township that make up the Mid-State Airport are for sale.

"I see potential with the hangar and the runways there and it could be a job development center," Herman said. He also told the transportation committee that the Senior Citizens Shared Ride program will be restricted to senior citizens in rural areas.

Senior citizens pay 10 percent of the cost of a ride and the state lottery pays the remainder, he said.

—by Susan Houseman

Some members of the audience were vocal in opposing the bill. Richard Cook, industrial relations director at Centre Engineering, 2820 E. College Ave., said afterwards that his main concern with the proposal is that if an employee does not follow company safety procedures the employer is considered personally liable.

"No employers have a real objection to their employees' right-to-know, but it is with employees' negligence when they don't follow procedures," Cook said.

"The courts are saying that it is no longer good enough to just post warning signs and train employees anymore," he added. "We must now stand over them and make sure they wear the protective clothing provided and follow safety procedures."

In addition, Herman discussed the Alcoholics Insurance Coverage Act, which provides workers with drug, alcohol and mental illness benefits.

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