

MINUTES

MONTANA SENATE  
55th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION

COMMITTEE ON HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION

Call to Order: By CHAIRMAN ARNIE MOHL, on February 20, 1997, at  
3:24 PM, in Room 410

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Sen. Arnie A. Mohl, Chairman (R)  
Sen. Mack Cole, Vice Chairman (R)  
Sen. Larry Baer (R)  
Sen. Bob DePratu (R)  
Sen. John R. Hertel (R)  
Sen. Ric Holden (R)  
Sen. Reiny Jabs (R)  
Sen. Greg Jergeson (D)  
Sen. Linda J. Nelson (D)  
Sen. Barry "Spook" Stang (D)

Members Excused: None

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Connie Erickson, Legislative Services Division  
Phoebe Kenny, Committee Secretary

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

Committee Business Summary:

Hearing(s) & Date(s) Posted: HB 93 and HB 202,  
Posted 2-17-97  
Executive Action: None

HEARING ON HB 93

Sponsor: REPRESENTATIVE TONI HAGENER, HD 90, Havre

Proponents:

Bud Williams, Inn Keepers Association  
Matthew Cohn, MT Department of Commerce

Opponents: None

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

REPRESENTATIVE TONI HAGENER, HD 90, HAVRE, the bill you have before you is one that asks for a designation of a trail. I am sure that all Montana residents are familiar with the steam boat travel up the Missouri river to Fort Benton. Those steam boats brought any number of persons and supplies to the frontier, including military personal and supplies to the military posts within the territory. What may not be familiar is the various trading routes that led from Fort Benton to other parts of the State. The bill you have before you attempts to identify a Northern route which linked the Montana territorial fort at Fort Benton with Fort Assinniboine, near Havre and Fort Walsh in Saskatchewan. All three of the forts played an important role in western history, both in Montana and Saskatchewan, Canada. All three of the forts named are working toward promoting the importance of that history to tourists. The identification and marking of the route will enhance that effort and add to the historic significance of the trail. Support for the marking of this trail comes from all three forts and all governing agencies involved. The Department of Transportation has been advised that this request is in, and has indicated their concurrence with it. I would like to pass out some things that would help you to identify the trail itself. (EXHIBIT 1). The trail begins at the Old Fort in Fort Benton then proceeds to Fort Assinniboine and then to Fort Walsh. I have strong support from all the agencies that are involved. I would ask you to take a look at the fiscal note which I don't disagree with, but found a little puzzling, because when we first talked about the designation of this trail we were assured that we would have three signs for sure and that there would be no additional cost, because it came from a special revenue account, but oddly enough there is a dollar amount included in here, so the only explanation I can give you is when you talk to different people you get different answers. The group is perfectly willing to assist in putting up other signs at their own expense in order to promote this. I hope you will look favorably on this.

Proponents' Testimony:

Bud Williams, Inn Keepers Association, we stand in support of House Bill 93. It is certainly good for the tourist industry. Thank you.

Matthew Cohn, Montana Department of Commerce, we stand in support of this bill. One of the things that our research shows us is that one of the top three reasons that people visit Montana is to experience our history and our culture. This is an important part of this and I urge you to Concur with the House on this. Thank you.

Opponents' Testimony: None

Questions From Committee Members and Responses:

SENATOR REINY JABS, is this a scenic highway?

REPRESENTATIVE HAGENER, I am not sure, it is designated as the "Old Forts Trail".

SENATOR MACK COLE, Are there any signs along these roads now that indicate it as the Old Forts Trail?

REPRESENTATIVE HAGENER, no, there is nothing along the trail.

SENATOR COLE, is the road out of Havre an oil road?

REPRESENTATIVE HAGENER, Havre North, the last nine miles are not paved.

SENATOR JABS, will this be advertised for tourists?

REPRESENTATIVE HAGENER, yes it will be advertised and promoted.

CHAIRMAN MOHL, does this affect the construction and funding in any way.

REPRESENTATIVE HAGENER, the department said no, that it was just a matter of signing it.

Closing by Sponsor: REPRESENTATIVE HAGENER, I hope you would Concur with this and if you have too many tourists in your area send them North. Thank you.

HEARING ON HB 202

Sponsor: REPRESENTATIVE PATRICK GALVIN, HD 48, Great Falls

Proponents: NONE

Opponents: NONE

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

REPRESENTATIVE PATRICK GALVIN, HD 48, Great Falls, this bills purpose is to establish one main route between Great Falls and Billings and designate it as Montana Highway 3. submitted written testimony. (EXHIBIT 2)

Proponents' Testimony: NONE

Opponents' Testimony: NONE

Questions From Committee Members and Responses:

SENATOR JOHN HERTEL, did you say Highway 6, I thought you meant Highway 3.

REPRESENTATIVE GALVIN, Yes I am sorry it will be designated Highway 3.

SENATOR RIC HOLDEN, could you talk about the cost?

REPRESENTATIVE GALVIN, yes, the cost will come out of the funds that the Highway Department now have. They will do it at their leisure.

SENATOR MACK COLE, we will have between Billings and Lavina just Route 3, but then from Lavina to Harlowton it will be Route 3 and Route 12?

REPRESENTATIVE GALVIN, Yes. There will be no elimination of any number that you see on the map only an addition of the number 3.

SENATOR BOB DEPRATU, I enjoy driving through that country and I always take a little different route every time I go. I am wondering about the towns that are not on that route, is this the most commonly driven route? Do the towns that are not on this route have a problem with the designation?

REPRESENTATIVE GALVIN, this is the most level, shortest route. And the towns are alright with the designation, as long as there is nothing saying people can't drive the other routes.

SENATOR GREG JERGESON, is this going to change the highway mileage marker signs?

SENATOR MOHL, yes, I believe it has to.

SENATOR "SPOOK" STANG, will this change the fiscal note. You said that they are only going to do this as the need arises, if you read the fiscal note it sounds like they are going out to do this tomorrow.


REPRESENTATIVE GALVIN, that is the way the fiscal note is written but no they are not going to ask for the \$16,000 and sign it tomorrow.

Closing by Sponsor: REPRESENTATIVE GALVIN, thank you for a good hearing.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 3:41

  
SEN. ARNIE MOHL, Chairman

  
PHOEBE KENNY, Secretary

AM/PK