

MEETING MINUTES
HUMAN SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 11, 1987

The meeting of the human services subcommittee was called to order by Chairman Cal Winslow at 8:07 a.m. on February 11, 1987 in room 108 of the state capitol building.

ROLL CALL: All members were present.

(37b:266) At this time, Chairman Manning resumed the meeting for testimony on House Bill 600.

Rep Cal Winslow, House District 89, introduced HB 600, "An Act Terminating State Assumption of County Welfare and Protective Services". He stated that those who were present last session were forced to look at a general assistance (GA) caseload that seems to be out of control. Also last session, and even more visible now, he said, is the migration of individuals to the state assumed counties and currently those counties represent 90% of the general assistance caseload. County assumption went into effect in 1983, and in 1985 a lawsuit was filed which set the general assistance payment level to the AFDC caseload. He stated that this increased the payment level on general assistance caseloads in all the state assumed counties. He noted that some of the now-assumed counties were friends of the court in the lawsuit against the state and advocated higher assistance payments. He stated that during the last session there was an attempt to reduce caseload growth by removing able bodied individuals, recognizing that Montana is the only state west of the Mississippi except California to offer general assistance to able bodied individuals; the counties again filed as friends of the court to make sure the state had to pay able bodied individuals. He stated it brings to light the problem of accountability. In serving on the human services subcommittee for three (3) terms, he felt there were three (3) goals that needed to be achieved: (1) setting of priorities, (2) reorganization, and (3) responsibility. He stated HB 600 accomplished those goals and brought the general assistance program to a level of accountability. He stated because of the court interpretations, the state does not have any kind of control over general assistance. However, he said, it has moved beyond general assistance, and now includes state medical (5,000 medical bills last month, 40% not general assistance recipients). He stated that if the state was permitted to control this area, possibly this legislation would not have been necessary. But, he said, the very counties that were helped out through state assumption made sure the state had no control, and now we have to face something that is maybe not

desirable, but necessary. This bill removes the mill levy limit and allows the counties to establish criterion for their general assistance programs. Although the bill is written to return the program back to the counties July 1, 1987, he stated he would like to change that date to January 1, 1988, giving the counties six (6) months to establish criterion, and also give the mill levy back to them on July 1, 1987, which gives them the November property payments for funding.

OPPONENTS

(37b:377) Gordon Morris, Montana Association of Counties (MACo), spoke in opposition to HB 600. He presented a property tax analysis (exhibit 2) of the proposed mill levies needed in the twelve (12) assumed counties to maintain the present general assistance program in those counties. He stated that the proposed mill increases would rely on an increase in property taxes at a time when public opinion is against such an increase. He stated he appreciated the problems of maintaining and funding general assistance in the state, but stated this was not a county accountability problem. He further stated county participation and help did not aid the problem, even if counties did file as friends of the court against the state in the lawsuits. From a prioritization standpoint, he stated the non-assumed counties do establish criterion, and that criterion is basically consistent across the state of Montana. From a reorganization standpoint, he stated there was no reason to believe that services will be better delivered if they were directly administered by county commissioners and local welfare boards. He further stated that the population of 392,200 in the twelve (12) counties was the majority in terms of state voting population; and if the legislature passed HB 600, they would reap tremendous political pressure from that constituency. He ended by stating that part of the bill intrigued him; that the bill could be interpreted as a show of confidence in county commissioners, and that the counties did not want the general assistance program in 1983, and do not want it now in 1987.

(37b:526) Dick Gasvoda, Cascade County Commissioner, continued on the testimony of Mr Morris relative to Cascade County. He stated the proposed mill value needed to maintain all the present general assistance services in Cascade County would require an increase in mills in excess of 42.6 mills for welfare alone, nearly four (4) million dollars. He stated that, in relation to the migration of individuals to state assumed counties, he believed that people migrated from rural into the urban areas, which accounted for the higher caseload in state assumed counties. He also stated

that with the poor economy, tightening the criterion does not alleviate the needs of the citizens. He stated Cascade County cannot support the financial burden of assuming the county general assistance program and urged rejection of the proposal.

