

MINUTES

MONTANA SENATE 52nd LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE & SAFETY

Call to Order: By Chairman Dorothy Eck, on January 25, 1991, at 1:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Dorothy Eck, Chairman (D)
Eve Franklin, Vice Chairman (D)
James Burnett (R)
Thomas Hager (R)
Judy Jacobson (D)
David Rye (R)
Thomas Towe (D)

Members Excused:

Bob Pipinich (D)

Staff Present: Tom Gomez (Legislative Council)
Christine Mangiantini (Committee Secretary)
Steve Meloy (Department of Commerce)
Nancy Ellery (Department of Social and
Rehabilitation Services, SRS)

Please Note: These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

Announcements/Discussion:

HEARING ON SENATE BILL 135

Presentation and Opening Statement by Sponsor:

The chairman recognized the sponsor, Senator Ed Kennedy from District 3. He is a registered pharmacist and was asked by the Board of Pharmacy and the Department of Commerce to sponsor this bill.

He said the bill was an act to license wholesale drug distributors because the Food and Drug Administration passed legislation that Montana needs to comply with. He turned the floor over to Warren Amole, executive director of the Board of Pharmacy.

The chairman recognized Mr. Amole who addressed the committee by saying that the intent of SB 135 is to implement the Prescription Drug Marketing Act of 1987. He said the guidelines had already been promulgated by the Food and Drug Administration. Presently, the drug wholesalers who distribute controlled substances are registered. Many wholesalers and manufacturers deal with legend drugs that require prescriptions that are not controlled substances, this bill would cover that area and would provide the additional authority that the Board of Pharmacy is seeking.

The chairman recognized Steve Meloy, Bureau Chief of Professional and Occupational Licensing Division of the Department of Commerce. Mr. Meloy talked to committee members about the fiscal note.

Proponents' Testimony:

None.

Opponents' Testimony:

None.

Questions From Committee Members:

The chairman recognized Senator Towe who addressed Mr. Meloy with questions about the fiscal note.

Mr. Meloy said the Department proposed to absorb without increasing the FTE level, the majority of administrative expenses and duties within the Board of Pharmacy. The increase into the Board of Pharmacy budget is \$5,000 in fiscal year 1992 and \$4,128 in the second year. This will be used to handle administrative charges as well as the amount of extra money paid to the board to conduct business regarding the licensing of wholesale drug distributors.

The chairman recognized Senator Towe for a follow-up question. He asked Mr. Meloy if the statute denoted that it would be in the Board of Pharmacy.

Mr. Meloy read from the bill. He said the new section on the last page of the bill intended to bring this jurisdiction under the Board of Pharmacy statutes.

The chairman read from the bill and asked if the licensing fees would be adequate to cover the increase of costs.

Mr. Meloy said in preparing the fiscal notes the basic formula is to divide the number of licensees into the cost of regulation and derive the amount of the fee. The Department arrived at the \$5,000 administration cost by estimating 85 licensees at \$60.00 each. He said this was comparable with other licensing fees around the country.

The chairman asked about general fund allocations.

Mr. Meloy said there were no general fund allocation.

The chairman recognized Senator Towe who asked about the federal compliance issue.

Mr. Amole responded that the bill was drafted using the proposed Food and Drug Administration guidelines.

Closing by Sponsor:

There being no further questions the chairman recognized Senator Kennedy to close.

Senator Kennedy asked for a favorable recommendation on the bill.

HEARING ON SENATE BILL 129

Presentation and Opening Statement by Sponsor:

The chairman recognized Senator Harry Fritz who addressed the committee by introducing himself and describing Senate Bill 129. He said the bill creates the Office of Childrens Advocate and locates it in the Executive Branch, under the Governor. The bill requires that the advocate be a licensed attorney and describes the range of duties of the advocate. He asked the chairman to recognize the proponents of the bill.

Proponents' Testimony:

The chairman recognized the first witness to testify in favor of SB 129 who was Noel Larrivee, an attorney from Missoula.

Mr. Larrivee stated that he is the source of the legislation. He said he has been involved in family law cases for 15 years. He said he considers this bill to be significant. He continued by saying that Montana is a state of 800,000 residents, one-fourth of which (200,000) are age 18 or younger. He said this bill is for their benefit and the intent is to provide an advocate for those 18 or younger. He said the bill will provide for the representation of children but is not intended to take the place of existing programs. He said Montana will be the third state to create such an office.

