

VCF COASTAL COMMISSION RP

Coastal office in Santa Cruz victim of veto

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SACRAMENTO — The California Coastal Commission's office in Santa Cruz will apparently be closed as a result of Gov. George Deukmejian's veto yesterday of a bill that would have given the state agency the right to decide which of its regional offices to keep open.

Deukmejian, who acted on five dozen bills before leaving for the state Republican convention in Anaheim this weekend, also signed into law two bills that will eliminate a rule requiring community college students to attend the campuses located in the districts in which they live.

The veto of the Coastal Commission bill was not unexpected. The commission, created by a voter initiative in 1972 to oversee coastal development, had defied Deukmejian by refusing to close regional offices in Santa Cruz and Santa Barbara that the governor had chopped out of the 1987-88 budget.

The commission, contrary to the administration, contended that the initiative gave it the right to decide how to spend any of the money it was allocated. The bill, by Assemblyman Sam Farr, D-Carmel, would have ended the debate by expressly allowing the commission to decide which offices to keep open.

Deukmejian said the bill would be, "an inappropriate intrusion into the authority of the executive branch" and would allow the offices to stay open "in derogation of action by the governor."

Deukmejian and the commission have been at odds since he took office. He has sharply slashed the commission's budget and staff.

The so-called "free-flow" community college bills by Assemblyman Tom Hayden, D-Santa Monica, and Sen. Robert Beverly, R-Manhattan Beach, will allow students to attend the community colleges of their choice. Opponents of the bill had argued that it will encourage some students to flee inner city schools, leaving them with smaller enrollments and budgets.

But Deukmejian said since the students are adults, "There is no reason why they should not be able to select which campus they want to attend to pursue their education." In addition, he said there will be more incentive for community college districts to offer solid educational programs.

Beverly's bill also restores \$86.6 million in aid to the state's urban school districts that Deukmejian had previously cut out of the budget. The restoration of funds was part of a trade-off for Democratic votes on a \$1.1 billion tax rebate won by the governor.