

March 1, 1979

The House Highways and Transportation Committee convened on March 1, 1979, at 1:30 p.m. with Chairman Baeth presiding and twelve members present (absent were Reps. Fabrega, Lien, Meyer and Rosenthal). Chairman Baeth opened the meeting to a hearing on the following bills:

SENATE BILL 179: SENATOR THOMAS O. HAGER, District 30, the chief sponsor, said the purpose of the bill is to put personalized license plates on a staggered registration system.

LARRY MAJERUS, Motor Vehicle Division, said they support the bill.

There were no questions from the committee and no closing statement.

SENATE BILL 297: SENATOR THOMAS O. HAGER, District 30, the chief sponsor, said the bill was introduced at the request of the Department of Justice to increase the grace period for a transfer of license plates to a newly acquired motor vehicle from 10 days to 20 days.

LARRY MAJERUS, Motor Vehicle Division, said this was an oversight during the last session and is just cleaning up the statute.

There were no questions from the committee and no closing statement.

SENATE BILL 196: SENATOR MAX CONOVER, District 36, the chief sponsor, said this was to require a custom combiner's fee for Montana resident custom combiners similar to the fee paid by nonresidents and in lieu of fees presently required. He said a Montanan can custom cut within a radius of 100 miles of his home free of charge; but, if he goes out of state to custom cut, when he recrosses the Montana state line they have to pay \$174.19 farm gross vehicle weight fees. He said with this bill their fee would be \$20. He gave the following totals of permits issued: 1978-1100 permits; 1977-1239 permits; 1976-1484 permits; 1975-1314 permits; 1974-856 permits. He submitted for the record a copy of a rundown on charges to custom combiners (exhibit 1 of the minutes). He said this bill would correct a wrong we are doing to our own people.

JIM BECK, Department of Highways, said they support this bill.

During questions it was asked how come the nonresident custom combiners get such a good rate. Senator Conover said we used to make them get new license plates on all their vehicles as soon as they crossed our state line (usually cost \$300-\$500), and as a result were losing them, so the law was changed.

SENATE BILL 251 SENATOR PAUL BOYLAN, District 38, was not present so BILL ROMINE, Montana Automotive Dismantlers and Recylers Association, requested and received permission from

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the committee to introduce the bill. He said this bill requires that if an insurance company disposes of a totaled automobile at a wrecking yard, it must be a licensed motor vehicle wrecking facility. A copy of his testimony is exhibit 2.

HENRY E. LOHR, Townsend, Hank's Salvage and Recycling, said he supports the bill.

During questions Larry Mitchell, Health Department, responded to a question by Rep. Keyser concerning the number of unlicensed yards. He said this is a difficult question because according to the law anyone who has four or more junk vehicles is considered a wrecking yard. He said there are 30 to 38 bonafide yards that aren't licensed and 160 yards that are. It was mentioned this bill might encourage more of these yards to become licensed.

Chairman Baeth closed the hearing part of the meeting and opened it to an executive session on the following bills:

EXECUTIVE SESSION

SENATE BILL 251 Rep. Cooney moved Senate Bill 251 be concurred in. Rep. Keyser raised the question of how the insurers will know if the yards are licensed. He felt the probable encouragement for more to become licensed would be good. The researcher, Bob Lane, suggested the following amendments to make the meaning clearer: Amend the title, line 4, following "require" insert "that"; line 5, strike "to" and insert "may" and strike "licensed" and on line 7, following "salvage" insert "only if the wrecking facility is licensed." Rep. Tropila moved this amendment. Mr. Lane cautioned the committee that the way the bill has been amended may change the original meaning as now an insurance company can dispose of a vehicle as it wants to but if it uses a wrecking yard it must be a licensed wrecking place. Question was called and the motion on the amendment passed unanimously with those present. Motion on the bill as amended be concurred in also passed unanimously with those present. Rep. Harrington will carry the bill on the floor.

SENATE BILL 179 Rep. Cooney moved be concurred in. Motion carried unanimously with those present. Rep. Tropila moved that it be placed on the consent calendar. This motion carried unanimously with those present. Rep. Kessler will carry the bill.

SENATE BILL 297 Rep. Cooney moved be concurred in. Motion carried unanimously with those present. Rep. Tropila moved that the bill be placed on the consent calendar. This motion carried unanimously with those present. Rep. Cooney will carry this bill on the floor.

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SENATE BILL 196      Rep. Feda moved the bill be concurred in. This motion carried unanimously with those present. Rep. Feda or Rep. Vicki Johnson will carry the bill on the floor.

SENATE BILL 154      Rep. Keyser moved be concurred in. Motion carried unanimously with those present. Rep. Lien will carry the bill on the floor.

SENATE BILL 98      Rep. Keyser moved be concurred in. Motion carried unanimously with those present. Rep. Keyser will carry this bill.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

William R. Baeth  
WILLIAM R. BAETH, Chairman

Emelia A. Satre, Sec.