In Canada, they have an Office of Official Guardian where they utilize an advocate for both children and incompetent persons.

He described certain sections of the bill and discussed the duties of the advocate. He said the person would provide technical assistance to volunteer guardians and be responsible for creation of volunteer programs. In contested custody and divorce cases the court is entitled to appoint an attorney to represent the children. In reality that does not happen very often. The advocate could be available for that function. He said foster care costs in excess of \$3,000 per month to house a child at Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch at level 5. One of the goals of the legislation is to reduce the amount of time children spend in foster care by having an advocate for the child who can examine alternative methods for means of treatment. He said four cases at \$30,000 per year would address the fiscal note implications attached to the bill. He closed by saying the vindication of rights rarely occurs unless there is someone championing those rights. He urged the committee to look at all the interests being protected by the bill.

The second witness to testify in favor of SB 129 was State Representative Bruce Measure from House District #6. Representative Measure said he has been working with Senator Fritz and Mr. Larrivee on the need for a child's advocate. He said presently in the state there is a system where an attorney can be appointed on behalf of the child. In contested custody cases there are provisions for representation of the child. The legal issues that arise are beyond the knowledge of some of the individuals representing the children. He said it would be nice to have a structure where someone could keep track of the records so individuals representing the child would know what has gone on in the past. He thinks it is important, from the standpoint of an attorney, to have someone work on behalf of children day after day, know what their issues are before they get before a judge and try and represent the child without much knowledge about the child.

The third witness to testify in favor of SB 129 was John McCrea, representing the Montana Advocacy Program. Mr. McCrea said that he supported the concept. He said he has seen tremendous need for a children's advocate. He thinks the current children's system in the state is in disarray and as a result children are the ones harmed in the system. In order for a children's advocate to be effective it needs to have independent authority. He urged the committee's support to accept SB 129.

The fourth witness to testify in favor of SB 129 was Jim Smith, representing the Montana Residential Child Care Association. He said that he would be remiss if he did not point out to the committee that the executive budget contains no provisions for increased funding for the foster care parents taking care of 1,000 children in out-of-home care.

SENATE PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE & SAFETY COMMITTEE

January 25, 1991

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He continued by saying you pay more to house your dog in a kennel than the average foster parent receives to take care of an abused and neglected child in this state. He said there is no additional funding for people who operate residential child care facilities. There is no increase in AFDC benefits and the funding for the Department of Family Services (DFS) is woefully lacking. He said to meet national standards DFS should be adding about 108 social workers this biennium. They requested about 65 in the executive budget process, ultimately were granted 13 as proposed. He said bills should be taken on their own merits but in this case he expressed conditional support for SB 129 by saying if the legislature is willing to do things for children in a broad range of areas, then he is a supporter of this legislation. If the legislature simply adds the FTE and leaves the other areas neglected and under-funded for another two years then his support diminishes a great deal. He said he hopes the legislature will do both, fund this position and fund the broad spectrum of services that children in Montana desperately need right now.

The fifth witness to testify in favor of SB 129 was Donnie Sexton. She said she is a guardian ad litem for Lewis and Clark County. She told the committee members that she has the luxury of taking a case that comes into DFS and giving it a significant amount of her time. She said they had extensive training at the start of the program but once the training is over, you are on your own. A central office where they could receive technical advice would be beneficial. She said they do not have the luxury of going to DFS or the County Attorney's office because they have so many cases. She said on-going training is very necessary in their work as well as prevention programs to deal with child abuse and neglect.

The sixth witness to testify in favor of SB 129 was Dori Nelson from the Office of Public Instruction (OPI). She said the Department is always concerned about the protection of children. She said OPI supports the concept of an independent office to serve children.

The seventh witness to testify in favor of SB 129 was Cliff Murphy. He said he is aware of the limitations of advocacy groups operating in Montana. He said bureaucracies can be inhuman in their application of rules. He said a child advocate could be very helpful in these instances.

The eighth witness to testify in favor of SB 129 was Andree Larose, she is an attorney with experience in family law. She expressed her support for the bill and said she is especially interested in the aspect of the bill that provides for the childrens advocate to review foster care status. She said she has seen children become victims of the system, the system charged with the duty of protecting them. She thinks the childrens advocate can hold the system accountable. She also supports this as an independent office.

