

HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

JANUARY 12, 1983

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Fred (Fritz) Daily in the House Chambers of the Capitol Building at 12:35 p.m., with all members present. Teachers representing Jefferson Elementary School who attended the meeting were Barbara Berg, Sandy Heffelfinger, Marcy Carroll, and Fred Stanaway.

Chairman Daily opened the meeting to a hearing on House Bill 39.

HOUSE BILL 39

REPRESENTATIVE HAL HARPER, District 30, Helena, Montana, chief sponsor, opened by giving background information on the present state song, "Montana". Rep. Harper then stated that the young people here know that the main opponent in this matter is tradition. We are serious about this song. The state song is for the kids. I would like them to run through this song, "Montana Melody" at this time.

A group of 72 elementary school children; 59 from Jefferson Elementary School, Helena, Montana, and 13 from Bonner Elementary School, Bonner, Montana sang through the song, "Montana Melody".

The list of proponents from Jefferson Elementary School, Helena, Montana, included Seth Reese, Nicole Wolcott, Lerria Rogers, Liesl Strickler, Margaret Squillia, Paige Reese, Bill Tompkins, Amy Chenovick, John Mues, Kerry Heffelfinger, Tracy Knudson. Proponents from Bonner, Montana, included Joe Frohlich, Chris Carter, and Sara Nelson. These students stated they were proponents of House Bill 39 because it is interesting, easy to learn, has a flowing melody, is more feeling, and shows the true beauty of the state. The children talked about the song's description of the people, places, animals, plants, wilderness, and sunsets. They felt that nature and outdoor life in Montana are described more fully in the new song. Indians were mentioned as being a very important part of Montana's heritage, which is pointed out in the song. It was also mentioned that because of the emphasis on nature and outdoor life in Montana, the tourist trade in the state could be benefited. The students said that there are some bad points to the old song "Montana". It is worn out, has a plain melody, few verses are known, it sounds like a football cheer, and it doesn't tell much about the state of Montana.

MADELINE DUNHAM, Jefferson School Librarian, Helena, Montana, stood in favor of House Bill 39. The old song "Montana" is more appropriate as a college fight song. I feel that "Montana Melody" is far more descriptive of our beautiful state. From our high mountain lakes and snowy peaks, to the wildlife and Charles Russel. This is a very moving song and it should be our new state song.

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MERVE FINSTAD, Principal, Jefferson Elementary School, Helena, Montana, said I am proud that these teachers and students have learned about the legislative process. House Bill 39, I believe could help relate the beauty of our state.

ROBERT VAN DE VERE, Helena, Montana, said I think it is about time we came up with a new state song.

MARY WARD, 9-Mile, Montana, said I think we are truly fortunate to have a young man as talented as LeGrande Harvey in our state. The song describes our whole state much better than the old one. It would give these young people a great sense of pride to do something for their state.

REPRESENTATIVE JOE HAMMOND, District 24, Alberton, Montana, said I would like to go on record in support of the "Montana Melody" for all the reasons previously given.

BOB REAM, District 93, Missoula, Montana, said I sense the real feeling these kids have for this song. I have a stack of letters from constituents from my district, and for that reason alone, I support House Bill 39.

Chairman Daily then called for opponents of House Bill 39.

STACY SHORT, Jefferson Elementary School, Helena, Montana, said "Montana" is the state song, and it should not be changed. It has a lot of tradition behind it. It was easy for me to learn the song, and I have been singing it ever since.

JOHN HOLTER, Helena, Montana, said the present state song should stay the state song. Although it was introduced by one man, it is accepted by Montanans and has been for many generations. The song is simple, easily learned, and it does express the pride we have for our Montana. The only reason to change the state song is simply for the sake of change, which is the poorest reason to change anything.

Rep. Harper then closed by saying times are tough now in this state and country, but the spirit you see in these kids shows the kind of pride we have as Montanans. Maybe it is past time we nourish the seeds that help us to grow into the best Montanans and people.

Rep. Harper introduced the Co-authors of the "Montana Melody", LeGrande and Carleen Harvey.

A slide presentation was given while Mr. Harvey played the guitar and sang the "Montana Melody".

It was mentioned by Rep. Harper that royalties from the sale of this melody would be given to scholarships for higher education.

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The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Fred Daily 1-14-83
FRED (FRITZ) Daily, Chairman

Cheryl Fredrickson
Cheryl Fredrickson, secretary

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT

January 19, 1983

SPEAKER:

MR.

EDUCATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

We, your committee on

HOUSE

39

having had under consideration Bill No.

first reading copy (white, color)

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT TO CHANGE THE OFFICIAL
STATE SONG FROM 'MONTANA' TO 'MONTANA MELODY'."

HOUSE

39

Respectfully report as follows: That Bill No.
be amended as follows:

1. Title, lines 4 and line 5.

Following: "ACT TO"

Strike: line 4 and 5 through "MELODY"

Insert: "MAKE 'MONTANA MELODY' THE OFFICIAL STATE BALLAD"

2. Page 1, line 11.

Following: "is"

Strike: "more"

3. Page 1, line 13.

Following: "government and"

Strike: "more"

4. Page 1, line 18.

Following: "much"

Strike: "more"

Following: "and"

Strike: "after much more"

CHURCH

FRITE DAILY,

Chairman.

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5. Page 1, lines 19 and 20.

Following: "people"

Strike: line 19 and through "Montana" on line 20.

6. Page 2, line 1.

Following: "Melody"

Strike: "supersede "Montana" as"

Insert: "become"

7. Page 2.

Strike: line 2 through "state song"

Insert: "ballad"

8. Page 2, line 5.

Following: "State"

Strike: "song"

Insert: "ballad"

9. Page 2, line 7.

Following: "official state"

Strike: "song"

Insert: "ballad"

AND AS AMENDED
DO PASS