

MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
FREE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE  
MONTANA STATE SENATE

February 10, 1987

The second meeting of the Free Conference Committee on SJR 6 was called to order at 1:40 P.M. on February 10, 1987 by Chairman George McCallum in Room 331 of the Capitol Building.

ROLL CALL: All committee members were present, Senators McCallum, Van Valkenburg and Farrell and Representatives Hannah, Iverson and Vincent.

FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF SJR 6: Representative Hannah said he talked with the Taxation Committee Chairman and the caucus on this issue. He said our caucus is of the opinion that SJR 6 should be left the same as was amended in the House. As of February 10, 1987, the computer printout shows the Senate Taxation Committee with 47 bills assigned, 37 bills heard, 31 bills out of committee, and approximately 10 bills left to be heard. The House Taxation Committee has 109 bills assigned, 62 have been heard, 21 reported out, and approximately 47 bills left to be heard. There are 130 bills yet to be introduced that are not into the system. Of that 130 bills Taxation will get another 15 on the low side or 25 on the high side.

Representative Iverson said that some of those bills are extremely heavy bills and he does not feel he can ask House Taxation to compress any more time.

Senator Van Valkenburg asked if that was the only thing that was discussed, compression of time.

Representative Iverson said that is really the issue, what this boils down to. He is not sure that given five more days above the House proposal, that we can still do an adequate job of dealing with those bills.

Senator Van Valkenburg asked if that didn't tell him that he should be looking at a later transmittal deadline of House revenue bills to the Senate than the present one.

Representative Iverson said by the end of the session we could be losing an important period of time. He said we hoped to have 10 days at the end of the session in order to deal with conference committees and we have had to cut that down to 7 days now. From a legislative

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standpoint, they hope to have at least 7 days at the end. They do not know where else to take the days from for what is proposed.

Senator Van Valkenburg said it seems that you want it all. You don't want to negotiate or to compromise.

Representative Iverson said the numbers are there and the workload is there. He recognizes there should be adequate time in the end to deal with the big questions. He feels they are being reasonable and he does not know how else to handle the load.

Representative Hannah said we supported you in December but this is what our caucus said they prefer to do. We have spent considerable time on this bill and this is where our caucus has instructed us to remain concerning the transmittal deadlines.

Senator Van Valkenburg said you are saying it is our way or no way.

Representative Vincent said he sees potential disaster here. We do not have enough time to do the job in Taxation. Give the Senate up to 65 days to get Senate revenue bills over and send the appropriation and House revenue bills on the 72nd day. That would not impact the 83rd day at all. If the House Republican caucus thinks we can process all of those bills between now and the transmittal deadline, it is not possible unless there is no intent to report all of those bills out or to take executive action on all of those bills.

Representative Hannah said the previous sessions have traditionally been run where the House has all of the revenue bills in their hands in time to deal with the appropriations bill and then to send the package to the Senate. That is the will of our caucus and what we have been instructed to try and convince the Senate is the right thing to do.

Senator Van Valkenburg said I do not allow my caucus to bind me in some fashion before I go to a conference committee. A conference committee is held to try and resolve differences, where you sit down and see if you can get a majority from each house to agree and then you take something back to your caucus. This is the easiest part of the session for conferences. This is where we should be able to work some things out.

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Representative Hannah said that is precisely what we did. We took it back to the caucus and they are very clear in what they want.

Senator McCallum asked if they need extra time on their side.

Representative Hannah said that happens to be my view.

Senator McCallum said he needs the extra time in view of the heavy load coming in and the heavy bills coming in.

Representative Hannah said we are not unsympathetic to that but where do you take the time from. What you have in the House proposal to the Senate is balanced in the sense of the time frames. How ever you move these days, you have to pull a day from another peg of this particular formula. He asked Representative Vincent if he could get the appropriation bill out the 70th or 71st day.

Representative Vincent said you have got a much bigger problem dealing with the revenue bills on time rather than the appropriations bill. There is not enough time given the load in the House. Even the 65th day transmittal will not allow enough time.

Representative Hannah said the time frames have not come easy. We spent some time talking about this in our caucus.

Senator McCallum asked him to go back and ask his caucus if they would consider going to the 68th day and the 61st day.

Representative Hannah asked him what he would do with the appropriation bill.

Representative Iverson said three days is the absolute minimum.

Representative Hannah said 61 days for Senate revenue, 68 days for House revenue and 73 days for appropriations, which is 5 days instead of 7 days. That compresses two days out of House Appropriations.

Representative Vincent said we do not need more time than that for the appropriations bill. He would be in favor of 65 days for Senate Revenue, 68 days for House revenue and 72 days for appropriations.

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Representative Hannah said 61 days for Senate Revenue gives an additional 4 days, 68 days for House revenue gives an additional 3 days and 73 days for appropriations compresses two days out of the appropriation time frame. We would still keep the 83rd day for amendments.

Senator Van Valkenburg said he does not think there is any reason to go from 72 to 73 for appropriations.


Senator McCallum said we are trying to compromise a little. We will give one extra day and get 4 days.

Senator Van Valkenburg said the most important thing here is that we work something out. He thinks it would be damaging to this process if they come back and again remain at the 57 days.

Representative Hannah and Iverson both agreed with that.

Representative Hannah said he will propose to the caucus 61, 68, 73 and 83.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 2:10 P.M.

  
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SENATOR GEORGE McCALLUM, Chairman

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