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Opponents' Testimony:

Paulette Kohman testified as an attorney who recently practiced as a public defender in Washington. She said she is not opposed to the concept but has questions about the bill. She questioned whether the advocate should be placed in the Governor's Office. She thinks that the system would be better served if the office were an independent agency. In Washington the childrens advocate programs are coordinated through the public defender programs at the state and local levels. She said attorneys function best when they have no one to answer to but the client, in this case the child.

Questions from Committee:

The chairman recognized Senator Rye who asked Mr. Larrivee for his reaction to Ms. Kohman's testimony.

Mr. Larrivee said he did not disagree with her comments. In placing the office in the Executive Branch it provides accessibility to the public and the courts. He said that it may be effectively utilized in some other capacity but to give it the kind of authority and level of advocacy that would be undertaken he thinks you need a higher level of status.

The chairman recognized Senator Rye who asked Mr. Larrivee what other states had similar programs.

Mr. Larrivee said New Jersey and Pennsylvania had similar programs. He said these offices are in some form or another are conducted out of the Executive branch.

The chairman recognized Senator Towe who asked what was really contemplated in the bill.

Mr. Larrivee said the court has the power to provide for the representation of children. What happens is that it isn't being done because of an inertia on the part of the judges because they are not sure who to appoint because they want someone with some expertise in the area. Contested custody cases are increasing and the interests of the children are not being represented.

Senator Towe commented that in Billings there is a person that performs these duties full-time.

Mr. Larrivee responded that if there were 56 persons like that the bill would not be necessary.

Senator Towe asked about Section 8 of the bill. He said that the childrens advocate would have the authority to come into the various proceedings and ask for an investigation to determine whether an appointment of an attorney for the child would be appropriate.

Senator Towe continued by saying that the childrens advocate would step into the picture, insist on investigation and once an attorney was appointed the childrens advocate would step out of the picture.

Mr. Larrivee said that was correct. That the childrens advocate is not to take the place of another entity performing those duties.

Senator Towe asked about Section 11 and provided the same example.

Mr. Larrivee agreed. He said it would be an entity that could come to court, asking the court to determine if it is necessary. We do not see the parents asking the court to appoint an attorney for the children in divorce cases.

Senator Towe said he had questions about the language on page 7 of the bill regarding what parties would be charged for the costs of the services.

Mr. Larrivee said the intent is put the responsibility on the parents or those entities legally responsible for the support of the child to pay the cost of services.

The chairman recognized Senator Burnett who asked Senator Fritz about the fiscal note for the bill and wondered what the costs would be of an extended bureaucracy.

Senator Fritz said whenever you propose legislation that spends some money you wonder if it is being spent in the right place or if it should be spent at all. He said one has to trust the judgement of future legislators to keep this office from ballooning out of control.

The chairman recognized Senator Hager who read a portion of the bill regarding legal representation and cited caseload projections. He had a question regarding this area.

Mr. Larrivee said he tried to anticipate the caseloads in the populated counties. He said he envisioned that the advocate would be involved in some capacity, not necessarily providing continuing representation throughout the course of a case. He said the bill provides for supervision and development of more programs that had been previously referenced.

The chairman recognized Senator Burnett who asked if cases where family services are involved should not the money be taken from the DFS budget.

Mr. Larrivee responded that he did not disagree with the comments of Jim Smith about the need for increased funding for family services. He said he would resist any reduction in DFS funding.

He said if the advocate can effectively represent a portion of children in foster care and reduce the costs this state would save money.

The chairman recognized Senator Jacobson who asked Senator Fritz if it might be advantageous to have the subcommittee dealing with the budget look at the bill. She would like to see what kind of a priority would be placed upon the bill in the appropriations subcommittee.

Senator Fritz said it is always difficult for a committee to try and come to a common decision on what are really two separate questions: the need for a program like this and how it is going to be paid for. He would hope that the committee would agree on the need for the program. He said he would recommend the bill go to the appropriate subcommittee.

The chairman recognized Senator Towe who was concerned about the provision concerning cost of services.

Senator Fritz said the fiscal note was in part modeled on the cost of the Governor's Council on Aging.

