

Agriculture, Livestock
& Irrigation Committee
March 28, 1979
46th Legislative Session

The House Agriculture, Livestock, & Irrigation Committee held a meeting in room 437, at 12:30 p.m., March 28, 1979. Chairman Day called the meeting to order. All members were present except Rep. Kanduch, Lien and Smith who were absent.

The hearing was opened on SJR 32.

Senator Galt, chief sponsor of SJR 32, introduced the bill to the committee. The resolution requests an interim study of the laboratory needs of the Livestock Industry of Montana. One of the important considerations of the committee would be to consider if consolidation of the animal diagnostic laboratory and veterinary research laboratory would be feasible and in the best interest of the livestock industry. Senator Galt said that this has been the problem and it is time to do something about it.

PROPOSERS:

Mr. Zack Stevens, representing the Farm Bureau and the organization WIFE, arose in support of SJR 32. He said that he would be available to answer any questions that the committee may have.

Rep. Gene Donaldson, former member of the Board of Livestock, testified in favor of SJR 32. He said that this resolution is an attempt to try and bring about a more efficient livestock industry. He also stated that finance is one of the problems that must be dealt with.

Mr. Bill Asher, representing the Agricultural Preservation Association, spoke in support of the resolution. He stated that a logical and responsible study should be made before any decision is made concerning the needs of the livestock industry.

Senator Paul Boyland also appeared in support of SJR 32. He said that the laboratory being in his district made him more aware of the problems and he thought it was up to the legislature to do something about this. He said a study is a good idea. He gave examples of different problems that have been worked out in the laboratory in Bozeman and how important the industry is to Montana.

Dr. Jim Glosser, Administrator of the Dept. of Livestock, and Gary Langley, Montana Stockgrowers Assoc. and Montana Cattlemen's Assoc. also arose and stated their support of SJR 32.

Ray Myers, Jr. representing himself as a raiser of livestock in Montana arose in support of the resolution. He said that

he thinks the laboratory should be "freewheeling". - He said as a user of the livestock lab, he has found that it takes too long to get results of tests back.

Dr. Dave Young, Mt. State University, spoke in support of the resolution. He said the study would greatly help in solving a problem in Montana.

there were no opponents to SJR 32.

Questions from the committee followed. Rep. Johnson asked if the Dept. of Livestock and MSU had objections to picking up the expenses of this study. Senator Galt said that they had agreed to accept the responsibility. He also said that the federal government would put in a percentage of the cost.

Senator Galt gave closing statement on SJR 32.

HJR 61

Rep. Ernst, sponsor of HJR 61, explained the bill to the committee and gave background information on what persipitated the resolution. He said that there has been a real problem in moving grain to market. The only major markets are on the west coast. He said that this winter many contracts were not met because rail cars were not available or they were unable to meet deadlines. He said that the farm members had come up with this study idea as a way of solving the problem. He said that it is important for the country that the public work with the agriculture community.

PROPOSERS:

Zack Stevens, representing the Montana Farm Bureau, spoke in favor of the pipeline bill. He said that the technology is available to really open up the industry. The pipeline transporting of grain could open up grain markets never before open to Montana.

Dr. William Hunt, Montana State University, spoke in favor of HJR 61. He stated that technology is available for moving grain by pipeline.

Chris Johanson, Montana Grain Elevators Assoc., gave testimony in support of HJR 61. He said that the situation in Montana for moving grain to market is getting progressively worse. He urged the support of the committee.

HJR 61 CONT.

OPPONENTS;

Mr. Gordon McGowan, Montana Railroad Association, spoke in opposition to HJR 61. He said that he could see a lot of problems with this resolution. He passed out sheets with viewpoints of the R.R. Assoc. Exhibit "A" shows the wheat and barley exported from Montana from the BN railroad. Exhibit "B" shows the surplus of box & covered hoppers for grain on the BN system. He stated that the environmentalists have raised concrete objections against the pipeline. He gave examples of some of the problems that the pipeline would be faced with such as breakage. He said that the whole issue is dealing with nature and the crops each year. He passed out a sheet showing the return on net investment in transportation property (see Exhibit "C")

There were no other opponents to HJR 61.

Questions from the committee followed.

Rep. Conroy asked if this bill would take an appropriation. The answer was no, not at this time. Some of the members wanted to know if there is a working pipeline anywhere else that carries grain. The answer was that there have been test pipelines but none that are presently being used. The question was asked why some corporation or free enterprise had not come up with this study before if it is so important. The reply was that private corporations usually do not release the results of their studies to the public when it is their money that is put into it.

Rep. Ernst closed on HJR 61. He said that he was pleased with the response to the resolution. He said that it is his belief that the grain shipping has become the "step child" in the last few years.

HJR 62

HJR 62 is a House Agriculture Committee Bill requesting assignment of an interim committee to study Montana's present seed certification laws.

PROPONENTS:

Mike Koehnke speaking as a private citizen spoke in favor of the bill. He said that this resolution would probably do what the farmers want. He said that the bill should probably specify how many members would make up the committee and who would appoint the committee. He said that as far as funding, people who participate in the study will cover their own funding.

Senator Paul Boyland spoke in favor of the resolution. He said that the resolution was presigitated by suits going on between the University and the potatoe growers. He said that it is necessary that they make a study during the interim so that this problem can be solved next session.

Also appearing and stating support of the resolution was Jack Gunderson of the Dept. of Agriculture.

There were no opponents to HJR 62.

Questions from the committee followed. The main concern at this time was that the resolution did not have enough details about who would make up the committee. Chairman Day said that he would leave it up to the committee to decide if they wanted to change the wording.

Hearing was closed on HJR 62.

EXECUTIVE SESSION;

Rep. Conroy made a motion that SJR 32 BE CONCURRED IN. Discussion on the motion followed. A vote was taken and carried unanimously with those present. Rep. Donaldson will carry the bill in the House.

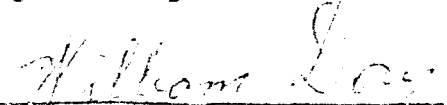
Rep. Hand moved that HJR 61 BE CONCURRED IN. Discussion on the motion followed. Rep. Johnson said that either the Legislative Council or the Dept. of Agruculture should do the study or give money for the study because she felt Montana State University should not have to do it on their own. Rep. Roth said that the university has plenty of time to do this study and it will fit right into their program. Rep. Dassinger moved that the word "STUDY" in the title be changed to "research". After discussion from the committee he withdrew his motion. A vote was taken on Rep. Hand's motion and carried 12 yes and 2 no with 3 absent. Rep. Brand and Dassinger voted no.

No action was taken on HJR 62 at this time. A meeting was scheduled for executive action on EJR 62 for Friday March 30, at 12:00 noon.

A motion was made & seconded to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:


William M. Day - Chairman