

MINUTES

**MONTANA SENATE
52nd LEGISLATURE - 2nd SPECIAL SESSION**

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Call to Order: By Senator Chet Blaylock, Chair, on July 18, 1992, at 8:05 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Chet Blaylock, Chairman (D)
Harry Fritz, Vice Chairman (D)
B.F. "Chris" Christiaens (D)
Bill Farrell (R)
H.W. Hammond (R)
Mignon Waterman (D)
Bill Yellowtail (D)

Members Excused: Robert Brown (R) and Dennis Nathe (R)

Staff Present: Eddy McClure (Legislative Council)

Please Note: These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

Announcements/Discussion: None.

HEARING ON HOUSE BILL 22

Presentation and Opening Statement by Sponsor:

Representative David Hoffman told the Committee House Bill 22 reduces state reimbursement to the counties for special education transportation from 100% to 50% and represents a general fund savings of \$800,000. The \$800,000 has been included in House Bill 2. He explained prior to 1991 transportation costs to the schools were cut 2/3 - 1/3 ratio. Special education was split in the reverse. In 1991 transportation was equalized (50-50) through legislation while special education was reimbursed at 100%. House Bill 22 will not deprive special education students of quality transportation. There has been an effort to integrate special education students into other student transportation programs.

Proponents' Testimony:

None.

Opponents' Testimony:

Bob Anderson, representing the Montana School Board's Association told the Committee House Bill 22 is a pass-back to the property tax payers.

Eric Feaver, Montana Education Association, stated his organizations opposition to transferring the tax burden back to the county to pay for a state program.

Terry Minnow, Montana Federation of Teachers told the Committee House Bill 22 is a tax shift.

Jim Turner, school administrator rose in opposition to House Bill 22.

Questions From Committee Members:

Senator Farrell asked Representative Hoffman if he had any objection to sunsetting House Bill 22. Representative Farrell told the Committee he had no objection.

Senator Farrell asked Greg Groepper (OPI) if the 100% was of what OPI has scheduled. Mr. Groepper explained that is correct. The state puts limit on the state reimbursement schedule which is 85 cents a mile. The sharing of responsibility comes on the 85 cents.

Senator Yellowtail asked if the school district is already putting out monies. Representative Farrell stated this was approximately \$1 a mile. Mr. Groepper explained there were several ways of funding but Senate Bill 82 changed this to fund at the same way. A study is being made by OPI on transportation costs.

Senator Yellowtail asked Mr. Groepper if during the next session this particular issue will be revisited again and if sunsetting House Bill 22 would be advised. Mr. Groepper explained the interim legislative committee is studying transportation and OPI is preparing a cost study because the legislature has made the commitment to revisit the issue in 1993.

Closing by Sponsor:

Representative Hoffman closed on House Bill 22. He stated equalization does not address transportation.

Motion:

Senator Fritz moved House Bill 22 BE CONCURRED IN.

Discussion:

Senator Yellowtail stated the counties deeply resent this pass-back of costs.

Amendments, Discussion, and Votes:

None.

Recommendation and Vote:

The vote on House Bill 22 to BE CONCURRED IN CARRIED with Senator Yellowtail and Senator Farrell voting NO. Senator Hammond will carry House Bill 22 on Senate floor.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment At: 8:20 a.m.



SENATOR CHET BLAYLOCK, Chairman



LINDA CASEY, Secretary

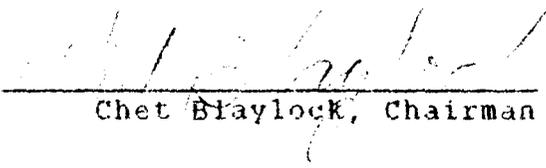
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SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT

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July 18, 1992

MR. PRESIDENT:

We, your committee on Education and Cultural Resources having had under consideration House Bill No. 22 (third reading copy -- blue), respectfully report that House Bill No. 22 be concurred in.

Signed: 
Chet Blaylock, Chairman

Jan 7 18-92
Amd. Coord.

SB 7-18-92
Sec. of Senate

ROLL CALL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE 7/18/92

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

NAME	PRESENT	ABSENT	EXCUSED
SENATOR BROWN			
SENATOR CHRISTIAENS	X		
SENATOR FARRELL	X		
SENATOR HAMMOND	X		
SENATOR NATHE			
SENATOR WATERMAN	X		
SENATOR YELLOWTAIL	X		
SENATOR BLAYLOCK, CHAIR	X		
SENATOR FRITZ, VICE CHAIR	X		

Each day attach to minutes.