

February 3, 1977

The Natural Resources Committee convened on February 3, 1977, at 10 a.m., in room 437, with Chairman Sheldon presiding and all members present (except Rep. Huennekens who was excused) for a hearing on the following bills:

HB 259 REP. GARY KIMBLE, District 94, said this bill would authorize the using of solar on a building at Eastern Montana College.

He said this building will need a separate heating plant, is in a stage that could use solar, has a southern exposure and would be on the rims where it would be visible to many people. He questioned the 40% heat reduction that would be needed to consider this a success. He felt the word "reasonable" should be used instead. He said this would be an excellent way to study solar technology and prove it. He said the data could be compiled by the students.

SENATOR TOM RASMUSSEN, Senate District 16, said with our energy shortage we must start looking beyond our nonrenewable sources to renewable ones. He said the state by approving this bill would be showing in one small way that they are committed to this philosophy. He said the building would be in our largest city and people will be able to see that solar doesn't need to be 20 years down the road--but possible now. He mentioned that a solar firm is marketing solar units in Great Falls, and the city of Bridgeport, Texas, is planning to supply all their city's energy needs with a solar plant.

BOB WALTER, Physical Plant Manager at EMC, said they were delighted Eastern was selected--he said they didn't request this. He said it might add to their work load but they welcomed it. He felt what they learn could be important for the whole state. He felt, though, the budget is inadequate--reflector panels being the primary expense and they can vary from \$4 to \$34 (plastic to tempered glass); and we should put in a good system.

PHIL HAWK, state architect for Montana, said he was speaking as a proponent. He said he would look forward to the challenge of building the first state solar building. He suggested, also, that 40% might be a little high and "reasonable" would be better; and he expressed concern about the budget--their estimate was \$150,000 rather than \$50,000. He said a possible alternative would be to reduce the scope of the project--could be used for the office wing.

ERNIE POST, AFL-CIO, said Montana should look at other forms of energy and before it is too late. He said he hoped the committee would recommend a do pass.

SONNY HANSON, Montana Technical Council, said they support the bill. He said it could cost more money.

HARRY GARBERG, Sheet Metal Workers State Council, said they support the bill. He said they would like to see this development down in Billings.

DICK SHERIDAN, University of Montana, representing self, said solar

is feasible--a home in Maine has had 80% of its heat furnished by solar for 17 years. He mentioned Stevensville has a solar heated home that provides 80% of its heat. He said it is not a complex technology--solar can be designed by any intelligent individual who is willing to do some reading and some work. He said solar heated homes must be well insulated.

PATRICK BINNS said he had worked with MEAC and also with Senator Rasmussen and Rep. Kimble on the bill. He said Montana wouldn't be the first as other states have done this: Colorado College is almost totally solar heated; Iowa is doing feasibility studies; Nevada has private funds for this; Florida is providing funds to build. He said this shouldn't be looked on as the maximum kind of energy saving--conservation is the first priority. He said this building could provide a necessary data base so the state can consider solar systems for all kinds of buildings. He said if life cycle passes this kind of information will be especially important. He mentioned that funds would be needed for monitoring.

MAE NAN ELLINGSON, Montana Student Lobby, said they heartily urge the passage of this bill. She said it is proper that it is on a campus in our biggest city.

There were no opponents. During questions Rep. Metcalf asked if there were any federal funds available and Rep. Kimble said he didn't know of any. Mr. Cooney questioned what role the MHD might play in this--he said he hoped they could use some of their innovations and knowledge. Mr. Hawk said they would be interested in getting input from anywhere they could--in state and out. He said they would be interested in anything the university would want to contribute in the line of students becoming involved.

HB 425 REP. GARY KIMBLE, District 94, said this act was to reorganize state programs for the encouragement of energy conservation and alternative energy development. He went through the bill explaining the different parts.

CHUCK DALBY, Geology Department, University of Montana, supported the bill and a copy of his testimony is exhibit 1.

