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#### HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS:

A Human Services Committee meeting was held March 7, 1979 in room #108 of the Capitol. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Holmes at 12:30 and all members were present.

SENATE BILL #377 -- SPONSOR: Senator Bob Palmer, District 48, introduced his bill which would require that the manufacturer of a drug product be listed on the label. This requirement would be for the consumer as well as the pharmacist. There has been no opposition to such a requirement from either the manufacturers or the pharmacists of the state and he requested that the committee give it a favorable recommendation. PROPONENTS: Mr. Frank Davis, Montana Pharmaceutical Assn., stated that he was in favor of this bill and so were all of his colleagues. Currently a pharmacist has no information to base his decision on as to the reputation of the company he is purchasing his drugs from, only the word of the wholesaler. He requested that the committee give the bill a do pass recommendation. Mr. Patrick Nix, pharmacist from Berguim Drug in Helena, presented three bottles as examples of the correct and incorrect labeling should this piece of legislation pass. He stated that he was very much in favor of this bill and hoped that the committee would give it a do pass recommendation. Senator Palmer in closing stated that he felt such legislation was long overdue and vitally needed in the state.

SENATE BILL #97 -- SPONSOR: Senator Matt Himsel, District #9, introduced his bill which would allow the manufacture, possession, and administering of Laetrile by licensed physicians. He stated that his interest in such legislation was due to the fact that last year he informed that he had a malignant tumor in his stomach, and consequently had to have his stomach removed. He went on further to state that it was a freedom bill because it frees patients from conventional forms of cancer treatment; frees physicians who wish to prescribe Laetrile to do so without interference from medical health facilities; and frees the physician from any disciplinary action for prescribing or administering Laetrile as an adjunct to traditional treatment for malignancy. He stated that he was not going to argue the tests for the use of Laetrile because there was a lack of clinical evidence. But, there have been remarkable success stories with the use of Laetrile accompanied by Vitamin A and enzymes which has brought about regression of tumors. Currently, the Cancer Society warns that one out of every four persons can expect to be a cancer victim. Senator Himsel stated that perhaps introduction of Laetrile into Montana will give another option to a cancer victim's somewhat grim picture, as well as give them treatment without having to go to other states or even other countries. He stated that since his introduction of SB 97 he has received hundreds of letters from concerned citizens throughout the state cheering him on in his endeavor. He also presented a petition which was circulated unbeknownst to him until receipt with over 2,000 signatures on it requesting they be given a choice in cancer treatment. He requested that the committee give SB 97 a do pass recommendation for those less fortunate who were suffering from cancer. PROPONENTS: Dr. Harold W. Manner, Chairman of the Biology Department of Loyola University in Chicago, IL, discussed his own research with Laetrile. He went on further to state that he is

