

Published: 02.25.2005

Legislative Briefing

Pickup trucks

Arizona motorists would no longer be able to transport children in the open beds of their pickup trucks under the terms of legislation approved Thursday on a 7-2 vote by the House Transportation Committee.

House Bill 2532 would make it a crime to have anyone under age 18 in the pickup bed unless there was a camper shell or the truck was in a parade. The law would not apply if the vehicle was on a road with a posted speed of 35 mph or less - assuming the vehicle was not driving faster than that.

Previous efforts to outlaw the practice have failed amid complaints, largely from rural lawmakers, that some people cannot afford larger vehicles that can hold all their children. The bill now goes to the full House.

Military pay

Active-duty military personnel would get a one-year break from having to pay income taxes on their pay under the terms of legislation given preliminary approval Thursday by the Senate.

Sen. Jack Harper, R-Surprise, said current law exempts only combat pay differential but not the base pay. Senate Bill 1027 says any active-duty pay is not subject to state tax.

The measure would apply only for 2006 at a cost to the state of about \$10 million.

Skin cancer

Senators gave preliminary approval Thursday to requiring all public and charter schools to teach youngsters about the dangers of skin cancer.

Sen. Barbara Leff, R-Paradise Valley, said Arizona has the highest rate of skin cancer in the nation. She said Senate Bill 1297 would mandate what might be only 15 to 20 minutes a year to explain to youngsters, at a grade-appropriate level, how they should shield themselves to prevent getting what can be a fatal disease.

Opponents like Sen. Jack Harper, R-Surprise, said the state should not impose requirements on schools that should be left to parents.

Capitol Media Services