

Lawmakers iron out plebiscite issues

by **Limtiaco**

Daily News

Lawmakers yesterday passed a bill to resolve confusion about the political status of the island, and confirmed David Soledad as Department of Labor Director.

They also voted to override the Governor's veto of a bill that strengthens the Legislature's investigatory powers by establishing penalties for those who refuse to cooperate with investigations.

Lawmakers approved Bill 443, which makes it clear that the July plebiscite will be postponed until the November general election, and the Guam Election Commission decides the island is ready for the self-determination vote.

The bill also gives the election commission permission to promulgate temporary rules and regulations for the November election, and permanent rules are created for the next year.

Author Sen. Simon Sanchez, however, said the election commission was concerned that the plebiscite reform bill passed by lawmakers during the last legislative session was flawed, because it

WHAT'S NEXT

▲ Legislative session is scheduled to resume at 2 p.m. today at the session hall in Hagåtña. There will be a hearing on the nomination of Ed Kabina as Guam Police Chief at 8:30 a.m. in the Legislature's public hearing room. At 10:30 a.m., at the rules committee's hearing room, there will be a public hearing on a bill related to Guam Memorial Hospital. Lawmakers also will discuss the reappointment of three hospital board members during that hearing.

called for a 30-day delay before its provisions take effect.

Lawmakers also passed two bills related to the government's retirement fund.

The first, by Sen. Larry Kasperbauer, R-Dededo, describes what happens when employees enrolled in the defined contribution retirement plan decide to leave government service and cash out their contribution.

"It states that the employer's contribution ... will be distributed

to the fund members," Kasperbauer said. "It would distribute the money to them, rather than leaving the money in the fund to be used for operations."

The second bill, by Sen. Vicente Pangelinan, D-Barrigada, reopens the enrollment period for the defined contribution retirement plan to allow employees enrolled in the defined benefit plan to switch over. It also calls for an open enrollment period each year.

The defined benefit plan is the government's original retirement plan, and guarantees retirees a certain amount of retirement pay, based on their highest salaries and years of service.

The defined contribution plan, created several years ago for all new government employees, is similar to a 401K retirement plan, and retirement pay is based on how well the employees' investments performed.

Lawmakers also discussed a bill to make the ko'ko', or Guam Rail, the island's official bird, and confirmed several people to serve as board members for the Public Utilities Commission, the Guam Housing and Urban Renewal Authority, the Civil Service Commission and the Port Authority of Guam.

Senators iro

By **Steve Limtiaco**

Pacific Daily News

Senators yesterday passed a bill to clear up confusion about the date of the political status plebiscite, and confirmed David Dell'Isola as Department of Labor director.

They also voted to override the governor's veto of a bill that strengthens the Legislature's investigatory powers by establishing criminal penalties for those who refuse to cooperate with investigations.

Lawmakers approved Bill 443, which makes it clear that the July 1 plebiscite will be postponed until the November general election, or until the Guam Election Commission decides the island is ready to vote on the self-determination issue. The bill also gives the election commission permission to adopt temporary rules and regulations for the November election, until permanent rules are created and approved next year.

Bill author Sen. Simon Sanchez, R-Tamuning, said the election commission was concerned that the election reform bill passed by lawmakers during the last legislative session was flawed, because it