

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
FINANCE AND CLAIMS COMMITTEE
MONTANA STATE SENATE

January 21, 1981

The third meeting of the Senate Finance and Claims Committee met in room 108 of the State Capitol on the above date. The meeting was called to order at 8:05 a.m. by Senator Himsl, Chairman and roll call was taken, attached.

Senator Himsl announced that he was to name the members from the Senate to the Long Range Building subcommittee, that traditionally they were chosen from areas that do not have an institution to be affected, and that he would continue with this trend and name Senators Etchart, Thomas, Haffey and Himsl. He said the meetings would be called by the Chairman of the subcommittee, Representative Moore.

HOUSE BILL 114: Senator Himsl said the purpose of the meeting this morning is to consider House Bill 114, a supplemental which dealt with interpreter program for the Deaf and Blind School at Great Falls, and called on Representative Moore as the chief sponsor of the bill.

Representative Moore said House Bill 114 is a supplemental for a interpretative-tutor program for the State School for the Deaf and Blind. He said this program consists of a number of people who take the hearing impaired older children in junior high school and in high school since this is the age group they work with. They take them to the high schools and junior high schools each day for the classes required but not offered in the deaf and blind school. It has been funded by special education monies. Before this year it was taken out of the general fund was contracted out of the school district. This year the school district did not give them the contract, we were notified last spring and we had a problem. If we discontinued this program the children would be denied the classes. The Legislative Finance Committee decided to let the superintendent go ahead and spend the money for the next year. The superintendent left the meeting with a vote of 6 to 4--thinking it passed. However we found it took 7 votes to pass it; no one notified the superintendent and he initiated the contract. The committee then agreed to appropriate a certain amount of money for the continuation of the program. This gave approval until January 23, 1981. The \$124,000 included \$97,000 in salaries for the remainder of the year. The highest paid one is \$87,000 a year. The remainder of the money is there--insurance, FICA tax, workers compensation, a few hundred dollars for supplies etc. and \$3,000 which if not used will revert to the general fund. He then asked for approval of the bill from the committee.

Senator Goodover, co-sponsor of the bill said this school is not in his district, but adjacent to it. He said he had been involved in it for some years and that the program was necessary. He would urge support for the bill.

There were no further proponents, there were no opponents.
Questions from the committee as follows:

Senator Regan: Is the general fund going to be an on-going program that will be funded from now on? Moore: It has been an on-going program for several years. It is in the next biennium budget.

Senator Regan: What is the total for the program? Representative Moore: I don't recall. It is in the break down for the committee. Bruce Shively, (LFA), said the figures are about the same \$124,000 for the fiscal year '82 and about the same for '83.

Senator Regan: About $\frac{1}{4}$ million? Bruce: yes.

Senator Regan: Isn't there special education grants--or why does the district turn it down? Representative Moore: The special education funds are funneled through. We changed the funding methods of special education. It was contracted before, and the school district did not have enough money to continue the program.

Senator Himsl: The school district funds its own special education program. They reniged on this program for the State School that appeared to be their responsibility. The legislative finance committee made a committment, the contract has been made, the services delivered, and we are now meeting those responsibilities.

Representative Moore: That is correct. Salaries are required, the benefits, etc. for the tutors (10 tutors).

Senator Regan: I do want the committee to know that the legislative finance committee cannot obligate this legislature nor any other. I voted "no" on the committee. There are a number of special education programs that we are facing.

Representative Moore: This should not be the obligation of the school district in Great Falls, it is a State School.

Senator Regan: Doesn't this school get more money for this? Representative Moore: There is very little funding for the A & B since there are only 49 kids there. Some of them only take 2 or 3 classes, and they are the ones that are required classes for them to take, but are not in the regular school.

Senator Nelson: Do the tutors have another job when they are not tutoring? Representative Moore: No. They take one student then go back and take another, and perhaps a third. In addition they assist the junion highschool or highschool teacher in the interpreting and tutoring of the students in that subject.

Senator Aklestad: When was the money cut off? Representative Moore: The contract was not renewed in 1980.

Senator Aklestad: Of this year? Ans. Yes.

Senator Van Valkenburg: What happens if we don't fund this money?
Representative Moore: The program would discontinue as of the 23rd of January and the program would be defunct. Because of the limitation of the \$85,000 that the finance committee said they would support, the 23rd of January was the limit and no funding after that.

Senator Nelson: How come this didn't go through our subcommittee when we took up the budget? Representative Moore: It was withdrawn because of the time element.

Senator Keating: Do these kids or their parents pay tuition?
Ans: No. The parents contribute a lot of free service to the school.

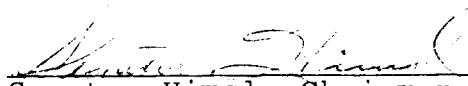
Senator Haffey: Point of clarification. It is my understanding that the Education subcommittee would approve the tutor supplemental. If it can be expedited here, okay, otherwise it would still be on? Bruce: The Education subcommittee approved \$260,000 for all of the school for the deaf and blind. The time element involved caused them to subtract this amount and pursue the interpretive tutor program here. This was done because of the time element.

Senator Smith: Was this program discussed at the other session in the last legislature, and was it considered in the last session?
Representative Moore: Last session it was discussed. We appropriated for it but the school district refused to contract for 1982. We appropriated the expenditure. They did not give out the money so the program did not have the money.

MOTION: Senator Story moved that HOUSE BILL 114 BE CONCURRED IN. Second by Senator Dover. The vote was unanimous with one exception. Senator Regan voted no.

ANNOUNCEMENT: Representative Moore announced there would be a Long Range Building subcommittee meeting Tuesday, January 27 at 5 P.M. in room 108.

There was a motion to adjourn, voted and passed.


Senator Himsl, Chairman

ROLL CALL

FINANCE AND CLAIMS COMMITTEE

47th LEGISLATIVE SESSION - - 1981 Date 4/21/81

NAME	PRESENT	ABSENT	EXCUSED
Senator Etchart	✓		
Senator Story	✓		
Senator Aklestad	✓		
Senator Nelson	✓		
Senator Smith	✓		
Senator Dover	✓		
Senator Johnson			
Senator Keating	✓		
Senator Boylan	✓		
Senator Regan	✓		
Senator Thomas	✓		
Senator Stimatz	✓		
Senator Van Valkenburg	✓		
Senator Haffey	✓		
Senator Jacobson	✓		
Senator Himsl	✓		

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT

January 21

1931

MR. PRESIDENT

We, your committee on FINANCE AND CLAIMS

having had under consideration HOUSE Bill No. 114

Respectfully report as follows: That HOUSE Bill No. 114

DO CONCUR IN
DO PASS