Mr. Larrivee said he would resist any amendment that would specify or limit that particular clause. He said the goal is to maintain the sense of responsibility on the appropriate entity.

Senator Towe asked if he intended to charge the state.

Mr. Larrivee said it was not his intent to charge the state. He said the childrens advocate would figure out an hourly rate which would be assessed against the parents.

Senator Towe asked a question regarding the language on page 7, lines 12 and 13. He asked about the requirement to make written reports. He said there may be cases where a written report is not appropriate or necessary.

Mr. Larrivee said the language was intentional. He said he found that the court system seems to be going toward some form of a record. He said he does not think it is necessary in every instance but at the same time in any type of review you would fall back to this type of situation.

Mr. Larrivee asked the chairman if he could address comments of Senator Jacobson. The chairman granted the request. Mr. Larrivee continued by saying that he was sensitive to the comment about the bill being reviewed by the Senate Finance and Claims committee. He asked the committee to send a strong endorsement to the Finance and Claims committee.

Senator Jacobson said her name was on this bill and on Senator Eck's bill. She said her concern was that the Governor's budget office came in on Saturday with an additional \$19 million request for SRS. She said these two bills have an impact on that budget not just this legislative session but every year hereafter if they are enacted. She said the agencies need to have a chance to look at their priorities and see if these bills are appropriate.

The chairman asked for questions, there being none the chairman asked the sponsor to close.

Closing by Sponsor:

Senator Fritz said whenever you propose a new program you question both the need and the cost and you hope to be persuaded there is a need and it is affordable by the testimony you hear. He said he has been persuaded and hope the committee has too.

HEARING ON SENATE BILL 151

Presentation and Opening Statement by Sponsor:

Senator Eck said SB 151 addresses a number of needs. The bill extends the number of pregnant women and infants that are covered by Medicaid from the present 133% to up to 185% of poverty. She said that would mean that all pregnant women with a family of three with an income of slightly under \$20,000 per year would have prenatal delivery and infant care services available through Medicaid. The special White House Task Force indicated that one-fourth of the infants that die each year could be easily prevented if there were prenatal care available. She said that in itself is a crying need to provide all the coverage possible under Medicaid. She referred to a chart that the director of SRS brought to the committee that indicated a savings to Medicaid of those that had prenatal care. She indicated that over half of the costs of infant care in Medicaid were consumed by four percent of the patients. She said there were 129 children that cost the state \$4.2 million. This also indicates that extending the availability of Medicaid and assuring that services are available are cost-effective. Some people have said that for every dollar spent three dollars are saved.

She continued by explaining that the bill extends Medicaid coverage to these families. She said this bill was already scheduled to go to taxation. The costs for Medicaid are the fastest growing part of the budget and by far the greatest increases come from those whom we call the working poor. These are people who are working who have low wages and cannot afford health insurance. The employers do not provide health insurance. Last session there was a program that proposed to tax all health insurance policies.

She thought this was unfair because the greatest cost is derived from the number of employers who do not provide health insurance. This bill, in section 3, provides the imposition of a tax on employers who do not have health insurance coverage. She is not proposing the tax is only on women employees but on all employees not covered by health insurance. The definition of health insurance will cover benefits of pregnant women. A proposed amendment would be excluding those employees who are paid more than \$6,000 per quarter or \$24,000 in a 12-month period. These wages are high enough to allow the employee to purchase health insurance. The other change that may want to be considered in the bill is on page 9, Section 7, which eliminates some of the language of the MIAMI program, which sunsets in June, 1991.

She continued by saying she thinks this bill is a responsible action for the State of Montana to take. The amount of revenue that will be generated will easily cover the costs of the program which SRS estimated at approximately \$600,000 the first year and approximately \$800,000 the second year. There are approximately 140,000 Montanans without health care insurance. It appears there may be between 50,000 and 75,000 who have lower wages, are employed but without health insurance. Assume it is 50,000, assume the payment is \$1.00 per week per employee, that would generate \$2.5 million per year which is more than what is needed to administer the program. The other end of the scale is to persuade employers to begin providing health insurance. She sees this as a part of an overall strategy in addressing the health care needs of lower income Montanans.

Proponents' Testimony:

The first witness to testify in favor of SB 151 was Paulette Kohman, representing the Montana Council for Maternal and Child Health. See Exhibit #1 for a copy of her testimony.