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nationally known for his independent research into the possible use of Laetrile for cancer arrest. He stated that cancer is a curable disease today through Laetrile, Vitamin A, and enzymes in a human's diet. He first experimented with laboratory mice, injecting 20 times the potency that a human would be subjected to, and he said the mice looked healthier than when he had started. His second attempt was not nearly as successful in that all of his mice died. He then subjected the mice which he had injected with cancer cells to Laetrile accompanied with Vitamin A and various enzymes; his Manner Plan, and within four days a white pimple appeared at the point of the tumor. Two days later the pimple broke which oozed out white pus, which was diagnosed as dead cancer cells. After legislation allowing use of Laetrile was passed in Illinois, they experimented with 15 women who were due to have mastectomies because of breast cancer; and were all remarkably cured. He presented his book to the committee on experimentation with Laetrile entitled "The Death of Cancer". He requested that the committee give the bill a do pass recommendation. Mr. Chad Smith, Montana Hospital Association, stated that he was in favor of the bill in it's concept, but that he felt since Laetrile was still in such an experimental stage, a provision should be made to free hospitals from the liabilities because of use of Laetrile in their facilities. He presented amendments to that end. **OPPONENTS:** Dr. Donald Twito, cancer specialist, representing the Montana Medical Association, stated that he was strongly opposed to the bill because there is no scientific proof that Laetrile cures cancer. He advocated that it was more of a spoof than a viable cure. He stated that he has had a large number of cancer victims, which had they chosen to undergo conventional treatment would have been saved, but because they chose to go out of state for Laetrile treatment, they are currently dying from their disease. He stated that Laetrile and its use, which is more political than medical he felt, will disappear just as many other wonder cures have done. His major concerns with the Laetrile issue were as follows: 1. Several people have died from cyanide (an active ingredient in Laetrile) poisoning as a result of Laetrile treatment; 2. Laetrile contains many contaminants which are harmful to the human body; 3. Introduction of this so called "wonder cure" could deter many patients from receiving conventional help which could save them. He gave examples of two of his patients who choose to go to Mexico to receive Laetrile treatment, who would have been otherwise salvagable, and are dying of cancer. He felt that introduction of Laetrile into Montana would be openly malpractice by Legislators as well as physicians who choose to use this substance. Mr. Vern Sloan, Department of Health and Environmental Sciences, Bureau on Food and Consumer Safety, requested that the committee give the bill a do not pass recommendation. Mr. Fred L. Lofsvold, Denver Regional Food and Drug Director of the F.D.A., stated that he was not in favor of this bill because it would introduce into Montana a drug which has not been thoroughly tested. The Congressionally enacted Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act requires that before approval, drugs must be proven both safe and effective for their approved indications. Substantial evidence must exist to demonstrate this. The F. D. A. has not found Laetrile to be a safe and effective cancer treatment. Increasingly, doctors dealing with cancer patients are finding that patients are coming to proven, effective therapy too late, having delayed while trying Laetrile. Another group is avoiding

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effective therapy altogether and using Laetrile instead. Cancer is too dangerous a disease to treat with the "placebo effect", which many proponents of Laetrile suggest may be one of it's major contributions to the cure of cancer. While some Laetrile proponents claim the substance is a vitamin, experts in the vitamin area have concluded that it is not. He went on further to explain the legal status of Laetrile, which in 33 states is still against the law, and that even if this substance were made available for distribution in Montana, many of it's components would have to be transported here from other states; which is in violation with the interstate commerce laws. He requested that the committee give the bill an unfavorable recommendation. Mr. Frank Davis, a registered pharmacist in Montana, stated that he was neither in favor of Laetrile nor against it. He was worried, though, at how we were trying to circumvent federal law. He requested that the committee wait until the National Cancer Institute had completed their study and that it be approved by the F. D. A. Senator Himsel in closing stated, that although cancer researchers say they are making favorable progress in cancer cures, 1,300 people died of cancer in Montana last year. He also stated that since the F. D. A. was so good for the country, why did they continue allowing the sale of many products on the market which were recognized as causes to cancer. He read a letter from a concerned citizen whose son was not supposed to live longer than a few months, but because of Laetrile, he had lived seven years, and was getting stronger all the time. He requested that the committee give SB 97 a favorable recommendation to give all cancer victims a little more hope. Questions were asked and answers were given.

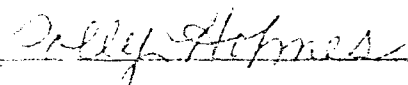
The following action was taken:

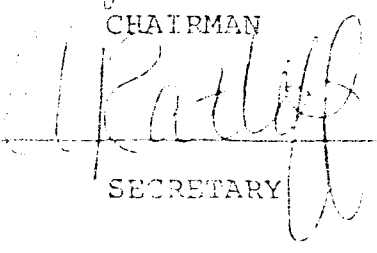
Rep. Gesek moved that the committee do concur with the Senate's favorable recommendation on SB 100. This motion carried unanimously.

Rep. O'Connell moved that the committee do concur with the Senate's favorable recommendation on SB 377. This motion carried unanimously. She agreed to carry the bill on the House floor.

Rep. Keyser moved that the amendments presented by Mr. Smith do pass. This motion carried with a 16 to 3 vote. Rep. Stobie moved that as amended SB 97 do pass. This motion carried with a vote of 15 to 4.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 by Chairman Holmes.

  
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CHAIRMAN

  
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SECRETARY