

MINUTES

**MONTANA SENATE
54th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION
JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE**

Call to Order: By CHAIRMAN STEVE BENEDICT, on March 6, 1995, at 5:05 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Sen. Steve Benedict, Chairman (R)
Rep. Scott J. Orr, Vice Chairman (R)
Sen. Dorothy Eck (D)
Sen. Mike Foster (R)
Rep. Duane Grimes (R)
Sen. Judy H. Jacobson (D)
Sen. Ken Miller (R)
Rep. Bruce T. Simon (R)
Rep. Carolyn M. Squires (D)
Rep. Carley Tuss (D)

Members Excused: None

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Susan Fox, Legislative Council
David Niss, Legislative Council
Jennifer Gaasch, Committee Secretary

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

Committee Business Summary:

Hearing: This was an organizational meeting.
Executive Action: None

{Tape: 1; Side: A.}

Discussion:

CHAIRMAN STEVE BENEDICT said they asked interested parties including the people on the committee and the members of the public to submit those bills that the committee should take a look at. He said the criteria for evaluating the bills were as follows; 1. conflicts, there were a lot of conflicting bills, they were looking at bills that were in the following categories; health care authority, small group employer insurance availability act, medical savings accounts, voluntary purchasing pools, pre-existing conditions, the Montana Comprehensive Health

Association and tax deductibility. They ended up with 18 bills. The rest of the bills are either tabled in the system somewhere or else they are moving through the system on their own. He said that this week would be devoted to suggestions from the interested parties on how the committee can take the bills they have in the different subject groups and meld them together to come up with something that will work. He gave them an idea of what the schedule was going to be for the next week. After getting the public input they will go into executive session. He stated he did not want to end up rehearing the bills. He stated the bills have been re-referred to the committee. He said the bills will be referred out of this committee to the appropriate house, either the body of the Senate or the body of the House.

REPRESENTATIVE BRUCE SIMON requested that all of the bills be placed in the folders.

CHAIRMAN BENEDICT replied that the bills were just re-referred that day and the bills will be placed in the folders for the next meeting.

REP. SIMON requested that as they go through the process, those people who have interest in particular pieces of legislation and if the public wishes to offer testimony and suggestions or modifications to put the concerns in writing.

CHAIRMAN BENEDICT stated that everybody would have a chance to make their suggestions and they should propose them in writing.

REP. SIMON asked if they had the authority to amend bills during their executive action, and if it was a House Bill that had already passed the House, would it get passed to the Senate and then return to the House?

CHAIRMAN BENEDICT replied that was correct.

REP. SIMON asked if they were going to modify the bills in this committee, will there then be a public hearing on those bills before they get sent to the Senate floor or House floor? He said it seemed as if they were leaving out the hearing.

CHAIRMAN BENEDICT replied that the bills would have had one hearing in one of the houses and that is the reason for the public testimony in this committee. He said this committee would also have the ability to table bills, but the House and the Senate can ask to have them removed if they are tabled just as in any other standing committee.

REPRESENTATIVE CAROLYN SQUIRES asked if they would be voting as a group on the bills?

CHAIRMAN BENEDICT replied they needed to work on that. He said he would like to see the committee vote as a regular standing committee, but it could be discussed within the committee.

REPRESENTATIVE DUANE GRIMES replied he would not object to that, but if they do take that route they need to suspend the rules.

CHAIRMAN BENEDICT said he told the leadership that the committee would decide and then come back to them with their recommendation.

REP. GRIMES asked if they were going to operate as a standing committee.

Motion:

SENATOR MIKE FOSTER MOVED that the committee operate similar to a standing committee and suspend the rules to allow both houses to work together.

Vote:

The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Discussion:

SEN. FOSTER asked about a Senate Bill that has had no executive action and the committee approves the bill and it goes to the Senate floor and if it is approved there, would it go directly to the House floor, or will it go to another committee?

CHAIRMAN BENEDICT replied they were acting as a circuit breaker. Once this committee makes a recommendation the bill will move on in the process as a bill from a standing committee does.

SENATOR JUDY JACOBSON said that SB 194 that was not part of the bills in the committee and that it was in conflict with another bill in the committee. She said it may be helpful to have that bill in their packet also.

CHAIRMAN BENEDICT replied the reason SB 194 was not in the committee because it does away with everything. It is in the House and if they cannot resolve something in this committee that would be the fall back position. He said SJR 14 could have proceeded on it's own. It has already passed the Senate and was over in the House. The sponsor wanted to have it here. He asked if it had an interim study in it?

SEN. JACOBSON replied "no" it did not.

CHAIRMAN BENEDICT said they could use that bill as a vehicle to ask for an interim study ranking. They are mainly dealing with access issues. He said they were not looking at what the cost drivers were and they might be able to use SJR 14 to start to monitor the cost drivers in the system.

SEN. JACOBSON said SJR 14 has been well used already. They may have to modify the language.

Mike Craig, representing the Health Care Authority, asked if there would be an opportunity for people coming from out of town to testify on a day an issue was not planned to be heard?

CHAIRMAN BENEDICT said he would do as much as he could to let people be heard after hearing the planned issues.

Bob Turner, representing the Department of Revenue, said his place here was to monitor the legislation affecting tax policy. He just wanted to say he would be at the meetings to answer questions.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 5:30 p.m.



SENATOR STEVE BENEDICT, Chairman



JENNIFER GAASCH, Secretary

SB/jg

ROLL CALL

DATE _____

3/6/95

[illegible]