(37b:666) Howard Gipe, Flathead County Commissioner, stated Flathead is living within the 12 mill limit, but that they are opposed to returning the GA program to the counties. He stated a new building was built in Kalispell, where the state is paying \$99,000 a year rent, and if HB 600 goes into effect, this building would no longer be utilized by the state and the county would not pick up the cost of that facility. He further stated that migration was caused by more services being available in larger counties, drawing people in, and was not a county problem. He also objected to the manner in which personnel were handled. The state, he said is willing to give the financial responsibility for this program, but is not willing to turn over other state district offices, like Rehab. He advocated complete control at the county level instead of state participation through district and area agency offices. He also advocated allotments of the necessary funding for these programs for county distribution to the population in those counties. He stated the bill gave an open pocket book to the counties as long as they went to the local people for taxes.

Dave Fuller, Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners for Lewis and Clark County, stated that if it was the decision of the legislature to return welfare to the counties, so be it. He has no problem with running the program in Lewis and Clark County. He stated the problem is funding under the existing statutes. He stated a proposed 15 mills would be needed on top of the current levy for welfare alone. He stated he would probably support the bill if the legislation would give funding sources other than property taxes.

(38a:008) Judie Tilman, representing Don Peoples, Butte-Silver Bow Chief Executive, read her prepared text (exhibit 3) in opposition to HB 600. She stated Butte-Silver Bow would, out of necessity, have to implement very stringent guidelines for recipient eligibility for General Relief to alleviate the financial burden that HB 600 would place on the county. She stated that the county presently has 426 persons on GA and state medical at a cost of \$1.4 million, excluding protective services, administration and other program costs. She added that in order to make the administration of the state's constitutional guarantees for welfare equitable among the counties it is necessary that the state have the responsibility for the welfare system.

(38a:045) Marion Davis, Ravalli County Commissioner, endorsed Mr Morris' statements in opposition to HB 600. He stated in response to migration, the people who are moving are state people, not county people, and he felt they are to be taken care of, regardless of their place of residence, by the state. He felt GA was not a county problem, but a state problem. He presented the statistics of the last four (4) months (Oct - Jan) of the caseload in Ravalli, which included able bodied and infirmed. He stated "misfits", people who are able bodied but can't cope with anything, are grouped into the able bodied statistics. He stated the county does not have the revenue to fund the current GA program in the county, and reiterated that GA individuals are state people and this is a state problem, and that where ever they go, the state should provide for them.

(38a:090) Dave Fisher, Chairman of the Butte-Silver Bow Council of Commissioners, read his prepared text (exhibit 4) in opposition to HB 600. He stated the Council of Commissioners are not trained in welfare administration and ill equipped to handle the GA program, as well as being only part time commissioners on a small stipend for the services they currently perform. He stated it was unfair to ask counties to take the responsibility of the GA individuals who have migrated into those counties, but rather they should be a state responsibility. He stated that when welfare is a responsibility of the state, local inequities are eliminated and the financial burden is properly placed.

(38a:128) Tom Brophy, a member of the Council of Commissioners for Butte-Silver Bow, read his prepared text, (exhibit 1) -in opposition of HB 600. He stated the legislation would impact the assets of older citizens and those already over burdened with taxes, leaving the options of bankruptcy and suicide. He stated welfare, by court decision, is a constitutional duty of the state with its much broader revenue base.

(38a:165) Rep Bradley asked if any of the spokesmen from the counties agreed with Dave Fuller's position of assuming the counties if there were other options besides property taxes to raise revenue.

Gordon Morris, MACo, stated Mr Fuller's idea was very intriguing, and something MACo would look at kindly. Two avenues could be pursued: return the county assumption with the revenue source to fund the program, or 100% state assumption of the general assistance program through a consumption tax or other revenue source. MACo would support either option as long as property tax relief was part of the package.

(38a:186) Sen Hims1 noted the disparity in the program, and the difference in the statistics presented in exhibit 2, (example: Lewis and Clark vs Flathead). He asked if the disparity was due to administration or generosity that drove up program costs. No one in the audience responded to his question.

(38a:220) Rep Connelly asked if food banks or local volunteer support that would affect the expenditure figures. Again there was no response from the audience.

Rep Bradley asked if any of the county spokesmen had any suggestions as to how to deal with this problem. Marion Davis, Ravalli Co, stated the state could set the guidelines, laws, and restrictions for coordinators to follow in running the program. If this was done, a universal program in the state would then evolve. He reiterated these were state, not county people that were involved.

