

HOUSE AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK, AND IRRIGATION COMMITTEE

March 5, 1979

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Day at 12:35 p.m. with all members present except Representatives Brand and Ellerd.

Representative Dassinger assumed the Chair.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 22

SENATOR GREG JERGESON, Chief Sponsor, introduced the resolution. This resolution calls upon the Governor and Montana's Congressional Delegation to seek funding for research aimed at the eradication of Wild Oats.

PROPOSERS:

ZACK STEVENS, Montana Farm Bureau, rose in support of the resolution. He stated that Dr. Stroble, Montana State University, has been doing some research on developing an eradicator for Wild Oats. He began his research with Sugarcane and found a toxant for it. This resolution would seek funding to further his research.

There are 3 million acres of Wild Oats in Montana, which would be about \$22,000 annually that is being taken out of production.

Vice-Chairman Vicki Johnson assumed the Chair.

REPRESENTATIVE THOMAS CONROY rose in support of the resolution. He stated that Wild Oats are a serious problem in Montana and urged the committee to look favorable at this resolution.

SENATOR JERGESON closed requesting Representative Conroy to carry the bill on the House floor.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 26

SENATOR ELMER SEVERSON, Chief Sponsor, introduced the resolution. This resolution is requesting Congress to adopt legislation to do three things. They are as follows: 1) require all imported meats to be clearly and conspicuously labeled in large letters, 2) requiring the inspection of foreign meats, and 3) creating countercyclical quotas and prior notification of future import levels at a reasonable time in advance of such importation.

PROPOSERS:

MONS TEIGEN, Montana Stockgrowers and Montana Woolgrowers Associations, rose in support of this resolution.

Questions were asked by the committee and the hearing on SJR 26 was closed.

Chairman Day resumed the Chair.

COMMITTEE BILL

REPRESENTATIVE DENNIS NATHE requested the committee to introduce a committee bill addressing the problem of noxious weeds in Montana, especially Leafy Spurge. Last fall in Standford, Montana there was a lot of concern, after the federal government knocked out some of the funding for noxious weed control. They would like to have a resolution adopted to put Montana on record as being in support of a coordinated approach by state, federal, and private individuals to control and eradicate noxious weeds and identify the sources of money available. Leafy Spurge is a hard weed to get control of. He told of an instance in 1975 of a rancher trying to get rid of the weed. It cost him about \$100 an acre and at that time the selling price was \$80 per acre. We have not found a good control for the weed and there are not very many animals that will eat it.

Questions were asked by the committee.

Representative Johnson moved, TO INTRODUCE A COMMITTEE BILL, as requested. The motion was carried unanimously.

Vice-Chairman Vicki Johnson resumed the Chair.

SENATE BILL NO. 465

SENATOR GREG JERGESON, Chief Sponsor, stated that this bill had been introduced to restrict the importation of diseased alfalfa bees into Montana. Since then those concerned have been working well with the Department of Agriculture and there is no need for this bill, so he requested the committee kill the bill.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 10

SENATOR ED SMITH, Chief Sponsor, introduced the resolution. This resolution is a request to the U.S. Congress to provide a special exemption from emission requirements for light-duty vehicles used predominantly in fire-prone areas. Farmers and ranchers have had problems with the catalytic converters that are put on the new pickups today. These converters get white hot and when the farmer drives through his field there is a good chance of a fire. He stated some instances that fires have occurred.

PROPOSERS:

BIB BIGGERSTAFF, Soil Conservation Districts, stated that they had passed to support this bill at their last meeting.

Questions were asked by the committee.

Representative Kanduch stated that the Forest Service is exempt at this time.

SENATOR SMITH closed urging the committee to concur in SJR 10.

SENATE BILL NO. 407

SENATOR CHET BLAYLOCK, Chief Sponsor, introduced the bill. This bill will revise the formula for computing base rental in fixing annual grazing rental on state lands. There are 4,097,000 acres of state school grazing lands. "I tried real hard to be as reasonable as possible to come up with an increase on these fees." Presently the formula is $\$.50 + 5 \times$ the average price of beef. This bill provides $6 \times$ the average price of beef. He thought that this would be a fair and reasonable price to pay. The cattle prices have risen considerable in the past few years and if they should go down so would the grazing fee.

He concluded by stating that 80% of the state school lands are controlled by 20% of the ranchers. (attached rate chart)

PROPONENTS:

LEO BERRY, Department of State Lands, explained that the legislature raised oil, gas, and coal leases, in 1975. The current rental on state grazing lands is \$1.68 per AUM. By comparison the rate on private land in 1977, was \$7.30 per AUM. He then compared Montana to our neighboring states. (attached are these comparisons and a complete written testimony)

MONS TEIGEN, Montana Stockgrowers and Montana Woolgrowers Association, rose in support of the bill. "We evaluated this during the last few weeks and feel this fee is acceptable. It is fair to everyone. I think the industry is in a position to handle the raise."

OPPONENTS:

SENATOR MARK ETCHART stated that this raise should be considered more before passage. You must consider that the rancher has to do all the fencing. You can run 20 head of cattle on one section of land. You have 5 animals worth each month just in fence and you still have other costs to consider. At \$8.00 per head in taxes each section would cost \$160.00.

He concluded by stating that he could see a need for a raise but more consideration should be taken for the amount of that raise.

BOB BIGGERSTAFF, Montana Association of State Grazing Districts, stated that they could see a need for an increase but felt that this bill was requesting too much. We have to consider the cattle prices and the cost of production. He explained that on BLM land 50% of the grazing fee goes back into the land. On state lands the lease takes care of everything.

He concluded by submitting an amendment to the bill on page 2, line 11, by inserting, "Subsection (3). The maximum rental rate shall not exceed (110) percent of the annual grazing fee established by the Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978." (amendment attached)

SENATOR BLAYLOCK closed stating that the cattle are not going to drop in price. In the Great Falls paper it said that the price would not drop for at least 2 years.

He concluded by stating that our schools are going to need more money. By passing this bill that money will be available.

Questions were asked by the committee and the hearing on SB 407 was closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 10

Representative Kanduch moved, BE CONCURRED IN. The motion was carried with Representative Johnson opposed.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 22

Representative Kanduch moved, BE CONCURRED IN. The motion was carried unanimously.

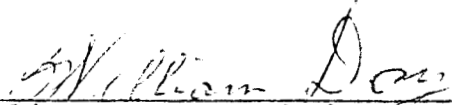
SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 26

Representative Kanduch moved, BE CONCURRED IN. The motion was carried unanimously.

SENATE BILL NO. 465

Representative Lien moved, BE NOT CONCURRED IN. The motion was carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 p.m.



William M. Day, Chairman

Judy J. Mook, Secretary