

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY COMMITTEE
MONTANA STATE SENATE

January 12, 1981

The meeting of the Business and Industry Committee was called to order by Chairman Frank W. Hazelbaker, on January 12, 1981, at 10:00 a.m. in Room 404 of the State Capitol.

ROLL CALL: Present were: Senators Dover, Boylan, Lee, Regan and Hazelbaker. Absent were: Senators Goodover, Kolstad and Blaylock.

Chairman Hazelbaker introduced Senator Bob Brown, Sponsor of Senate Bill 57, who explained that the purpose of this Bill was to make the State law conform with the Federal law, thereby making Montana eligible for an additional \$20,000 in Federal funds.

The Chairman introduced Ray Brown, Chairman of the Montana Human Rights Commission; Karen Townsend, also representing the Montana Human Rights Commission; Ray Hunter, the newly-appointed Montana Commissioner of Labor and Scott Secap, the representative from the Legislative Auditor's office.

Karen Townsend explained that in order to make Montana eligible for more Federal money, this Bill is attempting to make our Law conform with the Federal Law. There are minor disagreements here which have prevented this from occurring. (She presented a Fact Sheet of explanation; sheet hereby attached).

Dave Hunter said that the Department of Labor supports the Bill. He explained his prior experience with the City of Helena, in that they have to certify that they are enforcing the Federal statute. He explained that if this law is passed, it will take considerable burden off of the cities and counties, who, at this time, have to have considerable staff to investigate all complaints which are then turned over to the Federal Regional Office in Denver.

In response to a request from Senator Regan, Scott Secap advised that the Audit Committee concurs with the recommendation of this endorsement; that the Human Rights Commission could make their sanction of the law much more forceful with the passage of this Bill. They would not receive more complaints; they would just have more money to work on existing complaints.

Senator Hazelbaker questioned if there had been trouble in regard to the new legislation on page two, and Scott Secap explained that paragraph "E" is just to conform with the Federal law.

2--January 12, 1981

Senator Regan asked if, under this Act, we will still have to investigate these complaints when they come into the state, if we do not pass this Bill.

Karen Townsend clarified the issue by saying: "When we adopt the new legislation, we will receive an additional \$20,000., but we have to investigate any housing discrimination complaints anyway. We have just added additional language."

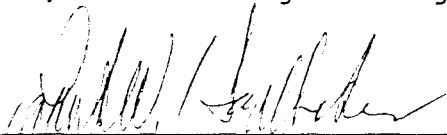
OPPONENTS:

Senator Gary Lee stated that he is not opposed to Equal Rights, Fair Housing, etc., but he feels that we are doing nothing more than to accept coerced implementation of Federal guidelines. He feels that this group just wants an additional \$20,000. to help fund administrative proceedings in cases which come before it, and he feels that the state should take over the responsibility of the State of Montana. He clarified his stance by saying, "The state is not paying for this. Under our present law a person can complain to the Human Rights Commission, which means only that the present staff would work this out with Federal funding so that we are completing the investigation of Montana problems in Montana." He wanted to know if, should we accept this money, this would terminate the Federal Government's involvement in this type of thing in the future."

Scott Selback responded by saying that this type of agreement is not unique; there are many other agreements of this type. The majority of the money is funded anyway; this would just add to it.

Because many committee members were absent today, Chairman Hazelbaker advised that we would again take up discussion on this matter at the next meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.


FRANK W. HAZELBAKER, Chairman

mm