(38a:259) Dave Fisher, Butte-Silver Bow, also commented on Rep Bradley's question by stating that the state had a bigger piggy bank on which to draw revenue and alternate sources of funding and were better able to fund this program. He stated it wasn't fair to take what he considered a statewide problem and put it on the local level.

(38a:275) Rep Bradley stated the price tag on state assumption has tripled since its inception. She asked where cuts could be made in the program. Dave Fisher responded that people are entitled to assistance, they are state people, its a state problem, that the burden should be distributed on a statewide basis, and didn't know where cuts could be made in the GA program.

Gordon Morris, MACo, noted the state is living with the economic consequences of the time, and the reason state assumption costs tripled was due to the stagnant economy; and not due to lack of administrative control. He stated that some counties could see problems with the system at the local level in 1983 and therefore opted for state assumption, because for them it was getting rid of a foreseeable problem; one the state could cope with.

(38a:329) Sen Hims1 asked if this was a state problem, why the other 44 counties were not asking for state assumption. Mr Morris stated the answer was obvious, the other 44 counties are levying less than the 12 mill limit for GA, and that a couple of counties will be asking for state assumption and its benefits effective July 1, 1987. These counties are at the magic threshold of 12 mills and state assumption is the viable alternative to the revenue shortfall they

would experience in not being able to levy more than 12 mills.

Sen Himsl further questioned Mr Morris if all the counties should participate in the GA program, since, in his opinion, it was a statewide problem. Mr Morris stated that if a revenue source at the state level could be provided to relieve all of the counties from levying mills for the program. He further stated that an equalization of the 12 mill levy in the state would adversely affect the 44 counties that currently levied less than 12 mills, mostly eastern counties.

(38a:366) Rep Switzer asked why the commissioners assumed an adversarial stance in the lawsuits against the state. Mr Morris stated Butte-Silver Bow and Missoula filed as friend of the court. Dave Fisher, Butte-Silver Bow, stated he did not know, other than a decision evolved from a public meeting, and further explained it was a state problem and the state's responsibility to be in charge of the welfare program. Tom Brophy, Butte-Silver Bow, said the Low Income group came before the council, their request was that they enter the suit as a plaintiff, and as a compromise they entered the suit as a friend of the court. He stated the GA program can be better administered by the state.

(38a:428) Sen Harding asked if the commissioners in the 12 assumed counties were interested in legislation that would have an amendment to the people to make a change in the constitution to stop court intervention in the legislative decisions. Howard Gipe, Flathead County, stated anything that is helpful to the state would help the counties also.

(38a:465) Rep Winslow then presented his closing remarks. He stated the issue was not one of money only, but also of setting criteria. He said this state can not longer afford the demand that is being placed upon it in the area of human services. He stated this committee knows, better than anybody in this legislature, what the state is facing in this area. The state is on the brink of a revolt against human services, and the reason that is going to happen is because we cannot make decisions or decide what our priorities are in the area of human services. Coming into the session, the governor's budget stated the human services share of the general fund would elevate from 25% to 29%. If priorities cannot be set during this session, he said the percentage could be 30% to 40% of the total general fund. At this level of excelleration, this could escalate to 50% to 60% of the entire general fund in two (2) more years, simply because we cannot make decisions. He reiterated that the man who stated we must look at human services from a humane standpoint is correct, and if we do that we have to

