

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

January 31, 1979

The Senate Education Committee met Wednesday, January 31, 1979, in Room 402 of the Capitol Building. Senator Bob Brown, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. Committee members present were Senators Brown, E. Smith, R. Smith, Severson, McCallum and Thomas. Senators Anderson, Blaylock, Fasbender, and O'Hara were absent although Senator O'Hara arrived before the end of the meeting.

The committee heard testimony on Senate Bill 203.

SENATE BILL 203

Senator McCallum, sponsor of the bill, stated the bill was requested by the Thompson Falls School District and the bus contractor in that area following a problem they had with the current law. Currently, a district may call for bids or negotiate a new contract with the current bus contractor if the increase is not more than 5% of the previous year contract. Thompson Falls called for bids and received bids of \$1.26 per mile as opposed to 76¢ a mile the previous year. They rejected those bids and tried to renegotiate with the contractor but could only agree at an 8% level so it became necessary to re-advertise for bids, this time having to accept a bid of \$1.16 per mile. Senator McCallum stated this caused a lot of hard feeling in the community and with the contractor as well as being very costly for the district. The district felt the contract could have been easily resolved at the 8% level.

PROPOSERS

Bob Stockton, representing the Office of Public Instruction, stated his support of the bill. He noted the Thompson Falls case is not unique, it happens all over the state. He felt the law was originally too low and it has caused many problems. In many cases, because the renegotiation is optional, the bidding has been at a 20% level due to the costs of buses soaring in the last two or three years from \$11,000 to \$18,00-\$20,000.

Chad Smith, representing the Montana School Boards Association, echoed support of Mr. Stockton's testimony. He felt that the 8% level would help keep costs down as many districts could reach agreement on contracts at that level and not have to accept bids on a 15-20% increase level.

Richard Boese, Chairman of the Richey School Board and representing Region 4 of the Montana School Boards Association, stated the 8% would be helpful in his area. He said more and more schools are going to the bid procedure and it is increasingly expensive.

There were no opponents to the bill and the hearing was opened to questions by the committee.

Senator Thomas asked if Senator McCallum would like to add an effective date to the bill.

Senator McCallum stated he would be happy to have that addition made.

Senator Thomas moved to amend the title and the body of the bill providing an immediate effective date upon passage and approval. The motion carried unanimously with Senators Anderson, Blaylock, Fasbender, and O'Hara absent.

Senator McCallum moved Senate Bill 203 Do Pass As Amended. The motion carried unanimously with Senators Anderson, Blaylock, Fasbender, and O'Hara absent.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Senator Brown stated he would like to have the committees feeling regarding moving SJR 12, the ERA proposal, to the Judiciary Committee. He felt it is a volatile issue and of great public interest and should be handled fairly and correctly and strictly according to procedure. He approached Senator Mathers, President of the Senate, and Senator Lensink, Chairman of Judiciary, and they agreed with his view that since the bill had been handled by Judiciary the last two sessions, it rightfully belonged there again. The committee agreed with the Chairman and he will so move on the floor.

Senator Brown stated the House Education Committee will be hearing the Indian studies bill Friday and our committee has been invited to sit in on the hearing.

The committee agreed to send copies of all the education bills to the county superintendents.

The brown bag lunch with the Office of Public Instruction will be Thursday, Feb. 1, with transportation and tuition being discussed.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.



SENATOR BOB BROWN, CHAIRMAN

NAME: Zak Stutch DATE: _____

ADDRESS: Capital Bldg

PHONE: 449-3167

REPRESENTING WHOM? OSPT

APPEARING ON WHICH PROPOSAL: SB 2D-3

DO YOU: SUPPORT? AMEND? _____ OPPOSE? _____

COMMENTS: _____

PLEASE LEAVE ANY PREPARED STATEMENTS WITH THE COMMITTEE SECRETARY.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT

JANUARY 31 19 79

MR. PRESIDENT

We, your committee on EDUCATION

having had under consideration SENATE Bill No. 203

Respectfully report as follows: That SENATE Bill No. 203
introduced bill, be amended as follows:

1. Page 1, line 7.

Following: "MCA"

Insert: "; and providing an immediate effective date"

2. Page 3.

Following: line 3

Insert: "Section 2. THERE IS A NEW MCA SECTION THAT READS:

Effective date. This act is effective on its passage and approval."

And, as so amended,

DO PASS