

MINUTES
MONTANA SENATE
51st LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS

Call to Order: By, Chairman Gary C. Aklestad on January 5, 1989, at 1:00 P.M. in the state Capitol.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: All members were present.

Senator Tom Keating, Vice-chair, Senator Sam Hofman, Senator J.D. Lynch, Senator Gerry Devlin, Senator Bob Pipinich, Senator Dennis Nathe, Senator Richard Manning, Senator Chet Blaylock, and Senator Gary C. Aklestad, Chairman.

Members Excused: There were no members excused.

Members Absent: There were no members absent.

Staff Present: Tom Gomez, Legislative Council Analyst.

Announcements/Discussion: There were no announcements or discussion.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

Senator Gary C. Aklestad, chairman, introduced new Senators Nathe, Devlin and Pipinich to the Labor Committee, as well as Mary Florence Erving, Committee Secretary, and Tom Gomez, Legislative Council Staff Researcher. Gomez addressed the committee giving an overview of the researcher's job.

Senator Aklestad stated the President of the Senate requests all bills to be transferred by the 35th Legislative day. Every person testifying before the Labor Committee must declare themselves to be a bill's proponent or a bill's opponent. Senator Chet Blaylock suggested an exception be made for the party testifying as an expert witness or as an information giver.

Senator Aklestad stated the committee will not act on bills the same day they are heard. This will allow the committee members time to properly evaluate bills before the committee takes action.

Senator Aklestad discussed a no smoking policy, asking the committee to refrain from smoking due to the large crowds and the poor room ventilation.

Senator Keating was introduced to the committee as the Labor Committee Vice-Chairman.

Senator Nathe expressed concern for people traveling great distances to testify, and suggested special consideration be made to allow these witnesses to testify early in the hearing. Senators Aklestad and Blaylock agreed this courtesy will be extended.

Senator Aklestad stated there will be a public forum on January 10, 1989 in room 325 of the state Capitol. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss Workers' Compensation issues. Questions from the committee are invited. Should additional legislation be required, there will be sufficient time to file the new legislation before the deadline, which is January 12, 1989.

Senator Lynch stated he would like to know the percentage figures concerning the Workers' Compensation budget, and stated the compensation of Washington State is forty percent, not allowing for rehabilitation.

Senator Blaylock, noted the 50th Legislature accomplished major steps in the area of Workers' Compensation, and acknowledged the excellent job accomplished by former division head, Bob Robinson. Senator Blaylock suggested Robinson address questions from the committee at a later date. Senator Aklestad addressed Senator Blaylock's request saying he would discuss the possibility about Robinson's testimony with the new Director of Labor and Employee Relations, Mike Micone.

Senator Nathe questioned what benefits are included in rehabilitation. Don Judge, representing the Montana AFL-CIO, replied education, physical, occupational therapy, and employee retraining were included in rehabilitation.

Senator Keating stated the administrations costs are approximately 17 to 20 percent. There has not been enough money given to the people so they can get out from under their loads. The Department does not have the proper time to review the claims.

Senator Aklestad stated the 50th Legislature intended to take care of funding. Senator Manning stated the Senate Finance and Claims gave additional money for inspection costs, administration costs, staff and other expenses.

Senator Aklestad requested the committee show proper respect for each committee member, and asked the members to address the chair before speaking. Senator Aklestad requested the committee members refrain from smoking. After discussion, the committee agreed there would be a no smoking rule, with an exception: Should the committee meet, and there are no witnesses present to testify, the committee can smoke.

ADJOURNMENT

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 1:47 p.m.

GCA/mfe


Chairman Gary C. Aklestad

ROLL CALL

LABOR COMMITTEE

51st LEGISLATIVE SESSION

DATE: *January 5, 1989*

	PRESENT	ABSENT	EXCUSED
SENATOR TOM KEATING	X		
SENATOR SAM HOFMAN	X		
SENATOR J.D. LYNCH	X		
SENATOR GERRY DEVLIN	X		
SENATOR BOB PIPINICH	X		
SENATOR DENNIS NATHE	X		
SENATOR RICHARD MANNING	X		
SENATOR CHET BLAYLOCK	X		
SENATOR GARY AKLESTAD	X		