

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON WATER  
January 27, 1981

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The Select Committee on Water convened at 2 p.m. on January 22, 1981 in Room 436 of the Capitol Building with CHAIRMAN ROTH presiding. All members were present with the exception of VICE CHAIRMAN CURTISS, who was absent, and REP. NEUMAN, who was excused.

HOUSE BILL 269. REP. MC LANE opened the hearing on HB 269, a bill to generally revise the law concerning the administration of irrigation districts. She stated that inflation had prompted her to sponsor the bill.

PROPONENTS:

CHARLES CRANE, Executive Director of the Montana Water Development Association, testified in behalf of the bill. (EXHIBIT I)

RON SCOFIELD, of the Helena Valley Irrigation District, spoke in favor of the bill. He read proposed changes (EXHIBIT II). BOB ELLIS, also of the Helena Valley Irrigation District, testified and referred to page 6, Section 8 of the bill. He stated that the \$5,000 limit was not adequate, as it barely covers the maintenance, which includes construction by the state definition. The Bureau of Reclamation, on all Bureau projects, does all the engineering and planning; it would be a duplication if outside engineers had to be called in. To keep all employees year around, the District prefers to do all the work within their power.

OPPONENTS: None

QUESTIONS:

REP. CONROY asked how often the Water meetings are held. ELLIS replied once a month. REP. CONROY asked how much travel is involved. ELLIS answered that, for federally funded projects, they meet in Billings. For the Missouri River Water Users Association, they sometimes meet with the regional director. They meet upon request, and require travel expenses and 2 or 3 days food and lodging. CONROY asked if they were able to pay for this expense with federal money. ELLIS said yes.

CONROY: Are there any guide lines for spending federal money? RON SCOFIELD commented that there definitely are guidelines. CONROY asked about the salaries for workers on the project and was told by SCOFIELD that they range from \$3.50 to \$9.50 per hour. REP. HUENNEKENS asked for an explanation of Sections 3 and 4 in regard to a Board of Control. Ex-REP. DAY told the committee that a Board of Control run the Buffalo Rapids project and the Lower Yellowstone project. The Board for the Buffalo Rapids is

comprised of six elected members and one member at large, all district representatives. They make up the proposed budget for the various districts. The Lower Yellowstone project operated somewhat differently. Its board is not made up of district representatives, but it operates the same. Members are not paid for travel but receive a per diem pay. REP. KEMMIS asked Mr. Crane why he was liberal in one of his proposed amendments increasing an amount from \$80,000 to \$100,000, yet he was more restrictive in that he wants to require written consent for any expenditure, no matter how small.

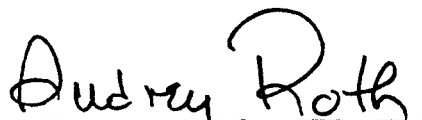
REP. CONROY asked Mr. Ellis how many were employed by the Helena Valley District. ELLIS told him there were five and that they were responsible for 15,000 acres. The number of employees of a district depends upon the size of the district. Some have as few as three employees and one employs 25.

REP. MC Lane closed.

REP. ROTH declared the hearing on House Bill 269 closed.

CHAIRMAN ROTH announced that on Tuesday, January 27, House Bill 194 and House Bill 324 will be heard. ROTH then introduced ERVAL RAINEY who presented slides and information on the proposed \$220,000,000 Kootenai River Hydroelectric Project. Mr. Rainey represents Northern Lights Generating and Western Montana Generating and Transmission.

The meeting adjourned at 3 o'clock.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Audrey Roth". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

AUDREY ROTH, Chairman

rj

NAME R. H. Ellis BILL No. H/B 269  
ADDRESS 1235 Sierra Malibu Mt DATE 1/22/01  
WHOM DO YOU REPRESENT Montana Winter Debatemen's Ass'n  
Helena Valley Frey  
SUPPORT ✓ OPPOSE \_\_\_\_\_ AMEND \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED STATEMENT WITH SECRETARY.

Comments:

·ONSOR

H B 269  
Mc Lane

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Jan. 22, 1981

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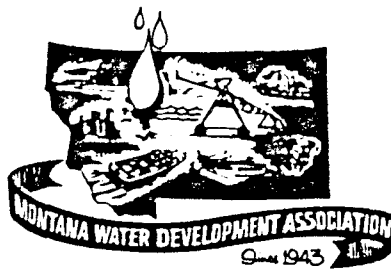
IF YOU CARE TO WRITE COMMENTS, ASK SECRETARY FOR LONGER FORM.

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED STATEMENT WITH SECRETARY.

Robert Fagerberg, President  
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Box 485  
Butte, MT 59703

## HB 269

This bill is the result of activities undertaken by the irrigation and legislative committees of the Montana Water Development Association. This action was prompted primarily as a result of the deleterious effects of inflation on the administration of the irrigation districts.

The process by which these proposed changes were identified was very much like the one we have here today. A committee consisting of irrigation district managers and directors thoroughly reviewed the existing code and suggested changes. These proposed changes were presented to the other irrigation districts in order to solicit comments and incorporate the changes that each of the districts had felt would be beneficial. I am telling you the background of this bill to emphasize that the changes proposed in this bill have been reviewed by the irrigation districts all over the state and reflect the needs of all of the irrigation districts.

The Montana Water Development Association asks that you support this bill on behalf of the irrigation districts.

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