

HOUSE AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK, AND IRRIGATION COMMITTEE

March 14, 1979

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

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 14

REPRESENTATIVE ROBERT ANDERSON explained that this was a resolution introduced by Senator Bob Brown and drafted by Terry Murphy, NFO. He stated that there would be some amendments presented to the bill and hoped the committee would look at these amendments and see if they would fit in the resolution, or if they should be presented on the House floor. The proposed amendments were presented by the Flathead Conservation District with an explanation, which was presented for the record. (amendments and explanation attached)

BOB BROWN, Chief Sponsor, stated that he had no opponents or proponents to the bill, but would like the committee to consider the proposed amendments.

PROPOSERS:

TERRY MURPHY, N.F.O., stated that they were in support of the resolution. The proposed amendments came from Senator Brown's area and he had asked us to call and talk to them. They are all agricultural people. "I talked to the people in that area but I did not say I would support their amendments. We feel the resolution is good as is. We feel a separate resolution would be the preferable method of dealing with the proposed subject matter."

SENATE BILL NO. 509

SENATOR MAX CONOVER, Chief Sponsor, stated that this was the potato bill. Amendments had been presented in the Senate, but it was close to the transmittal date and they did not have time to consider the amendments. They passed the bill out hoping the House Committee would consider the amendments. At this time he called on Mike Koehnke to explain the proposed amendments.

He concluded by stating that if the committee did not see fit to pass the amendments he would ask to have the bill tabled until the next legislative session.

MIKE KOEHNKE, Seed Potato Grower from Townsend, stated that they had started working on this bill about one year ago. They had sent letters out to all the seed growers in the state, receiving 28 responses. This legislation was drafted from the Nebraska seed potato legislation. With the amendments proposed it is intended to vest responsibility for seed potato certification with the Montana Potato Improvement Association, which is to be attached to the Department of Agriculture for administrative purposes. In the past seed potato certification has been accomplished by MPIA in cooperation with Montana State University. MSU wants to remove itself from the regulator aspects of seed potato certification, but the bill does contain certain provisions for continued

cooperation by MSU with respect to facilities, equipment, and services.

Currently the funding is kept in a private checking account under the MPIA. We want to maintain that. They do not want to go through the state purchasing bureau.

He explained the proposed amendments and submitted information that had been presented at the Senate hearing. Also, he had a statement of intent prepared for the committee. (amendments and materials attached)

JAMES A. MCLEAN, Montana Potato Grower, rose in support of the bill and gave the committee a brief history of the potato seed certification program. He stated that there are over 80 seed potato farmers in Montana.

He concluded by stating that they were a self supporting organization.

FRANCIS KOEHNKE, Seed Potato Grower, stated that he had been a seed potato grower for 27 years. The MPIA has a good relationship with MSU but MSU wants to get out of the regulatory business. This means the seed potato farmers will have to keep up on their own. They feel they are the only ones that can do this to keep things as they are.

BOB KOENIG, Kalispell Grower, rose in support of the bill.

ROGER N. FLAIR, Montana State University, rose in support of the bill as amended.

GORDON MCOMBER, Department of Agriculture, stated that this was the first time they had seen these particular amendments to the bill and they would like to have more time to look them over to see what they do to the Department. They would like to have it operate in the same manner as the Wheat Research and Marketing Act. In conclusion he stated that they felt these people were doing a good service, but would like to examine the amendments before taking a final position.

Other proponents to the bill were Ron White, Wilbur Kimm, Carl Hoffman, and Rick Boylan.

SENATOR CONOVER closed by apologizing to the committee for not having the time to consider the amendments in the Senate and urged the committee to consider them. He felt we were in the right place to go ahead.

Questions were asked by the committee and the hearing on SB 509 was closed.

Chairman Day asked Mr. McOmber and the MPIA if they would work with a subcommittee if he appointed one. They said they would be glad to work with a subcommittee. Members of the subcommittee are as follows: Representative Lien, Chairman, Representative Ellerd, and Representative Brand.

SENATE BILL NO. 520

SENATOR HAROLD DOVER presented this bill for the Senate Agriculture Committee, who had recommended it. He referred to SJR 28, which he had presented before the committee concerning fuels being made from agricultural products. This bill will change the assessment levied on wheat and barley to help fund research and development of fuels and food from wheat and barley. The annual assessment of 2 1/2 mills will change to not more than 5 mills per bushel upon all wheat and from 5 mills to not more than 10 mills per hundredweight on all barley. The allocation of assessment for the years 1979 through 1983 is \$200,000 per year for the Department of Agriculture to carry out research, development, production, and marketing of fuels and foods derived from wheat and barley.

In conclusion he stated that the farm groups were all in favor of this bill. He asked for the committees concurrence.

JACK GUNDERSON, Department of Agriculture, stated that the Department fully supported the bill. The \$200,000 per year that will go to the Department is not only for gasahol but also for the development of food products.

He stated that he felt section 4 would provide the money that the Wheat Research and Marketing Committee would need.

SHARON PETERSON, representing several farm organizations, stated they were in support of the bill. Under this bill the farmers are actually asking to increase the tax on themselves to help themselves.

She concluded by submitting a paper on the use of alcohol as a fuel. (article attached)

STEVE KEIL, Montana Grain Growers Association, stated that they work close with the committee. They need to promote markets for production of fuel. "We put in the smallest amount and get the most out of it. We urge the committees support."

GEORGE A SKARDA, Member of the Montana Wheat Research and Marketing Committee, submitted a prepared statement. (statement attached)

Other proponents were as follows: J. A. Asleson, Montana Agriclutlure Experiment Station, Bob Bastrup, Montana Wheat Research and Marketing Committee, and Dona Fitzgerald, MWR-MC.

SENATOR DOVER closed by stating that we need to promote this because it has so much potential in Montana. He urged the committees support.

REPRESENTATIVE ELLERD presented an amendment that would revert the mill levy back after the four year period. (amendments attached)

Questions were asked by the committee and the hearing on SB 520 was closed.

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 53

REPRESENTATIVE DENNIS NATHE presented the committee bill he had requested the committee draft for the control and eradication of noxious weeds, especially leafy spurge. He explained that they had a meeting last fall of over 300 people on what they were going to do about the problem of leafy spurge. This meeting had resulted from the ASCA announcement that there would be no more cost sharing monies available. This resolution will let Congress know the State is concerned and urges them to provide adequate funding for noxious weed control.

He concluded urging the committees support.

Questions were asked by the committee and the hearing on HJR 53 was closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 53

Representative Kanduch moved, DO PASS. The motion was carried unanimously.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 28

Representative Johnson moved, TO AMEND, as follows:

Page 1, lines 23 and 24.

Strike: "director of the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation"

Insert: "Governor"

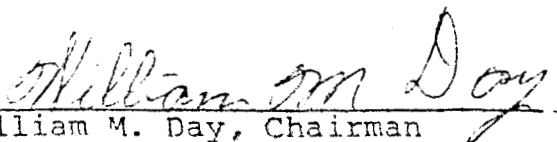
The motion failed.

Representative Kanduch moved, BE NOT CONCURRED IN. The motion was carried 7 to 5. Opposed: Dassinger, Day, Ellerd, Ernst, and Schultz  
Representative Johnson, abstained.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 14

Chairman Day appointed the following Representatives to the subcommittee: Representative Hirsch, Chairman, Representative Schultz, and Representative Johnson.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

  
William M. Day, Chairman

Judy J. Mook, Secretary