The second witness to testify in favor of SB 151 was John Ortwein, director of the Montana Catholic Conference. See Exhibit #2 for a copy of his testimony.

The third witness to testify in favor of SB 151 was Jerry Loendorf, representing the Montana Medical Association. Mr. Loendorf said that there is no difficulty in supporting Section 1 of the bill. He said the issue in this bill is Section 3, the funding mechanism. As of today, the Association supports the funding mechanism, it seems to be fair. He said they think this is a good approach and concurred with the amendments proposed by the sponsor.

The fourth witness to testify in favor of SB 151 was Lisa Payne, representing the Montana Women's Lobby. She said they would like to go on record supporting the bill.

Opponents' Testimony:

None.

Questions From Committee Members:

The designated chairman Eve Franklin, recognized Senator Towe for a question who asked for an explanation of the proposed amendment.

Senator Eck said the amendment is on page 7, section 3, which would insert language regarding wage requirements. Under the definition section, language would clarify that health insurance coverage means a policy that would include maternity and infant coverage.

Senator Towe asked for further explanation about the \$6,000 quarterly figure.

Senator Eck responded that if any employer provides health insurance or pays an employee at the rate of \$6,000 per quarter or \$24,000 per year then he is exempt from paying this tax on those employees. She said they were looking at people who were avoiding paying benefits by employing persons between 20 and 30 hours per week.

Senator Towe asked if the intent was to have the employer pay the extra cost to the state for Medicaid for that employee.

Senator Eck said that was not quite right because we have to recognize the fact that an employer would pay for 10 employees of which none are women of child-bearing age. By paying this small amount of fifty-cents or \$1.00 per week the employer is providing a benefit for his/her employees. The state is being compensated for an increased Medicaid expense that may or may not be attributable to any employees. It could be broadened extensively. There are also child care costs that would be impacted. She suggested that Nancy Ellery from SRS address that issue.

Nancy Ellery responded that current Medicaid standards are 133% of poverty for pregnant women and children up to age 6. This group just gets Medicaid. The dollar figures quoted when we were exploring what it would cost Medicaid to increase eligibility up to 185% of poverty did not include the additional children that would be covered. Under this bill it would be up to 185% of poverty levels.

Senator Eck said that before we take executive action we will have a fiscal note.

The chairman recognized Senator Hager who said he had a business whereby the employee participated in the insurance program. If the employee chose not to participate would an employer be subject to the tax?

Senator Eck responded by saying this is an issue that needs to be addressed as well as in the definition of health insurance on whether the shared policies are eligible.

Senator Hager said it seems you are encouraging the employee to say 'no' to insurance.

Senator Eck said that was not right because the employee would not be covered just because the employer is paying the \$1.00 per week. You have to be part of a designated, eligible group. With those employees that make a low wage and do not have insurance and run into serious health problems, they are likely to eventually fall into a category where they will be eligible for Medicaid or the State medical program. We have all seen this in our own communities, people who have been hit by high medical expenses and even though they were paying their own way initially, after a while it is prohibitive.

The chairman recognized Senator Burnett who asked if the legislation would be a deterrent to an employer employing women of child-bearing age?

Senator Eck said no, that was the problem with the language in Section 3. She said the employer might feel better about the fact that they have a woman of child-bearing age who does not have any insurance and yet if she became pregnant would have Medicaid coverage available to her. It would make no difference in the hiring. The employer would pay as much for a woman as a man regardless of age, it is all dependent on whether they have health insurance and whether they pay a wage that is high enough to allow the person to purchase their own insurance.

The chairman recognized Senator Jacobson who addressed her comments to Nancy Ellery. The senator asked if the money would trigger federal dollars. The way this bill is written it speaks to an infant being under the age of 1, federal laws have expanded the age to 6 but because this is a voluntary add-on, can we set the age at 1?

Ms. Ellery said when she was referring to children up to age 6 that is using the current 133 percent of poverty. There is an option under the federal regulation that allows states to expand their Medicaid program to 185 percent of poverty for pregnant women and children up through the age of 1.

The chairman recognized Senator Hager who commented that he has hired many employees and that the females figure at some point they will get pregnant and if they figure they are covered, employers would pay for it anyway under the tax.

Senator Eck said for your employee you would be paying for the broad group that would be eligible for Medicaid. Essentially you are doing that already for some of them because there are many minimum wage employees who are working less than full-time who would be covered under 133 percent.

