

March 30, 1979

The House Natural Resources Committee convened on March 30, 1979, at 10 a.m., in room 437 of the Capitol Building with Vice-Chairman Hal Harper presiding and nine members present. Absent were Reps. Mike Cooney and Michael Keedy; and excused were Reps. Jim Burnett, Aubyn Curtiss, Herb Huennekens, George Johnston, Jerry Metcalf, John Scully, Bob Thoft and Art Shelden.

Vice-Chairman Harper opened the meeting to a hearing on House Joint Resolution 60.

#### HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 60

REPRESENTATIVE DENNIS NATHE, District #1, the bill's chief sponsor, said this bill calls for the Environmental Quality Council to study the laws relating to review procedures for permits required for projects which contemplate the use of the state's natural resources for the purpose of coordinating such permit procedures. Rep. Nathe said he had a bill drafted but decided not to introduce it this session. He said more indepth study was needed as it is a complicated problem. He showed a copy of the flow chart which demonstrates the proposed COPRA process, which process is designed to simplify the permitting process. COPRA stands for Coordination of Permit Procedures Act and a copy of the paper describing it is exhibit 1 of the minutes. The paper was prepared by G. William Harbrecht, Ecology Researcher, EQC.

TERRY CARMODY, State Director, EQC, said there is a need for this bill. If everything works perfectly you are going to be looking at better than 18 months from the time you submit the application to when the permit would be given. There is a need for shortening this time period and have better coordination between agencies.

There were no opponents and in closing Rep. Nathe said there was an amendment. He asked the researcher, Debbie Schmidt, to explain the amendment.

Debbie Schmidt said the problem with requesting the Committee on Priorities to assign this to the EQC is that there is no statutory authority for that committee to assign things to the EQC. The Council should decide whether it is going to do the study rather than go through the Priorities Committee. This change will not change the meaning but only change the process and make it conform to the statutes. The amendment would be in the title, line 6, to strike "COMMITTEE ON PRIORITIES ASSIGN THE", and on page 2, line 21, to strike "the Committee on Priorities is requested to assign", and on page 2, line 22, to strike "to."

Rep. Nathe went on to say the Department of Natural Resources has put a considerable amount of effort in this already as has the EQC and they both felt there should be further refinement and study. If it is introduced next session it shouldn't have too much trouble and can fly right through.

Rep. Quilici questioned if it would be possible to fund this study through Legislative Council funds that are set aside for studies. Ms. Schmidt responded that the money is appropriated to the Legislative Council and not the EQC and there is no legal way to transfer this money to the EQC. She mentioned two studies done by the EQC which did not go through the Priorities Committee.

In response to a question about the fiscal condition of the EQC, Mr. Carmody said they had been cut 20%. Rep. Quilici said he felt this was an important study and would like to see it funded. Mr. Carmody responded to a question by Rep. Spilker that they do not receive many federal funds--they had done a project that had federal funds recently.

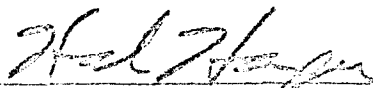
Rep. Quilici moved the amendments be adopted and the bill as so amended do pass. The motion carried unanimously with those present. Absent same as noted.

Rep. Fagg commented that if a proposed bill goes through there would be a standing interim committee of the Natural Resources Committee and more could be accomplished.

Rep. Fagg explained to the committee members about the proposed helicopter trip. He said they would view the proposed reopening of the chromium mine near Nye. He said the Anaconda Company would have people on hand to explain the proposed project. The committee would also view the reclamation work done on the old tailings pond. Included in the trip was lunch with the Stillwater Protective Association at which they would explain their position on the proposed project. Rep. Fagg said there are mountain sheep and hundreds of goats in the area. He said the National Guard has to fly so many hours a month and they like a mission such as this as it goes down as a training mission.

Meeting adjourned at 10:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
HAL HARPER, Vice-Chairman

Emelia A. Satre, Sec.