

February 2, 1979

HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS:

A Human Services Committee meeting was held February 2, 1979 in the Capitol Annex room #20. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Polly Holmes and all members were present except Rep. Fabrega.

HOUSE BILL #414 -- SPONSOR: Rep. Michael Keedy, District #18, presented his bill to outlaw the sale of household detergent containing phosphates. Studies which are being done have shown that the water quality indicates that phosphates hasten the evolutionary cycle of eutrophication. The usual life of a body of water is tens of thousands of years, but with introduction of phosphates, it can be quickly changed into a bog within a few decades. Page one and two of the bill contain many definitions, but the meat of the bill is contained on page 2, lines 13-16 involving washing machines. The principal point of phosphate loading is the sewage treatment plants if the detergents contain phosphates. This bill has been drafted after similar legislation which is being enforced in several states and is a national mandate in Canada. PROPONENTS: Mr. Richard Haeur, Flathead Research Group, has been engaged in an intensive Doctoral research program on the chemical, physical, and biotic characteristics of the Flathead Rivers above Flathead Lake for more than two years and has been involved in limnological research for over six years. Scientific investigations have often shown phosphorous to be that nutrient which limits the growth of algae, stealing much needed oxygen, leading to eutrophication. Although the removal of phosphate containing detergents from household use would not eliminate all culturally devised phosphorous, it would significantly reduce the amount of phosphates in municipal sewage. I urge you to give a do pass on this bill. Ms. Gael Bissell, representing the Environmental Information Center first presented testimony from Mr. Jack A. Stanford, Director of the Flathead Research Group, University of Montana Biological Station, claims that with the rapid urban growth of this area, that it is putting a great deal of stress on the biological cultures of this area and that unless something is done immediately to stop this strain, that these waters will soon be in big trouble. Ms. Bissell gave more testimony which was by Mr. Ed Miller of the Water Resources Division of the Department of Natural Resources who is currently investigating eutrophication at Georgetown Lake. Recently the counties surrounding Georgetown Lake purchased a weed-eater for \$5,000. Ms. Bissell worked on a pollution study of the Clear Water Lakes area, which showed that seepage from many septic tanks around Seely Lake were significantly contributing to the algal blooms and weed growths in this lake. Another point Ms. Bissell brought out is that phosphorous is mined; it is a finite resource which is most valuable when used in fertilizer. She felt that this was a much more resourceful use than in detergents for the sake of ease. Mr. Chris Hunter, Flathead Drainage Project 208, displayed some testimony from Mr. Anthony Schwartz from Minnesota where similar legislation has been enacted. There seems to have been very little difference in the cleaning performance between those containing heavier amounts of phosphorous and the new detergents which contain substantially lower amounts. A survey was taken in New York asking whether consumers supported such a ban, and 90% voted in its favor. Mr. John Wilson, Montana Council of Trout Unlimited

with it's 8,000 state-wide membership said that his group supports the legislation because it appears to be a simple solution to a potential serious problem. Tourism is a very valuable industry in Montana and if you kill the streams and their fish you are loosing a valuable resource as well as a valuable source of revenue. House Bill #414 will protect this industry now and in the future. There is a simple solution; "pay now or pay later". Montana Trout Unlimited urges a do pass recommendation on this bill. Mr. Mark O'Keefe, a concerned citizen, stated that he visited Omedogga Lake in New York in 1963, which in his opinion was nearly a disaster area. Later tests proved detergents caused 40%. Last year he returned and it was clean enough to be used for recreational purposes again. Bans are already made on the Great Lakes Basin States, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York. Twenty-seven percent of phosphorous can be removed by stopping this dumpage now. Studies conducted by areas which have implemented this program show that there have been positive financial results as well as positive environmental impact results. The amount of sludge produced in sewage treatment is reduced. The amount of chemicals needed to remove the impurities from the effluent will be reduced. The amount of particulates released in the air during the disposal of sludge will be significantly reduced, and less energy will be used to operate the plants. Mr. Frank Guay, Flathead County Commissioner feels that it has been adequately demonstrated that this is the type of legislation that Montana needs to enact. Phosphorous compounds in detergent is only for the sake of ease. Millions of people are living with the low phosphorous detergents and have found no negative results. Montana is the headwaters of many rivers which run to both coasts. There are 208 projects under way in other states and theirs will be futile unless it is implemented by the headwaters, too. Rep. Keedy in his closing statement asked the committee give a do pass recommendation on House Bill #414.