The chairman recognized Senator Towe who referenced Section 3, asking if the intent is that any employee not covered with health insurance, the employer would be charged for that employee whether or not that particular employee meets the 185 percent of poverty level.

Senator Eck said that was correct except if you say unless they have a higher salary. The employer has two ways of being exempt: 1) if he provides health insurance and 2) if he pays an amount above the salary ceiling. We need to strike the language after the word 'coverage' and put it into a separate definition.

Closing by Sponsor:

Senator Eck said she is pleased by the fact that this legislature seems to be willing to address the health care needs of our lower income people who do not have health insurance and cannot afford to purchase their own. By far the most cost effective way of addressing health care needs is through Medicaid. We can provide an insurance program for children or we can provide incentives for the small business employer. For every child we cover with this program the federal government pays 72 percent of the costs. No money is taken out of our general fund. She hopes we continue looking at Medicaid, extend the limits upward because it is cost effective to do so. She said she would appreciate the thoughts and support of the committee members on how to use this particular method of funding the extensions of Medicaid. Some of the worst offenders are some of the large businesses in Montana who use the ERESA rules to set their employment policies. She closed by saying the tax portion of the bill will be addressed in the Taxation Committee.

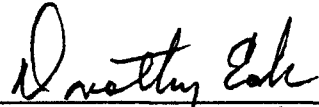
SENATE PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE & SAFETY COMMITTEE

January 25, 1991

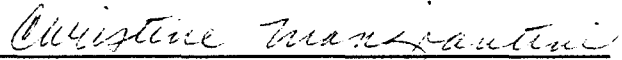
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ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment At: 2:50 p.m.



SENATOR DOROTHY ECK, Chairman



CHRISTINE MANGIANTINI, Secretary

DE/cm

ROLL CALLPUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE
AND SAFETY

COMMITTEE

Date 01/25/91

| NAME | PRESENT | ABSENT | EXCUSED |
|------------------|---------|--------|---------|
| SENATOR BURNETT | X | | |
| SENATOR FRANKLIN | X | | |
| SENATOR HAGER | X | | |
| SENATOR JACOBSON | X | | |
| SENATOR PIPINICH | X | | |
| SENATOR RYE | X | | |
| SENATOR TOWE | X | | |
| SENATOR ECK | X | | |
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Each day attach to minutes.

SB 129

PLEASE LEAVE ANY PREPARED STATEMENTS WITH THE COMMITTEE SECRETARY



Montana Council for Maternal and Child Health

The Voice of the Next Generation
in Montana's State Capitol

SENATE HEALTH & WELFARE

EXHIBIT NO. 1

DATE 1-25-91

BILL NO. SB 151

2030 11th Ave., Suite 10

Helena, MT 59601

(406) 443-1674

TESTIMONY FOR THE SENATE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

Re: SB 151

January 25, 1991

The Montana Council for Maternal and Child Health, a non-profit public policy research, education, and advocacy organization, supports SB 151. This bill provides Medicaid for pregnant women and infants whose family income is less than 185% of the federal poverty level, and establishes a payroll tax for uninsured workers. It will not only improve Montana's health care, but stimulate the health care industry.

An infant dies every three days in Montana. Our infant death rate, 11.2 per thousand, is significantly higher than the national average. Prenatal care is one of the least expensive ways to avoid complications which contribute to that figure. But too many mothers, those who make up Montana's "working poor," have no health insurance, and many delay or avoid obtaining prenatal care. DSRS has estimated that with this increase in eligibility 40% of all births in Montana could be covered by Medicaid, allowing these women access to the health care their babies need.

Medicaid brings in new money to the Montana economy. For every dollar of state general fund money spent on Medicaid, the Federal government provides \$2.55 in Medicaid matching funds (a 29% - 71% match). Fees for the services of Montana's doctors, nurses, and related health professionals stays within the state.

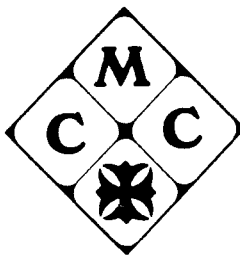
Medicaid money feeds an vital portion of our economy, the health care industry. When our rural counties are suffering a loss of obstetric providers due to inadequate reimbursement to cover their expenses, increased Medicaid funding can literally save small towns and counties from the loss of hospital and primary health care services, preserving a productive business climate.

