

April 8, 1977

The Natural Resources Committee convened in room 437, on April 8, 1977, at 9:05 a.m. with Chairman Sheldon presiding and all members present (except Reps. Bengtson and Huennekens, excused; and Reps. Quilici and Burnett, absent), for a hearing on the following bill:

SJR 43 SENATOR HAROLD DOVER, Senate District 24, said this resolution addresses itself to a study of Montana laws relating to subdivisions. He said it is to clarify and update those laws. He said a problem exists in that there is a limited amount of high density housing available and much is needed. He said the price of this housing is too high to attract people because of added costs from subdivision requirements. He said this results in urban sprawl--lots of good land leaving production as people move out where the cost is less, there is less hassle, they can have a horse and let the kids run. He said this is a tremendous problem which adversely affects our rural areas. He said this is a much needed study and he urged concurrence.

TOM COLLINS, MT Assoc. of Realtors, said they felt a study would give a much better view of what is going on with our subdivision laws.

During questions Rep. Hurwitz commented that none of the bills will work until everybody gets their heads together and agrees. He felt the realtors had come a long way. He said we really do need something. Rep. Ernst agreed saying the realtors and the DCA worked hard on the subdivision bills and he thought they had come a long way. He said he was pleased to see something come out that looked feasible. Rep. Frates commented there are more people with money who can buy land so price isn't a great deterrent. He felt we needed this study and hoped it would be for the common good. Chairman Sheldon questioned what restraints could be placed on the seller--as there is a great deal of opposition to any such restrictions. He felt perhaps some kind of incentive might work. He felt maybe a study like this will furnish a little more meeting of the minds.

Since this wouldn't be a standing committee as it would consist of members of both houses the following amendments were suggested: in the title, line 6, to strike "THE" and insert "AN" and to strike "STANDING"; on page 1, line 20, following "growth" to insert "with subsequent reduction of agricultural land"; and on page 2, line 6, to strike "the" and insert "an" and to strike "standing", and following "committee" to insert ", consisting of equal representation of both houses and both parties".

Rep. Kessler moved SJR 43 be concurred in as amended. Motion passed unanimously with those present (absent Quilici, Bengtson, Huennekens, Burnett).

Rep. Cox mentioned on June 21 the Decker Coal Company would be sponsoring a tour to the coal fields. Those interested are to meet at the Northern Hotel. Interest was again shown in a helicopter trip over the Bob Marshall Wilderness and this was going to be checked into.

Chairman Sheldon said the committee would meet one morning next week to check over the energy subcommittees' proposals.

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Arthur H. Sheldon*