recognize the truly needy, otherwise the truly needy people are going to lose in the process of trying to take care of everybody. He stated Montana is quickly approaching the point of having more people on some form of assistance than working. The caseload in general assistance has gone from 730 to 2,000 in three (3) years. If we, as a legislature, were able to make the decisions to set the criteria, then we would not be facing this today, but we can't, and we have to recognize that some of the people who filed as friends of the court are the very people the legislature tried to help. He further noted that one of the comments that came up a number of times was that these are state people, in that case, this legislation and possibly counties aren't needed. The other programs in the state are state programs and state people are involved, but the counties have the ability to make decisions and set criteria; and in the welfare area it is appropriate, in fact in most states across the country, that is the way the program is handled, if they have welfare programs at all. He stated welfare is not a constitutional mandate; some states do not have welfare. He stated if this area cannot be controlled, we will see a revolt that will do away with welfare - period - and that is wrong, because we have those people who are infirmed and truly needy. In response to Mr Morris' comments, Rep Winslow stated that the first thing that needs to be recognized is that the counties are taking a "worst scenario" position. The counties are taking for granted that their caseload is going to have to stay the same. With this legislation, he said, they would have time to set criteria, and that criteria would establish, or give them the opportunity to remove individuals, such as able bodied, that would lower their caseload. He added the comment was made that individuals migrate to urban counties, but Mineral, Park and Powell counties are all rural areas. He stated it was mentioned that the criteria was uniform across the state, which is not true. Yellowstone county has 41 people on its caseload, and at this report, Gallatin county didn't have anyone. He stated that 50% of the population is represented in the twelve (12) assumed counties, but over 90% of the GA caseload is in those counties. The reason is because of the higher benefit level, including state medical and the GA payment level of \$210 dollars a month, compared to \$125 in the counties that establish their own limits. He commented he didn't enjoy bringing this before the committee, and that it was not easy to sit on this committee and set priorities when looking at people who are in need. He stated one area that has to be faced is the setting of priorities, and it is the humane thing to do - to take care of the truly needy.

(38b:000) Chairman Winslow called the meeting to order after a short recess.

Bill McLean, administrator of the Valley Vista Manor in Lewistown, spoke in opposition of the proposed freeze for nursing homes. He stated the nursing home industry is the second (2) most regulated industry in the nation, and described the problems faced by the nursing homes in operating costs, increased regulatory costs, and the level of care required by those entering the nursing home in relation to the types of care needed five (5) to ten (10) years ago. He stated health insurance is being offered at the private level that will pay for long term care, and it does not have to be at the skilled level.

(38b:200) Joan Ashley, Cooney Convalescent Home, Helena, spoke against the proposed freezes for nursing homes. She described the rising operational costs faced by her facility, and the clientele now being served who require highly skilled care, or intensive care treatment comparable to \$200 a day ICU care for which she is reimbursed only \$45.00. She stated the facilities can't make it on the current rates due to the rise in operational costs and regulatory costs. She added that her clientele are already out of resources, and are not able to contribute to their care.

(38b:342) Bill Leary, Montana Hospital Association, covered material presented in exhibit 5 in opposition to the proposed freeze on providers. His presentation included medicaid discount increase, revenue and the number of patients served, and cost shifting to third party and other patients to cover the deficit incurred with the Medicaid provision of services if the freeze passes. He stated currently 67% of the total medicaid payment in the state is paid by the federal government, one of the highest in the nation. He also asked that if an increase cannot be provided for the nursing homes providers, that the committee consider an increase to the physicians, who have not received an increase in six (6) years. Since this is an option, many physicians are opting to not serve medicaid patients, specifically Obstetricians and Gynecologists; which will result in an increase in mandatory, more expensive services.

(38b:607) Mr Leary stated the hospital association, through the PFP process, proposed an increase in the tobacco tax with most of the money raised to go into the general fund and be allocated for SRS programs.

In response to a question on the proposed Diagnostic Related Groupings (DRG's) from Chairman Winslow, Mr Leary stated the association had been working with SRS for over a year, and the original proposals by the association were rejected by SRS. The proposals were: (1) adopt federal DRG rates with adjustments for obstetricians and gynecologists, and (2)

establish a dual system, one (1) for rural hospitals and one (1) for the larger hospitals.

(39a:012) In response to a second question from Chairman Winslow, Mr Leary stated medicaid was going up on an inpatient basis because of the increased caseload.

(39a:054) Dave Lewis, DSRS, presented an update of medicaid projections compiled from current data available to the department. He stated that primary care was the major area of increase fueling the upward movement of medicaid costs. He stated the department would have to request an increase in the budget for the biennium in the amount of \$14.6 million in FY 1988 and \$20 million in FY 1989. The program base is \$150 million dollars, and these figures represent a 10% increase. The general fund impact is in excess of \$10 million over the executive budget, and represent the best estimates by the department. Mr Lewis stated primary care expenditures were \$46 million in 1985, \$57 million in 1986, and are estimated at \$85 million in 1988 and \$98 million in 1989. In the area of hospital services, the medicaid share of the total hospital bill was 7% in 1985 up to 9% in 1986. While the total hospital census is dropping, the medicaid caseload is taking a bigger share of the total hospital services.