HOUSE BILL #451 -- SPONSOR: Rep. Michael Keedy, District #18, introduced his bill to appropriate money to set up a community child care program in the Kalispell area. This area is the only area in the state that doesn't have a community care center. There are many abused and neglected children in this area that need this kind of service. PROPONENTS: Mr. John M. Shearer, parent and professional in child care told the story of their son, Jason, who attended one local school that said he had a behavioral and learning problem. They removed Jason and sent him to another school, where now he is claimed to be bright, and maybe even gifted. Had their child lived in an area with a 4-c's program in a pre-school, Jason's potential might have been realized earlier. In the Flathead area, there is a substantial lack in child care and protective planning teams, no person or agency to assist interested persons in processing to license for day care, and no learning disability programs. I recommend a do-pass on HB-451. Ms. Lisa McMahon, former child abuse team worker, and member of a third generation social working family who is a mother of a year and a half old child, advocated that her interest is both professional and personal. The Child Abuse Team found that there is a substantial number of neglected and abused children in this area. The Child Abuse Team worked well for a while, but it was

all volunteer and everyone on the team had other full time occupations. A 4-c's program in this area would be able to address this problem more competently. Currently there are alot more needs for services than there are services provided. Therefore, I recommend a do pass. Ms. Linda Brander, Montana Day Care Association, works closely with 4-c's programs in training and public participation. "I feel it is an excellent program and most definitely needed in this area. Please do pass this measure. Ms. Jessie Schlinger, Director of Montana Foster Association, who has been a foster parent for 12 years, caring for over 90 children, nine of her own, and five adopted. I have worked with both parents and children, and understand the problems and the needs. The current social workers we have are overworked as it is. The Governor's Task Force for Abused and Neglected Children concluded that there needed to be more comprehensive programs, but that it can't be done through the SRS because of lack of funding. Please give this recommendation a do pass." Ms. Sheila Rick, 4-c's Coalition, is in favor of this bill. She worked with the Focus on Children in Great Falls, where all the mothers were still in high school. These mothers would have been unable to complete high school had it not been for this program because of a lack of day care they could afford. It is extremely important that a mother at least have a high school education for both herself and the child. People want and need adequate programs in this area. The 4-cs program is extremely cost effective and I recommend a do pass. Mr. Jim Mallard, Montana Coalition of Human Services, supports this bill saying that there is scarcity of human services programs in the Flathead Valley. Therefore 4-c's is needed in the Northwest corner of the state. Please give this a do pass. OPPONENTS: Mrs. Charles Rogers from Helena came bringing a letter from Mrs. Ted Limpus to present to the committee. Mrs. Limpus is opposed to this bill because there are several church organizations working with children in this area, endless newspaper ads asking to babysit to supplement income, and doesn't want to start another bureaucracy paid for with public funds. "In other words, we don't want 'Big Brother' controlling our lives from 'womb to tomb'. I recommend a do not pass on this unnecessary bill." Mrs. Albert J. Glueckert, stated that she is for the American system of free enterprise and is opposed to child care competition with the government. Why not utilize more cooperative day-care programs like parent-grandparent, co-workers, etc. She also presented a letter from Ms. Carol Keller, who is opposed to such a bill. Rep. Keedy in closing said that most child care centers in his area were sophisticated holding pens and that he didn't like to think of his child's care as being something to put on the competitive market. Most of these child centers only take care of children and don't address the problems of abuse and neglect or do they stimulate child development in the right direction. I recommend a do pass on this bill.

Ken Holmes

CHAIRMAN

[Signature]