

**GENERAL NEWS**



**Education bills face assembly**  
 FRANKFORT, Ky. (AP) - The House version of legislation to allow teachers to retire with full benefits after 27 years instead of 30 years was approved Thursday by the Senate Education Committee.  
 House Bill 178 is sponsored by Rep. Caroline White, D-Bartonsville. The Senate passed a companion bill.  
 The committee also approved:  
 - HB875, which amended by the committee would remove legal requirements for achievement testing in Kentucky schools. Legislation that created the Kentucky Essential Skills Test expires June 30 and that is not being renewed.  
 - The new legislation would require testing in grades 3, 5, 7 and 10 for purposes of comparing Kentucky pupils to those in other states. Testing would be required in every grade to identify remediation cases.  
 - HB872, which would give local school boards, in disciplinary cases against teachers, an alternative to firing. Boards could also suspend teachers with or without pay, or issue public or private reprimands.  
 - HB792, to place kindergarten pupils under the state compulsory attendance law.  
 - HB716, to create a separate governing board for adult vocational education.  
 - HB543, to remove an exemption from class-size limits for art classes. The committee deleted a section of the bill to require children beginning school to have social Security numbers.

**Drivers allowed to drive after certain convictions**  
 FRANKFORT, Ky. (AP) - A bill to let suspended drivers travel back and forth to work on an "occupational license" was approved Thursday by the Senate Transportation Committee.  
 A person would get the license only once and would have to pay a special fee, under House Bill 531. If caught driving in violation of the license, the motorist would have to pay an additional fine and all driving privileges would be halted.  
 The committee amended the bill to let the special license after a second offense for any crime. The bill also would allow only driving from home to work and back.  
 The earlier version allowed an individual to drive to meet family obligations.

**Bill to aid firemen questioned**  
 FRANKFORT, Ky. (AP) - A bill designed to help volunteer fire departments recoup the cost of fighting fires on property of non-residents was watered down by the House Counties and Special Services Committee on Wednesday.  
 Senate Bill 37 originally would have allowed the departments to charge \$500 per hour for fighting fires on property whose owners had not paid a \$50 annual fee for membership in a fire protection association.  
 It also would have allowed court actions, with fines up to \$10,000, against non-members who refused to pay the hourly charge.  
 As amended by the committee, the bill would allow fire departments to charge non-members \$100 per fire call, plus \$50 for involuntary membership.  
 Rep. Dick Castelman, D-Mayfield, opposed diluting the bill, saying, "It's hard for a volunteer fire department to operate with these firebreakers."  
 But Rep. Mark Farrow, D-Shamrock, said it was "substantially ridiculous ... to say you're going to charge people \$500 an hour, or if they don't pay that, you're going to get \$10,000."

**Baby bottle practice can lead to dental problems**

Most people don't know it, but the common practice of putting a baby to bed with a bottle can lead to serious dental health problems, warns Kentucky Department for Health Services officials.

"Bottle mouth," a preventable dental condition that can destroy a baby's teeth, is caused when a bottle with sweetened liquid - milk, formula, fruit juice, sweetened water, and drinks - is left in the mouth at bedtime. While the baby sleeps, the liquid pools around the teeth, turns to acid and attacks tooth enamel.

Robert Fowler, D.M.D., of the department's dental health program says that decay of baby teeth can cause permanent dental problems.

"If baby teeth are damaged and not repaired," he said, "permanent teeth can come in out of alignment or crooked."

And gum disease can result from poor dental hygiene. Bottle mouth can lead to infection and pain for the youngsters.

Dr. John Mink, a pediatric dentist and a University of Kentucky College of Dentistry professor, says that repair of baby teeth can be traumatic and expensive.

"We see a lot of bottle mouth cases among children 18 months to 2 years old," he said. "That's an extremely difficult age group to treat, and it's very traumatic for the child to have teeth pulled or crowned at that age."

Treatment of this type can cost thousands of dollars," said Mink, who characterizes bottle mouth as "common," but "completely preventable."

The first step in prevention, Fowler says, is not giving a bottle with sweetened liquid at bedtime. "If parents must give the baby a bottle at bedtime or naptime, it should be filled with plain water," he said.

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**Truck bill is delayed**  
 FRANKFORT, Ky. (AP) - Consideration of a bill to reinstate the weight-distance tax on large trucks was delayed Tuesday after an amendment was proposed to lower the rate at travel in Kentucky, replace the weight-distance tax by 1986.  
 Many Kentucky truckers oppose the weight-distance tax because they say they are unfairly charged while many out-of-state truckers avoid payment altogether.  
 The bill passed by the House would levy a rate of 2.85 cents for each mile traveled in the state by trucks that weigh more than 60,000 pounds. That would reduce an estimated \$40 million per year.  
 An additional levy of 1.15 cents per mile would be imposed until the state recouped the \$63 million lost this year when the decal tax was raised to \$10.  
 An amendment proposed by Sen. Joe Wright, D-Herold, would reduce the rate to 2.85 cents and stipulate the additional levy of 1.15 cents would end on June 30, 1988.  
 Wright's amendment would mean the state would get about \$11 million less than through the higher tax.  
 Wright recommended the Senate Appropriations and Revenue Committee pass over the measure to give members a chance to consider the amendment.  
 Transportation Secretary Mills D. Bryant said he opposed the lower rate.  
 "That does not, in my opinion, let the truckers pay their fair share," Bryant said.

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