

MINUTES OF MEETING
HOUSE RULES COMMITTEE
MONTANA STATE LEGISLATURE

April 13, 1977

The meeting of the House Rules Committee was called to order by Rep. Meloy, Chairman, on the above date in Room 343 at 11:15 A.M.

Members of the committee present were:

Rep. Bardanouve	Rep. Marks
Rep. Bradley	Rep. Meloy
Rep. Driscoll	Rep. Moore

Representatives Brand, Fagg, and Kvaalen were absent.

Also in attendance were Representatives Metcalf and Gunderson, and Senator Dover.

House Resolution 4, sponsored by Rep. Metcalf, was before the committee for consideration.

Rep. Metcalf explained that HR 4 was simply his attempt to abolish the procedure of having three separate readings in the legislature. He felt that sometimes it took a new eye to spot inefficiencies and the worst in the legislative process. He looked at the proper way to amend the rules, and hoped he was going about this the right way. He felt that third reading was a repetitious action, and had heard many comments from legislators about what a waste of time it was. He said he didn't know what the original intent of third reading was. He thought there were lots of delays between readings and in the process in general. He mentioned that the same results were obtained on third reading as on second on all but four bills and five resolutions. That's only five times out of about a thousand. He felt this was a chance to eliminate a time-consuming activity, and would allow more time for debate on the floor. He realized that it was rather late in the session to be working on this problem, but hoped it would be considered for future sessions. He mentioned that several of the bills which had the action reversed on third reading were sponsored by three members of the Rules Committee.

Rep. Meloy called for questions from the committee members.

Rep. Marks asked if he thought it would save printing costs.

Rep. Metcalf said that if a committee made amendments, they could be printed on a separate sheet instead of reprinting the whole bill. The bill could then be printed in its entirety for the final reading. He thought the white copy could be used all the way through.

Rep. Moore stated that Chapter 68 of Mason's Manual required that bills be read on three separate days.

Rep. Meloy mentioned that that requirement was not in the constitution any more.

Rep. Moore said it was an ancient parliamentary practice to have three readings on three separate days.

Rep. Marks asked Rep. Metcalf if he had figured how much time was spent on third reading.

Rep. Metcalf replied that almost an hour had been spent on two different third reading boards the other day.

Rep. Gunderson said that with the amendments that are put in a bill on second reading, it could make a big difference. He wondered how the public would know what was happening.

Rep. Metcalf suggested there be a one-day delay before transmittal to the other house.

The hearing was then closed on House Resolution 4.

The hearing was opened on House Bill 839, sponsored by Rep. Gunderson.

Rep. Gunderson explained that there had been an error in engrossing. He mentioned that the bill had had a stormy history in committee, that the committee had met late, and an "and" and an "or" were changed. This bill simply changes an "and" back to an "or."

Rep. Marks moved that House Bill 839 do pass.

A vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Rep. Moore then moved that House Resolution 4 do not pass. He thought the ancient parliamentary practice should be retained.

Rep. Driscoll spoke against the motion. He said that the ancient practice probably came about because of not having mechanically recorded votes.

Rep. Marks stated that bills are amended on second reading and the impact often isn't known until the third reading bill is printed. He felt it was a good idea to look at legislation after amendments had been made on second reading.

Rep. Bradley said she thought it was worth discussing on the floor.

A vote was taken on Rep. Moore's motion. Voting aye were Representatives Marks and Moore. Voting nay were Representatives Bardanouve, Bradley, Driscoll, and Meloy. The motion failed.

Rep. Bradley then moved that the bill be sent out of committee with no recommendation.

A vote was taken. Voting aye were Representatives Bardanouve, Bradley, Driscoll, Meloy, and Moore. Voting nay was Representative Marks. The motion carried.

Senate Joint Resolutions 48 and 49 were before the committee because they had been transmitted after the deadline.

Rep. Driscoll moved that both bills be accepted.

A vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Senate Bill 448 was before the committee because it had been transmitted after the deadline.

Rep. Meloy explained that the bill had been introduced in the Senate by suspension of the rules.

Rep. Moore moved that Senate Bill 448 be accepted.

Rep. Marks asked if this had to be done.

Rep. Meloy replied that it was just routine.

A vote was taken. Voting aye were Representatives Bardanouve, Bradley, Driscoll, Meloy, and Moore. Voting nay was Representative Marks. The motion carried.

The question of spreading the ayes and noes upon the journal was raised.

Rep. Marks moved that the motion that the ayes and noes be spread upon the journal must be made before the vote is taken.

Before the vote was taken, Rep. Meloy made it clear that adoption of Rep. Marks' motion did not in any way dispose of the question still before the committee relative to Rep. Moore's motion to spread the aye and noe votes on House Bill 267 which was referred to the committee by Rep. Huennekens.

A vote was taken. The motion carried unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 A.M.



Peter M. Meloy, Chairman

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT

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MR. Speaker,

Rules

We, your committee on

House Resolution

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having had under consideration Bill No.

**A RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA
REQUESTING THE RULES COMMITTEE TO PREPARE A REPORT AMENDING THE RULES
OF THE MONTANA LEGISLATURE TO ABOLISH THIRD READING.**

House Resolution

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Respectfully report as follows: That..... Bill No.

WITHOUT RECOMMENDATION

~~DO NOT PASS~~

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT

April 13, 19 77

MR. Speaker

We, your committee on Rules

having had under consideration House Bill No. 839

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 7, CHAPTER 310, LAWS 1977 TO CORRECT AN ERROR IN ENGROSSING."

Respectfully report as follows: That House Bill No. 839

DO PASS

Peter M. Meloy, Chairman