

THE STATE — Columbia, S.C., Thursday, August 26, 1976

Committee To Sponsor Bill Again

By United Press International

A legislative committee studying duplication in post-secondary education agreed Wednesday to try again next year to get a bill through the legislature eliminating that duplication.

A bill, authored by committee Chairman Sen. Robert C. Lake, D-Newberry, passed the Senate the last day of the 1976 General Assembly session, but was not acted on by the House.

Lake's bill revamps the Commission on Higher Education, removing members of the state's colleges from the commission and requiring it to approve college-level courses in technical education centers as well as colleges.

Sen. Allen R. Carter, D-Charleston, said he opposes Lake's bill, saying there is not enough information yet to draft an effective measure. Carter said Wednesday he believes a "disinterested" party such as the Legislative Audit Council should gather facts on higher education institutions and technical education centers before another bill is written.

"It is my feeling that one of the duties of the Audit Council should be to audit higher education," Carter said. "This bill says the Higher Education Commission is going to do lots of things that I don't think it is capable of doing."

But Lake said the committee has already found a great deal of overlapping. He said a bill similar to his is necessary.

"We heard in this committee from the commissioner of higher education, and the general consensus was the commission couldn't do anything because it was hamstrung by the trustees from each institution trying to protect their own interests," Lake said. "The college trustees are the ones who fought this bill last year, the University of South Carolina Board of Trustees Chairman T. Eston Marchant fought this bill in the legislature through his law partner, Sen. Walter J. Bristow."

"Marchant doesn't want to come off the commission because he wants to protect USC, but this bill was designed to eliminate this partisan situation."

Carter said during the committee's meeting Wednesday he still objects to the technical education schools being controlled in any way by the Higher Education Commission although another bill passed the legislature returning most of the governing power for the technical schools to the local technical education boards.

But Rep. Norma C. Russell, R-Lexington, said academic courses offered by the technical schools were found to be duplications of those offered in colleges in the same area, and that is why the technical schools were put under the Higher Education Commission bill.

"We felt the TEC schools should come under this because there was so much duplication, and it was a waste of the taxpayers' money," she said.

Carter agreed, but said technical schools shouldn't offer college-preparatory courses at all.

One committee member pointed out it was the job of the committee to gather the facts, but Carter said the committee's \$5,000 budget did not allow for that.

"We didn't have enough funds to do this last year, and we don't have enough funds to do it this year," he said.