More Medicaid money for primary care in Montana means less Montana money spent on expensive intensive care units in Utah or Washington. The federally chartered Institute of Medicine has estimated that each dollar invested in prenatal care saves \$3.31 in direct medical costs for low birthweight infants in the first year of life alone. And, by investing our funds to build Montana's health care infrastructure, we may actually be able to develop these more advanced medical facilities here at home.

A payroll tax on uninsured workers is a logical funding mechanism. As Montana health insurance carriers have raised rates, Montana's employers have dropped coverage, so that now, as Governor Stephens has estimated, 20% of Montanans are without any form of health insurance, despite employment. Medicaid coverage for pregnant women and children will fill a significant need, covering the most vulnerable members of our state family, the children of our next generation.

Paulette Kohman
Paulette Kohman, Executive Director

delete Section 7
as unnecessary and
complicating legislative
work on related
issues.



Montana Catholic Conference

January 25, 1990

MADAM CHAIRPERSON ECK AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

I am John Ortwein, director of the Montana Catholic Conference. As Director of the Montana Catholic Conference I represent the two Roman Catholic Bishops of Montana in matters of public policy.

The Montana Catholic Conference gives full support to SB 151.

Our concern for life--the life of the child and the life of the mother dictates our interest in this legislation. A great deal of suffering is caused by inadequate prenatal care. Studies have indicated that instances of mental retardation and longterm difficulties can often be prevented by adequate prenatal care.

Again, we support SB 151.

SENATE HEALTH & WELFARE

EXHIBIT NO. 2

DATE 1-25-91

BILL NO. SB 151

WITNESS STATEMENT

To be completed by a person testifying or a person who wants their testimony entered into the record.

Dated this 25th day of January, 1991.

Name: NOEL LARRIVEE

Address: 334 E. BROADWAY
MISSOULA, MT 59802

Telephone Number: 721-1234

Representing whom?

SELF - ATTORNEY

Appearing on which proposal?

SENATE BILL 129

Do you: Support? X Amend? Oppose?

Comments:

see minutes

WITNESS STATEMENT

To be completed by a person testifying or a person who wants
their testimony entered into the record.

Dated this 25th day of January, 1991.

Name: Bruce Measure

Address: P.O. Box 86 Capitol Station
Helena, Mt.

Telephone Number: 442-4800

Representing whom?

41.D. #6

Appearing on which proposal?

SR 129

Do you: Support? ✓ Amend? _____ Oppose? _____

Comments:

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PLEASE LEAVE ANY PREPARED STATEMENTS WITH THE COMMITTEE SECRETARY

WITNESS STATEMENT

To be completed by a person testifying or a person who wants their testimony entered into the record.

Dated this 25th day of January, 1991.

Name: John McCrea

Address: 1410 8th Ave
Helena, Montana

Telephone Number: 444-3889

Representing whom?

Protection and Advocacy for Mentally Ill Individuals Program with
The Montana Advocacy Program
Appearing on which proposal?

Do you: Support? X Amend? Oppose?

Comments:

As an advocate representing individuals with
mental illness and through my experience across
the state, I observe an unmet need which I
feel the state needs to address. It is an area
of increasing concern. There currently doesn't
exist such an opportunity for children.

WITNESS STATEMENT

To be completed by a person testifying or a person who wants their testimony entered into the record.

Dated this 25th day of January, 1991.

Name: Andrée Laine

Address: 806 Holker
Helena, MT 59601

Telephone Number: 406 442-1409 work: 444-3889

Representing whom?

Appearing on which proposal?
SB 129

Do you: Support? ☒ Amend? ☐ Oppose? ☐

Comments:
I strongly support this bill. I especially support the
independence of the Children's Advocate. Kentures,
children in foster care & children who are victims of
abuse or otherwise being assisted by the "system"
become victims of the system itself. There needs to
be an independent arm of the government to ensure
that the appropriate agencies respond to the children's
needs.

DATE Friday, January 25, 1991
COMMITTEE ON senate committee on public health, welfare & safety

senate committee on public health, welfare & safety

SB 151-ECK

VISITORS' REGISTER

(Please leave prepared statement with Secretariat)