(39a:118) Chairman Winslow stated the medicaid areas should be reviewed individually by the committee for their benefit.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 a.m. (39a:178)

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Cal Winslow", written over a horizontal line.

Cal Winslow, Chairman

Goodmorning, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I AM TOM BROPHY, A MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL OF COMMISSIONERS OF BUTTE-SILVER BOW AND AS SUCH I AM OPPOSED TO PASSAGE OF HB-600

HOWEVER, I AM ALSO FIRST VICE PRESIDENT OF THE BUTTE-SILVER BOW SENIOR CITIZEN'S COUNCIL AND ON BEHALF OF THE 7922 Seniors IN OUR COUNTY, 13.3% of WHOM LIVE BELOW THE POVERTY LEVEL I AGAIN APPEAR AS AN OPPONENT OF HB-600.

OUR OLDER CITIZENS THROUGH THEIR YEARS OF WORK, PLAY AND LIVING HAVE A HARVEST OF INSIGHT AND WISDOM TO SHARE. IT IS SAD THAT MANY OF THEM WHEN THEY OPEN THEIR EYES IN THE MORNING CAN ONLY HOPE AND PRAY THAT THEIR ASSETS WILL NOT RUN OUT BEFORE THEY CLOSE THEIR EYES FOR THE LAST TIME.

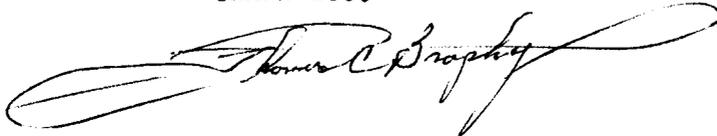
IF THE WELFARE PROGRAM IS RETURNED TO OUR COUNTY IT WILL MEAN AS YOU HAVE HEARD AN INCREASE IN EXCESS OF 40 MILLS TO MAINTAIN ESSENTIAL SERVICES. THIS MONEY WILL COME FROM OUR SENIOR CITIZENS WHO ARE NOW HARD PRESSED TO MAINTAIN THEIR HOMES, HEALTH AND DIGNITY AND IT WILL COME FROM OUR MIDDLE-AGED WORKERS WHO ARE ALREADY OVER-BURDENED WITH TAXES, MORTGAGE PAYMENT, LIVING COSTS AND THE EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN - OUR FUTURE LEADERS.

WITH THE CUTBACKS IN FEDERAL PROGRAMS AND OTHER ECONOMIC FACTORS WE REALIZE THAT YOU AS OUR LEGISLATORS HAVE SOME TOUGH DECISIONS TO MAKE AND WE HAVE CONFIDENCE THAT YOU WILL BE GUIDED BY FAIRNESS, COMPASSION AND WISDOM.

WELFARE BY COURT DECISIONS IS A CONSTITUTIONAL DUTY OF THE STATE WITH ITS MUCH BROADER REVENUE BASE AND I PRAY THAT YOU WILL KEEP IT THERE.

OUR SENIORS AND MIDDLE-AGED WORKERS, OUR TWO FASTEST GROWING CLASS OF CITIZENS CAN NOT AFFORD TO HAVE THE STATE'S BUDGET BALANCED ON THEIR SHOULDERS. THEY MUST HAVE OTHER OPTIONS THAN BANKRUPTCY AND SUICIDE. ON THEIR BEHALF I BEG YOU TO DEFEAT HB-600.

THANK YOU.



