# MINUTES OF THE MEETING STATE ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MONTANA STATE SENATE

January 7, 1983

The meeting of the State Administration Committee was called to order by Chairman Pete Story on January 7, 1983 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 331, State Capitol.

ROLL CALL: Roll was called and all members were present except SENATORS HAMMOND and STIMATZ who were excused.

SENATE BILL NO 48: SENATOR THOMAS TOWE introduced Senate Bill 48 to the Committee. "AN ACT FOR THE SIMPLIFICATION OF BALLOTS TO BE USED IN VOTING MACHINES AND DEVICES; PROVIDING THAT LOCAL ELECTION ADMINISTRATORS MAY REQUEST THAT ONLY THE BALLOT ISSUE NUMBER AND THE FOR AND AGAINST STATEMENTS APPEAR ON THE BALLOT AND THAT ALL OTHER INFORMATION BE DISTRIBUTED TO ELECTORS AS THEY ENTER THE POLLING PLACE". Senator Towe emphasized the complication of the machine and its mechanism. He stated that many people were forced to wait so long in order to vote and that many people left without voting. He stated that by law there are four different items that must be printed on the ballot which involves duplicating and space. He suggested that there should be an easier way and that is, if the election administrator requests in advance to simplify the ballot, he may print all the material that now must be printed on the ballot on a separate piece of paper and each voter can pick it up and read it while standing in line and if that is done all duplications on the ballot can be eliminated leaving only the title of the initiative.

SENATOR TOWE suggested the following amendments to the bill. That, following the word "requests" to insert "in writing at the time ballots from that county are submitted to the secretary of state for certification"; and on line 24, to strike "registrar" and insert "judge".

PROPONENTS were called. DAVID L. HALLAND, election administrator for Yellowstone County testified for S.B. No. 48, also expressing the sometimes thirty minutes that a voter may stay in the booth in order to vote. He indicated that this bill is an important and necessary bill. He also stated that the public is aware of the ballot issues due th the excellent publicity by the newspaper and radio. It is apparent that the elderly have some difficulty and read the ballot slowly and carefully. He said that the printing costs of the handouts would be minimal. He asked for eliminating the wording. Mr. Halland

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presented the committee with a proposed amendment after discussing it with Senator Towe, and that is to see the paper ballots included and to add that the same information could be mailed with the absentee ballots.

WILLIAM ROMINE, representing the clerks and recorders rose is support of S.B.48. He said that it appears that the voting machine is a devil and should be eliminated but that it is also true that people do wait until the last minute to come and vote and then some stay in the booths studying their ballots.

JONATHAN MOTL, lobbiest and attorney from Helena, Montana, spoke as a nuetral, stating the biggest concern is that everyone has the opportunity to vote.

CLIFF CHRISTIAN of the Secretray of States Office said they have probably moved from opponent to proponent and asked that the committee agree to have on the ballot itself including not only the sections found in line 20, page 2, subsection "(2)(a)" and "(2)(f)" but also include subsection "(2)(e)".

OPPONENTS were called and MARGARET DAVIS of the League of Women Voters spoke opposing the bill stating that she does not believe the voters should be penalized for the problems of others and that the voters should see a uniform system state wide. She implied that all initatives are not well publicized.

There being no other proponents or opponents, SENATOR TOWE closed on SENATE BILL NO. 48.

NO ACTION was taken on S.B.48 and it was held in committee.

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 10:45 a.m.

Chairman

#### ROLL CALL

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Date Jan 7 48 th LEGISLATIVE SESSION -- 1983 - SENATE SEAT # PRESENT ABSENT EXCUSED NAME Х SENATOR PETE STORY, Chairman 45 Х SENATOR H. W. HAMMOND, Vice Ch 34 X SENATOR REED MARBUT 44 X SENATOR LARRY TVEIT 33 Х SENATOR R. MANNING 48 X SENATOR LAWRENCE STIMATZ 7 SENATOR THOMAS TOWE X 26

Each day attach to minutes.

### 47th - Second Special Session

### VISITORS' REGISTER

## SENATE AND HOUSE COMMITTEE \_\_\_\_\_

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