

APPROPRIATIONS - FINANCE & CLAIMS

SUB-COMMITTEE: HUMAN SERVICES

JANUARY 24, 1979 - CAPITOL ANNEX

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 a.m. by Chairman Steve Waldron with the following members present:

Chairman Steve Waldron
Senator Gary Aklestad
Representative Bill Hand
Representative Robert Marks
Senator Pat Regan
Senator Pete Story

Others present were: R. J. Redpath, Chief of Management Services; Michael D. Roach, Chief of the Air Quality Bureau; Ben Wake, Administrator of Environmental Sciences Division; Sandra Muckelston, Administrator of the Legal Division of DHES; Dennis Thurston, DHES; Larry Lloyd, Chief of Occupational Health Bureau; Dr. Arthur C. Knight, Director of Health and Environmental Sciences; Linda Gambill and Ron Weiss, Executive Budget Office; and Curt Nichols, LFA.

Chairman Waldron brought to the subcommittee's attention a memo from Curt Nichols, LFA, regarding the transfer of funds within the Aeronautics Division to cover a deficit. The memo stated that according to Section 17-3-107 MCA the loan has to be approved by the Department of Administration and it must show that there is evidence the income will be sufficient to restore the funds. Neither of the requirements were met, making it illegal.

The Environmental Health Division will be studied by bureau.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH BUREAU

This program has five employees. The bureau monitors exposure to radiation, tests radiation machines, monitors noise pollution, monitors pollution levels in work areas and conducts various studies. The difference between the Executive Budget and the LFA Budget is funding for a study regarding Butte's radiation level. The LFA does not recommend the funding because they feel it will become a permanent program if funded now.

Dr. Arthur C. Knight, Director of DHES, and Larry Lloyd, Chief of Occupational Health, both spoke on the need for the Study of Radiation in Butte and Anaconda. The Governor has listed this as high priority and authorized a transfer of funds from the FY 79 to the FY 78 to begin the program.

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Studies were begun to determine what was the cause of carcinoma in the lungs of Butte residents. It was found that both men and women regardless if they worked in the mines or not were equally affected. The link with radiation finally was thought of when the drinking water in Alhamora was found to have radiation contamination. Through the studies of the bureau it has been discovered that the Butte area has a much higher concentration of gamma rays. Part of the problem has been linked to slag that has been used for road materials, concrete slabs, beams and blocks. Eventually the concrete was used to build homes. The slag contains Radium 226 which decays to an inert gas, Radium 222, which seeps into the air. There has been a voluntary moratorium by Staufer Phosphates, however there is still slag being used which was purchased previously. If the level of Radium 222 is .01 - .05, the Surgeon General recommends remedial action. Many of the houses in Butte have been found to have these high levels.

Besides the slag problem, the bureau is concerned that radiation is coming from other areas. The air has been found to have high concentrations of radiation; also houses with no slag have been found to have high readings. The bureau's objective is to identify all sources of radiation and begin some remedial programs.

The subcommittee expressed concern over the length of the program. Mr. Lloyd said he expected the study to last another two years. However, there may be future funding requests to monitor remedial efforts. He did not feel it would be a lasting program. At this point, they have not been able to get any federal funding. EPA is giving them support in the manner of equipment, lab back-ups and consultants; but no funds.

The Executive Branch did stress to the subcommittee that they felt that there was a definite health hazard and the study was necessary.

AIR QUALITY BUREAU

There are 20 FTEs in this bureau. This bureau is responsible for the Montana Air Quality Standards, granting loans to local communities, monitoring air quality sites and air pollution studies among others. The major difference between the Executive Budget and the LFA Budget is \$624,565.00 for the biennium for a program to bring the Montana Air Quality up to the federal standards by 1982. The Executive Budget does not include this funding. The department is requesting \$147,000.00 in supplemental appropriations for a Montana Ambient Air Quality Standards Program. This program is

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necessary to establish Montana Air Quality Standards. The general fund portion of the \$624,565 would be \$61,805.00.

Several subcommittee members expressed a concern that some of the standards were higher than the federal standards and might cause a hardship on the businesses. The only pollutants with higher standards were fluoride and sulfur dioxide. The bureau did not feel either would be economically detrimental. The subcommittee also asked what would happen if the standards were not met by 1982. Mike Roach, Chief of the Air Quality Bureau, explained that the federal government will do two things: 1) If there are no Montana standards and federal standards are broken, no new construction can be started. 2) If automobile pollution standards are broken on the federal level with no state standards, federal highway funds and federal sewage construction funds will be withheld.

SUPPLEMENTAL

Two portions of the supplement have been discussed, the radiation study and the Ambient Air Quality Standard for standards on pollution. Two other portions of the supplement are the audit for \$15,000.00 and the reinstatement of funds. the LFA asked the department to explain these two.

The audit supplement resulted from a Legislative Audit this year which they did not plan on. Therefore they need \$15,000 to pay the auditors.

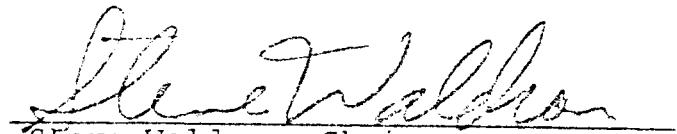
The "reinstatement" was not clear and the Executive Budget Office and Curt Nichols were appointed to get together and work out exactly what the subcommittee was required to do. The reinstatement was due to a transfer of funds from FY 79 to FY 78. All the funds were not utilized and there is \$59,000 that the bureau wants transferred back to FY 79. There is also \$67,000 from Subdivision Review that was not needed. This has to be reverted. They brought in enough money from their "earmarked" accounts that the general fund money was not used.

Larry Lloyd mentioned to the subcommittee a program that they would like to be considered. The program would require funding to develop a licensing program on radiation coming into the state. The bureau will provide a proposed budget and exactly what the program will do to the subcommittee before the work session.

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Respectfully submitted:


Steve Waldron
Steve Waldron, Chairman
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