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HOUSE COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS:

A Human Services Committee meeting was held February 9, 1979, in the Judicial Annex Room #20. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Holmes at 1:10 and all members were present except Representatives Pabreja, Gesek, Robbins, and Rosenthal.

HOUSE BILL #463 -- SPONSOR: Rep. Gould, District #98, introduced his bill stating that in his three terms this is probably one of the best bills he has ever sponsored. The intent of this bill is very simple, it will give the Montana physicians the go-ahead on prescription of Tetrahydrocannabinols after the Federal Government enacts such statutes. He went on further to state his own personal experience with Glaucoma which in his description was "like having two basketballs in your eye sockets covered with sandpaper". The pain was so bad, and the treatment for pain worse, he decided to have his eyes removed after three years of suffering. "When you have your own eyes in your head, there's always a chance they will come up with a miracle cure for blindness, but when you are forced to have them removed, to ease the pain, there's no chance for sight again. I don't want to see others suffer as I did and resort to such extremes for relief," stated Gould before the committee. PROponents: Mr. Robert J. Campbell, graduate of the University of Montana Pharmacy School in 1963 and graduate of the University of Montana Law School in 1967, stated that his interest is in a number of areas. This bill is to ready the state when the Federal Government passes legislation allowing such a substance to be utilized, which "I project to be in the interim of this session and the next." Campbell has worked with the School of Pharmacy at University of Montana on the potential uses of THC under controlled conditions, and to educate pharmacists on prescriptive uses of this drug. THC has been the most thoroughly tested drug in this country. And Campbell went on to quote the December 1976 PSYCHOLOGY TODAY MAGAZINE, which said "We know more about marijuana than we do about penicillin". This bill would take THC out of Schedule I classification with Heroin and place it in a more realistic Schedule III classification which can be used for medicinal purposes. Mr. John Bartlett, registered pharmacist for 30 years in Montana requests that you give a strong recommendation on House Bill #463. "Because of my position as Chairman of the Board of Health and with all the reports I have read, it is a good idea to pass this bill to allow THC to be used for medicinal purposes. Passage of this bill also, would help you keep your campaign promises of cutting red tape." Mr. Bill Kirly, University of Montana student and previous intern with the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws, stated that Mr. Robert Randall is the only man in the United States who receives marijuana under court order of 10 grams a week free of charge from the National Institute on Drug Abuse. Because of the lack of doctors to prescribe THC to Randall he sold it out on the street. He was arrested and prosecuted and took his case to the Supreme Court, where he pled innocent because he was a minor. Kirly presented some testimony from the JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION dated January 29, 1979. Rep. Gould, sponsor of the bill and proponent from District #40, stated that a woman from her district who has requested that she not be named is currently undergoing one week on chemotherapy.

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treatments and one week off. He becomes so nauseous it is hard for him to go anywhere or function like a normal human being. Perhaps if this gentleman, Mr. Ewing Storm, could receive Marijuana by prescription, his life would be much easier she advocated. OPPONENTS: Mr. Frank Davis, Montana State Pharmaceutical Association opposes the bill on the basis that it won't change the availability of anything. "If and when the FDA decides that Marijuana has value, it won't take an act of the Legislature to make it available. It will only involve rule changes by the Board of Pharmacology. The dangerous aspect of this bill is that it will give the impression that Marijuana will be available from physicians. Imagine the letdown Chemotherapy and Glaucoma patients will experience when they discover this fallacy. Four states have enacted similar legislation and have been discovering a great many problems. These states I am referring to have only changed it to a schedule II." Mr. Warren Amil, Montana Board of Pharmacologists, said that "Montana shouldn't jump the gun. We don't know the ramifications of such legislation nor the drug itself. It is still very much in the gray area. It needn't be legislated, let the rulemaking authority be assumed by those who have the power."

The following action was taken:

Rep. Bozler moved that House Bill #451 do pass as amended. This motion carried with a 11 to 6 vote.

Rep. Azzare moved that House Bill #414 be given a do pass recommendation. This motion carried with a 9 to six vote with one member abstaining.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 by Chairman Holmes.

CHAIRMAN

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