

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
STATE ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE
MONTANA STATE SENATE

JANUARY 29, 1981

The sixteenth meeting of the Senate State Administration Committee was called to order by Senator Pete Story, Chairman, on the above date, in Room 442 of the State Capitol Building at 10:00 o'clock a.m.

ROLL CALL: All members of the committee were present, except Senators Jan Johnson and Tom Towe.

CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILLS NUMBERS 189 and 190:

- 189- A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: AN ACT TO SUBMIT TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF MONTANA AN AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE V, SECTION, 6, OF THE MONTANA CONSTITUTION TO PROVIDE THAT THE LEGISLATURE SHALL MEET IN ANNUAL SESSIONS FOR 8 CONSECUTIVE 6-DAY WEEKS.
- 190- A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: AN ACT AMENDING SECTION 5-2-103, MCA, TO PROVIDE THAT THE LEGISLATURE SHALL MEET IN ANNUAL SESSIONS FOR 8 CONSECUTIVE 6-DAY WEEKS IF THE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO SO PROVIDE PASSES; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Senator Bob Brown, Whitefish, District 10, introduced his bills which provide for annual sessions. He pointed out that prior to 1972 the legislature met for sixty calendar days, which meant seven days a week. This happened to be convenient for those in agriculture because it was over by the first of March. The purpose of these bills is to meet annually for forty legislative days--six days a week--which would result in 96 days in the biennium. Presently they meet for 90 days biennially. In the off year there are those who make decisions that the legislature might have made had they been here, and he feels that they are only a legislative body every two years. Senator Brown mentioned the states that have annual sessions, among which are Idaho, South Dakota, Utah, Arizona, and Nebraska.

Senator Brown went on to say that if these bills pass, one year could be used for budgetary matters and other matters in the next year. This has not been introduced in the bills because that would make them too rigid.

PROPOSERS: Joy Bruck from the League of Women Voters expressed support in that the bills would exercise some sort of control rather than giving legislative committees authority by mail. They feel citizen participation is encouraged when there are annual sessions.

Senator Patrick Ryan rose in favor of this bill because it is good business to examine what they, the legislators, are doing every year rather than every two years.

OPPONENTS: Janelle Fallan, Montana Chamber of Commerce, states that their major concern is that the legislators are in the best position to consider the matters and that it would be necessary for less legislation. They would still have a lot of bills and may not be able to give them as much consideration in annual sessions. She posed the question, "Would there be enough time allowed?"

Questions from the committee: Senator Story addressed Senator Brown with the statement that now it takes two-thirds vote of both houses and then a vote of the people. A way to test this would be a majority could set rules, transmit deadlines; ones that would accommodate a special session each year.

Senator Brown stated he wants to try one more time, pointing out that when the governor has to call special sessions or others attempt to do this, it takes a majority of votes to do it. It may not be a good idea for a legislative session to be called by one of the parties.

Senator Story stated he would want a rule because they do not want the same issue brought up every year. Senator Brown agreed.


Senator Kolstad said to Senator Brown that the reason the people voted it out was because the legislature has no control over the number of bills introduced.

Senator Brown says the people who work with them now feel they are not doing the job they should.

Senator Ryan asked Senator Brown about the great panic to establish super committees to act for all of us and if this is his reason for asking for annual sessions. Brown reiterated that they should deal with the problems more than every two years and should not oppose just in a quorum.

In closing, Senator Brown stated he is open to ideas for amending; the bills are designed to be amendable. It is too late to do it for this biennium but perhaps for the next. He thanked the Chamber of Commerce for their gentle opposition to his bill.

ADJOURNMENT: 10:25 A.M.


SENATOR PETE STORY, CHAIRMAN

16th meeting

ROLL CALL

STATE ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

47th LEGISLATIVE SESSION - - 1981

Date 1-29-81

NAME	PRESENT	ABSENT	EXCUSED
Senator Pete Story, Chairman	✓		
Senator Allen Kolstad, V. C.	✓		
Senator William Hafferan	✓		
Senator H. W. Hammond			
Senator Jan Johnson		✓	
Senator Patrick Ryan	✓		
Senator Thomas Towe		✓	

Each day attach to minutes.

NAME: Gamelle Fallar DATE: 1/29/81

ADDRESS: Box 1730, Helena 59624

PHONE: 442-2405

REPRESENTING WHOM? Montana Chamber

APPEARING ON WHICH PROPOSAL: SB 189

DO YOU: SUPPORT? AMEND? OPPOSE? C

COMMENTS: Concerned that 48 days is not
sufficient time to consider legislation;
the number of bills introduced in
a 48-day annual session would
probably not be greatly less
than in a 90-day biennial session.

NAME: Jay Bruch DATE: 1-29-81

ADDRESS: 1601 Illinois Street

PHONE: 3-9772

REPRESENTING WHOM? League of Women Voters of Montana

APPEARING ON WHICH PROPOSAL: SB 189

DO YOU: SUPPORT? ☒ AMEND? ☐ OPPOSE? ☐

COMMENTS: The League believes an annual review

structure is a far better alternative to having more
oversight and control of executive branch activities

than giving legislative some authority to act on
behalf of the entire legislature as "legislate by mail"

We also feel legislative review tend to encourage
citizen participation

Jan 29

BILL NO. 189

VISITOR'S REGISTER

[illegible]

(Please leave prepared statement with Secretary)