TOM GIGNOUX, Missoula, representing self, spoke in support and a copy of his testimony is exhibit 2.

HERB JACOBSON, architect from Helena, representing self, spoke in support. He said he had designed a building in the valley to be heated by solar. He questioned how much of an incentive the property tax break really is. He said he supported the concept of this bill.

RON ERICKSON, Citizens Advisory Council, said the council would in general support this legislation. He said there were a few problems he would like to mention. These are found on his witness sheet, exhibit 3 of the minutes.

GEORGE W. BAGBY, Columbia Falls, representing self, spoke next in support and a copy of his testimony is exhibit 4 of the minutes.

DICK SHERIDAN, University of Montana, representing self, spoke in support. He emphasized the need of good insulation when using solar heating.

JIM BARNGROVER, Helena, representing self, submitted a November, 1976 copy of Not Man Apart which contains Amory Lovin's article "Energy Strategy: The Road Not Taken." This is exhibit 5 of the minutes. He urged the committee to support the bill.

KAREN ESPESETH, Missoula, representing self, said this bill attempts to offer solutions to the energy supply problem without an over dependence on outside power sources. She felt it was a step in the direction of energy self-sufficiency for individual homeowners.

ANGELA MUELLER, Clancy, representing self, spoke in support and a copy of her testimony is exhibit 6 of the minutes.

CLIFF CHRISTIAN, MT Assn. of Realtors, spoke in opposition. He said the initial cost is much more expensive than conventional heating. He felt the bill should not include the Subdivision and Platting Act as that deals only with subdivision of land. He felt there should be a fiscal note with the bill. He said they were not against the intent of the bill.

SONNY HANSON, Montana Technical Council, spoke in opposition to the bill. He said they support solar systems but cannot support this bill because of what it does to the normal systems--normal procedures. He said what is needed is a central authority to correlate rules and regulations that affect the building trades.

Rep. Kimble in closing said he knows there are problems that arise when we require subdivisions to be so planned as to allow every homeowner a chance to use alternative energy forms. He said this is a matter of orienting your house to the light--subdividers so far haven't been sensitive to this process.

Rep. Hurwitz asked about the erosion of the tax base that would come about with the incentives. It was mentioned the incentive would increase the value of the home and so end up increasing the tax base.

HB 430 REP. LES HIRSCH, District 52, said he had been requested to carry the bill by Rep. Meloy. He said this bill clarifies and revises the provision dealing with adoption of the state building code; it fixes dates by which energy conservation rules must be drafted, heard, adopted, published and implemented.

D. ROBERT LOHN, Governor's staff, spoke in support. He said it is required that the state adopt a building code promoting energy conservation and there is no solid national base to reach into. He said this bill applies to all public buildings.

W. JAMES KEMBEL, Dept. of Administration, Bldg. Code Administration Bureau, spoke in support of the bill. A copy of his testimony is exhibit 7.

SONNY HANSON, Montana Technical Council, said they support the bill. He asked that it be left with one authority. He hoped a workable approach to this problem could be reached.

PAT BINNS, private citizen, said MEAC strongly recommends this to be mandatory rather than permissive to implement energy conservation in our buildings.

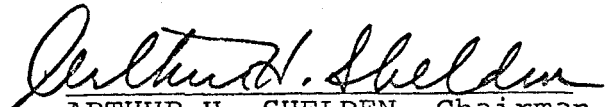
In response to a question about ASHRA Mr. Hanson said ASHRA has a very definitive type of construction and he felt it should be more flexible in the design part. He felt the best approach would be an energy budget--like Wisconsin which has allowed 13 BTU per square foot heat loss.

A request was made that a fiscal note be obtained for HB 425.

Chairman Sheldon said these three bills heard today and HB 426 would go to the Conservation and Public Participation Subcommittee.

Meeting adjourned at 12:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,


ARTHUR H. SHELDEN, Chairman

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