

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
FREE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
MONTANA STATE SENATE

March 4, 1987

The third meeting of the Free Conference Committee on SJR 6 was called to order at 5:15 P.M. on March 4, 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.

FINAL CONSIDERATION OF SJR 6: Senator McCallum said the purpose of the meeting was to discuss transmittal from the Senate to the House on revenue bills. He asked Representative Hannah if he would be willing to go with 58 days.

Representative Hannah said we talked at length on that and that was something he thought he could get done.

Senator Van Valkenburg asked why he couldn't do any better than 58 days.

Representative Hannah said his caucus has reached the point where they are done negotiating on it.

Representative Iverson said the question was asked as to why the Senate needs more time than that. He certainly couldn't tell them why.

Senator Van Valkenburg said he doesn't see any real compromise here. We have discussed before why the Senate needs additional time. We have got some big bills and we are trying to treat those bills fairly. We are at the point where we have to get something done. He made a motion that the conference committee amend SJR 6 on page 36, line 19 and line 21, by striking "57th" and inserting "58th". The motion carried unanimously.

Senator McCallum said another amendment was discussed on page 23, line 20, to change that from 64 to 78 and from 68 to 80.

Senator Aklestad said Senator Van Valkenburg has a little different opinion than he has on the days. His first thought was that we should have no deadline at all and he still thinks that would be best to deal with the free conference committee at the end of the

session.

Representative Iverson said he could support 78 and 80 days. In the Appropriation Committee and subcommittees they have tried to track all the things that might be necessary down but, unfortunately, they may not have gotten them all. He would guess, by the time that bill gets kicked around in the Senate awhile, this should be necessary.

Senator Van Valkenburg said he does not disagree with the concept, although, he does not believe the time suggested is adequate. He would offer a substitute that we change that so that the request must be made by the 75th day and the introduction deadline would be the 78th day. The general appropriation bill will come from the House on the 72nd day and we will have until the 83rd day to send that back to the House. Senator Regan, Chairman of the Finance and Claims Committee, has said she plans to hold hearings on that the day it comes over from the House and it normally takes two days to do that. The Finance and Claims Committee members, at that point, should know what needs to be done in terms of changes in that bill. So that the 75th deadline could be met in terms of drafting requests and he is sure it will take a day or two to get that run through the council and back out. That allows 5 days to have hearings on those bills, and second and third reading. If we wait until the 80th day for introduction, that doesn't allow enough time for the hearings and second and third reading. He made a substitute motion on page 23, line 20, to strike "64" and "68" and insert "75" and "78".

Senator Aklestad said he understands that 80 does make it a little bit of a crunch but he thinks we can handle it. The time spent in Finance and Claims with the bill could cause a bind on the Senate floor with amendments. It looks to him like it could take 2-3 days in committee.

Senator Van Valkenburg said two, maybe three. It depends on the condition it comes from the House.

Senator Aklestad said three days in Finance and Claims and two days to come over, we will not hear it until the 75th day probably.

Senator Van Valkenburg said he has a firm commitment Finance and Claims will hear it on the 73rd day.

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Representative Vincent said you can start the hearings before you have the final printed reference copy of the bill.

Senator Van Valkenburg said the time is already condensed; we used to have the 70th day as transmittal deadline, and now we have lost two days. We have to start hearings immediately.


Senator Aklestad is concerned with floor amendments and would like to have it at 78 and 80.

Senator McCallum said we will have to go with Senator Van Valkenburg.

Senator Van Valkenburg's substitute motion carried unanimously with the committee.

Senator Van Valkenburg made a motion we adopt SJR 6 as amended for the free conference committee report. The motion carried unanimously with the committee.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 5:37 P.M.


SENATOR GEORGE McCALLUM, Chairman

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