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2-11-87

**MONTANA
ASSOCIATION OF
COUNTIES**

EXHIBIT 2
DATE 2.11.89
HB _____

1802 11th Avenue
Helena, Montana 59601
(406) 442-5209

HB 600

PROPERTY TAX ANALYSIS

| <u>CO. NAME</u> | <u>TAXABLE VALUE</u> | <u>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</u> | <u>POPULATION</u> | <u>MILLS</u> |
|-----------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| CASCADE | \$92,168 | \$2,555,507 | 81,800 | 27.727 |
| DEER LODGE | 8,850 | 749,092 | 11,200 | 84.643 |
| FLATHEAD | 93,627 | 1,043,148 | 53,900 | 11.142 |
| LAKE | 31,480 | 445,946 | 20,400 | 14.166 |
| L/CLARK | 66,800 | 1,671,853 | 45,800 | 24.028 |
| LINCOLN | 37,506 | 592,126 | 18,700 | 15.788 |
| MINERAL | 5,625 | 98,034 | 3,700 | 17.428 |
| MISSOULA | 112,620 | 2,295,116 | 76,500 | 20.379 |
| PARK | 20,722 | 321,978 | 13,300 | 15.538 |
| POWELL | 13,821 | 155,117 | 6,900 | 11.223 |
| RAVALLI | 28,213 | 467,643 | 24,800 | 16.575 |
| SILVER BOW | 34,974 | 2,059,032 | 35,200 | 58.873 |
| TOTALS | \$546,406 | \$12,454,596 | 392,200 | 22.793 MILLS |

TESTIMONY
House Bill 600
Donald R. Peoples
Chief Executive
Butte-Silver Bow
Given By: Judie Tilman

Ladies & Gentlemen:

My name is Judie Tilman and I'm here today representing Butte-Silver Bow's Chief Executive Donald R. Peoples who had to be out of town today.

Butte-Silver Bow is very much opposed to House Bill 600. Mr. Peoples is a former chairman of the Urban Coalition that fought for the State Assumption of Welfare and Protective Services. The arguments that made State Assumption valid in 1982 hold true today, and may I add that we feel State Assumption has worked well.

The financial burden that this bill would place on Butte-Silver Bow staggers my mind. Butte-Silver Bow presently has 426 persons on General Relief. In Fiscal Year 85-86 approximately \$1.4 million was spent in Butte-Silver Bow on General Relief and General Relief Medical Programs. This translates to approximately 40 mills at the current value of a mill in Butte-Silver Bow. This \$1.4 million does not include the Protective Services, administration and other program costs that would on a pro rated basis be apportioned to the County. Therefore, in order to administer the Welfare system that is in place today, Butte-Silver Bow would be looking at a mill levy for Welfare of approximately 47-50 mills. Everyone must realize that this is an impossible burden to place on property tax payers.

Butte-Silver Bow would, out of necessity, have to implement

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very stringent guidelines for recipient eligibility for General Relief. However, in light of the State Constitution and recent Court decisions, we cannot be guaranteed that these restrictions would not be challenged in Court and I would assume it would be the sole responsibility of the County to defend itself, again at the expense of the property tax payer. If the County was not successful the potential exists for literally bankrupting the County Government.

Before the State assumption of Welfare, the State had the grant-in-aid program but this bill eliminates even that assistance for the Counties leaving the Federal Government as the only other real source of assistance. The Federal Government, however, has proposed putting more of the Welfare burden back on the States and local government.

It would seem evident that the Federal and State governments are unable to cope with the Welfare System and are therefore dumping it on the local governments who have no place to turn and very limited resources.

We must remember that a County's ability to fund a Welfare Program and its need for one do not necessarily go hand in hand.

In order to make the administration of the State's Constitutional guarantees for Welfare equitable among the counties it is necessary that the State have the responsibility for the Welfare System.

I urge you to defeat House Bill 600 as I feel it is a very short sighted approach to a very complex and long range problem.

EXHIBIT 7
DATE 2/1/80
HB 600

TESTIMONY
House Bill 600
Dave Fisher
Butte-Silver Bow

Ladies & Gentlemen:

My name is Dave Fisher and I am the Chairman of the Butte-Silver Bow Council of Commissioners. I am here to testify as an opponent to HB 600, the Repeal of the State Assumption of County Welfare and Protective Services.

In addition to the severe financial burden this bill would place on the twelve assumed counties, I am very concerned about the level of responsibility for developing, implementing and managing a welfare system that this bill places on the local county commissioners.

Our local Welfare offices are now directly responsible to the State office which is administered by people educated in all aspects of Welfare and Protective Services. These people are trained in sociology and law and are, therefore, well-versed in the human and legal issues that surround such a system. I realize that under this bill, the current local welfare staff would become county staff, many of whom would be retained and would be responsible for daily administration. This does not negate the fact that the Council of Commissioners who would become the ex-officio County Welfare Board is not trained in welfare administration.

