

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

February 16, 1977

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 a.m., with all members present except Rep. Kennerly, who was absent.

House Bill 768 was discussed first. Rep. Kimble, chief sponsor, read the attached statement in support of the bill. Proponents were Merle Lucas, Gerald Gray, Harold Gray. Maurice Hickey raised some questions about parts of the bill. Their testimony is attached.

HJR 30 was discussed next. Rep. Bradley, chief sponsor, said the bill recognizes that there are a significant number of children without English as their first language, which causes serious handicaps for them. It directs OSPI to undertake a needs assessment on this and then compile a plan to remedy it. the Legislature is directed to do this by the Lowe vs. Nichols Supreme Court Case originating in California where many students alleged they were denied education because they did not know the language. The court said equal access was not enough to guarantee equal education. Proponents were Steve Cherick, Bill Stops, Bill Yellowtail. Their testimony is attached.

House Bill 707 was discussed next. Rep. Sivertson, chief sponsor, said the Indian Teacher Training Program started several years ago. In 1975 the federal government stopped funding and the state continued funding the program. An extension is needed to allow more people to get training under the program. The cost of the bill is \$1.8 million and will include all 7 reservations and the Landless Indians in Great Falls. Proponents were: Darryl Gray, Merle Lucas, Ben Lumberhan, Mrs. Jenny Parker, Ivan Small, Glenda Morrison, Louise Strump, Ken Neorr, Greg Dumontier, Cecelia Corcoran, Laura Demoray. Dr. Irving Daton testified as an opponent. Their testimony is attached. Mr. Gray said that he was told by Governor's Office and there was \$1.5 discretionary money in the Board of Regents budget and Keith Colbo said they were specific about it being for Indian education. Sherri Matteucci said new people could be enrolled as seniors graduated and that is why there are freshmen in the program now.

House Bill 378 was discussed next. Rep. Porter, chief sponsor, said the bill raises the bus transportation reimbursement schedules. Steve Colburg from OSPI said it raises rate from 35¢ to 52¢ per mile and larger sizes of buses will receive 2¢ more. It still does not come close to the actual cost of running the busses. Maurice Hickey supported the bill. Mr. Colburg said, in answer to a question, that the fiscal note says \$2.46 million per year, but his figures are \$1,414,691 per year.

Rae Haas distributed the special education proposed bill for the committee to consider. The Chairperson said the primary intent is to bring Montana law into compliance with P.L. 94-142. The responsibility on local districts for funding is also clarified.

The bill also defines the role of regional services - it has been restricted to services and phased out by 1980.

Rep. Barrett moved that the committee submit the attached draft as a committee bill. The motion passed unanimously (Reps. Kennerly, Hand and Gunderson excused).

Chairperson also said she wants to submit a committee resolution on a study of the feasibility of establishing intermediate school districts which are cooperative efforts by several districts to combine administrative services. She asked for committee agreement. Rep. Estenson moved to adopt the attached rough draft as a committee resolution. The motion passed unanimously (Reps. Kennerly, Hand and Gunderson excused).

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

ANN MARY DUSSAULT, Chairperson