

## **MINUTES**

### **MONTANA SENATE 52nd LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION**

#### **COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE & SAFETY**

**Call to Order:** By Chairman Dorothy Eck, on April 23, 1991, at 1:10 p.m.

#### **ROLL CALL**

**Members Present:**

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

**Members Excused:** None.

**Staff Present:** Tom Gomez (Legislative Council)  
Christine Mangiantini (Committee Secretary)

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

**Announcements/Discussion:** None.

#### **HEARING ON HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 54**

#### **Presentation and Opening Statement by Sponsor:**

Representative Vivian Brooke opened by saying earlier in the session she introduced HB 950, the Montana Family Policy Act. She has lifted much of that language into this resolution. It failed in the Appropriations Committee. She is trying to get this resolution included as an interim study. Human services is continually faced with limited resources and many needs. Crisis intervention programs seem to be the norm. This proposal would review the current programs in the Department of Family Services and the services offered through the Office of Public Instruction and the Department of Institutions. She said she would like to examine new, innovative programs being implemented throughout the country. She said Hawaii had a child intervention program that looked promising. The intent is to take the limited resources and try to keep families together and strengthen the family unit. The National Council On State Legislatures (NCSL) has support services in this area.

Proponents' Testimony:

The first witness was Judy Carlson, representing the Montana Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. See Exhibit #1 for a copy of her testimony.

The second witness was Tom Olsen, executive director of the Montana Department of Family Services. He stated that he was neutral on this resolution. He said he embraced everything in the resolution. It has become the department's philosophy to strengthen the family. The department has similar projects underway but no matter if money is available for this study, the programs to strengthen the family will be continued. Reunification of families is the only way to incur lasting social change. The only way to impact this problem is to get funding at the front end. Money will be dedicated to wrap-around services. High levels of care and psychiatric hospitalization are a last resort not the first and only option.

Opponents' Testimony:

None.

Questions From Committee Members:

Senator Hager asked if NCSL would provide technical assistance.

Representative Brooke said during the course of writing HB 950 she contacted NCSL, they have helped Iowa and sent a representative to Montana to ensure us that there was support available.

Chairman Eck asked about NCSL grants for funding interim studies.

Mr. Gomez said there is a formal program at NCSL that is called the "Children, Youth and Families project" which provides assistance to states in the areas of policy and program services. He said they are available to provide technical assistance.

Senator Rye said the breakdown of values is causing problems with families. He said he would like to think this resolution would do some good. He asked what the cost of the study would be.

Mr. Olsen said he did not know what it would cost. In terms of whether or not we can 'fix' the family problem he said he did not think we could ever recreate the nuclear family. We have more single parent families, more working women, more children being raised by third parties. We have to be creative in devising solutions. We need to bring resources to bear on what is left of the family, parents still remain parents and still love their children regardless of their economic conditions.

SENATE PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE & SAFETY COMMITTEE

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Chairman Eck said she worked and served on the Youth Advisory Council. The various studies have recommended this approach. It is not a matter of legislators saying family services should change their direction. It may be more of legislators understanding the programs and looking at what is needed.

Closing by Sponsor:

Representative Brooke closed by saying there are philosophical issues here and said there were 18 proponents at the House Human Services Committee hearing. She thanked the committee for the hearing and urged concurrence.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 54

Motion:

Senator Franklin moved concurrence.

Discussion:

None.

Amendments, Discussion, and Votes:

None.

Recommendation and Vote:


There being 7 ayes and 1 nay by Senator Burnett the motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment At: 1:40 p.m.



SENATOR DOROTHY ECK, Chairman



CHRISTINE MANGIANTINI, Secretary

DE/cm

PH042391.SM1

ROLL CALL

HJR 54

PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE COMMITTEE  
AND SAFETY

Date 4/23

NAME	PRESENT	ABSENT	EXCUSED
SENATOR BURNETT	✓		
SENATOR FRANKLIN	✓		
SENATOR HAGER	✓		
SENATOR JACOBSON	✓		
SENATOR PIPINICH	✓		
SENATOR RYE	✓		
SENATOR TOWE	✓		
SENATOR ECK	✓		

Each day attach to minutes.

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT

Page 1 of 1  
April 28, 1991

MR. PRESIDENT:

We, your committee on Public Health, Welfare, and Carcels, having had under consideration House Joint Resolution No. 54 (third reading copy filed), respectfully report that House Joint Resolution No. 54 be concurred in.

Attest: *[Signature]*  
Deborah R. R. Chairman

*[Signature]* 4-23-91  
Attest: *[Signature]*

*[Signature]*  
Attest: *[Signature]*

Exhibit #1

Judith H. Carlson, ACSW

SENATE HEALTH & WELFARE MT Chapter, Natl Assn of Social Workers  
408 Washington Drive  
Helena, MT 59601

EXHIBIT NO. 1  
DATE 4/23/91  
BILL NO. 54

23 April 1991

HJR

Testimony before the Senate Public Health Committee

RE: HJR 54, Requesting Establishment of an Interim Committee on Children and Families.

Notes:

1. State needs family policy. Nothing can take the place of family.

2. How can state policies strengthen families? Let's shift emphasis from treatment to prevention and early intervention.

Notice money being spent on detention - needed - but how much better: prevention and early intervention - not detention.

3. Social workers - what do they do?

Tell about the Robinson family...falling apart - judge was ready to remove kids - weekly services kept family together.

4. Healthy start in Hawaii - one early intervention program with terrific results.

5. Specifics of study:

--NCSL has offered to help with study;

--DFS could use some Child Abuse/Prevention funds;

--University of MT - developing a Family Resource Center in conjunction with the MUAPS and Center for Rural Research - could help;

--Council on Families - has applied for Meyer Foundation and US West money that could be used.

Important to have the authority and credibility of the Legislature and the resources of the Legislative Council to bring legislators into the study.

ROLL CALL VOTE

SENATE COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE & SAFETY

Date 04/23/91 HJR Bill No. 54 Time 1:36 p.m.

NAME	YES	NO
SENATOR BURNETT		X
SENATOR FRANKLIN	X	
SENATOR HAGER	X	
SENATOR JACOBSON	X	
SENATOR PIPINICH	X	
SENATOR RYE	X	
SENATOR TOWE	X	
SENATOR ECK	X	

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

Motion: Senator Franklin moved concurrence. There being 7 ayes and  
1 nay the motion carried.

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE 4/23/91  
COMMITTEE ON Senate Public Health

WLR 54

# VISITORS' REGISTER

[illegible]

(Please leave prepared statement with Secretary)