To make the County Commissioners the board responsible to administer the County Welfare Program seems at best unfair. The Butte-Silver Bow Commissioners are composed of ^{PART TIME} commissioners

EXHIBIT 4
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HB _____

who receive a small stipend for the many hours of service they give to their community. HB 600 could cause an increase of approximately eight-ten meetings per month making the job one that for a person who is employed full-time elsewhere, is impossible to handle.

One other point I would like to make is that in our society, people are free to migrate from place to place. They most often move to cities with a greater array of services, hospitals, schools and the perceived notion of job availability, however, if they are unable for whatever reason to find a job, they often become dependent on that county's Welfare system. It would seem to me that it is unfair to place that burden on the community they migrated to, but rather it should be a State responsibility. When Welfare is a responsibility of the State, local inequities are eliminated and the financial burden is properly placed. We have no one to pass the responsibility to except the local taxpayer who is the same citizen we are all elected to represent and is already overburdened with taxes.

I would hope that this committee will take a very hard look at this bill and consider the ramifications it would have on local governments and local taxpayers.

MHA

EXHIBIT

DATE

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2-11-87

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HOSPITAL DATA BOOK

1986

A Report of Financial and Utilization
Indicators for Montana Hospitals
1985 Data

MONTANA HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 5119, HELENA, MT 59604, (406) 442-1911

MONTANA LOW-INCOME COALITION



P.O.Box 1029
107 West Lawrence
Helena, Montana 59624
(406) 449-8801

Statewide MONTANA ALLIANCE FOR PROGRESSIVE POLICY
MONTANA HRDC DIRECTOR ASSOCIATION
MONTANA LEGAL SERVICES EMPLOYEES
LOW INCOME SENIOR CITIZENS ADVOCATES
MONTANA SENIOR CITIZEN ASSOCIATION
NORTHERN ROCKIES ACTION GROUP

Helena LAST CHANCE PEACEMAKERS COALITION

Missoula LOW INCOME GROUP FOR HUMAN TREATMENT
NATIVE AMERICAN SERVICES AGENCY

Great Falls CONCERNED CITIZENS COALITION

Butte BUTTE COMMUNITY UNION

Bozeman BOZEMAN HOUSING COALITION

EX-117
2-11-87

February 11, 1987

For the record, my name is Marie Christopher. I represent the Montana Low Income Coalition -- which in turn represents thousands of low income residents of the state of Montana.

The Montana Low Income Coalition does not support HB600. Local county governments are burdened as it is. The present system, though flawed, needs a chance to work! This bill seems to be a case of robbing Peter to pay Paul. Local tax payers and property owners can not afford to provide the kind of service that is already in existence. In Butte-Silver Bow alone there would be a short-fall of hundreds of thousands of dollars.

M.L.I.C. is aware of the financial crisis that the state of Montana faces right now, but we feel that this is another unfair attempt to balance the budget on the backs of the poor. General Relief must remain in place to assist those of us that need it the most.

Thank you very much.

Marie Christopher
Montana Low Income Coalition

Home: 132-C W. Woolman
Butte MT 59701

Phone: 723-4819

VISITORS' REGISTER

HUMAN SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE

BILL NO. HB 600

DATE February 11, 1987

SPONSOR _____

DEPT _____

| NAME (please print) | Representing | SUPPORT | OPPOSE |
|---------------------|---------------------------|---------|--------|
| LOIS STENBECK | OSPD | | |
| HOWARD GIPÉ | Flathend Co. Commissioner | | ✓ |
| Gordon Morris | MACo. | | ✓ |
| Bill McLean | Valle Vista Manor | | ✓ |
| JOAN ASHLEY | comey convalescent Home | | ✓ |
| JUDITH TILMAN | Butte-Silver Bow | | ✓ |
| James A. Brophy | " " of Senior Citizens | | ✓ |
| DAVE FISHER | BUTTE SILVER BOW | | ✓ |
| RICHARD GASVODA | CASCADE Co Commissioner | | ✓ |
| Marion Davis | Ravalli Co Commissioner | | ✓ |
| SHAWN EGAN | BUTTE SILVER BOW | | ✓ |
| Rene Wheeler | self | | X |
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IF YOU CARE TO WRITE COMMENTS, ASK SECRETARY FOR WITNESS STATEMENT FORM.

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED STATEMENT WITH SECRETARY.