

MINUTES OF THE SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Les Donovan at 8:30 a.m. on March 10, 2004 in Room 527-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Senator David Adkins- absent
Senator Edward Pugh- absent

Committee staff present:

Hank Avila, Legislative Research Department
Bruce Kinzie, Revisors of Statutes
Marian F. Holeman, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Representative Mario Goico
Terry Heidner, KDOT Dir. Division of Operations
Tom Stoltz, Deputy Chief, Wichita Police Dept.
Lt. John Eichkorn, Kansas Highway Patrol
Mike Crow, Dir., KDOT Division of Operations
Terry Holdren, Kansas Farm Bureau
Robert Miller, Wellington
Leslie Kaufman, Kansas Cooperative Council
Tom Whitaker, Exec. Dir., Kansas Motor Carriers Assn.

Others attending:

See Attached List

HB 2563: Motor vehicles, increase amount for reporting accidents to \$1,000

Representative Mario Goico, the House sponsor, spoke in support of the bill which would raise the dollar limits for law enforcement investigation and reporting of non-injury accidents from damages in excess of \$500.00 to \$1,000.00. It would not apply in cases of injury, alcohol or drugs. Present reporting requirements involve an astounding amount of police time. It is estimated that the bill at the \$1,500 level would save the city around \$150,000 per year and \$63,000 at the \$1,000 level (Attachment 1). The House bill was amended to increase the threshold to \$1,500.00. Terry Heidner, Director of Planning and Development, Kansas Department of Transportation, described the current system of reporting and the relief they would experience from enactment of this bill. Especially beneficial were the house amendments to set the effective date at January 1, 2005 and to allow "electronic" reporting. He also provided information on the damage threshold used in some other states (Attachment 2). Thomas J. Stolz, Deputy Chief of Police, Wichita Police Department provided details regarding current reporting requirements and detailed savings resulting in the requested change. They would still make a case on all accidents. The only difference would be in filling out the very detailed and complicated state forms required by the present threshold (Attachment 3). Lt. John Eichkorn, Kansas Highway Patrol, testified in support of the bill for the same reasons as the Wichita Police Department. The base damage for reporting has not been increased since 1985, whereas the cost of materials and labor have increased much more rapidly (Attachment 4). Hearing closed

HB 2624: Cotton modules, intrastate registration, special permits

Mike Crow, Director, Division of Operations, Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) advised they support the bill which addresses the transport of over-dimensional cotton modules. Current law only allows transport during daylight hours. This bill allows transport 24 hours a day. All other statutory mandates and regulations remain applicable (Attachment 5). Terry Holdren, Associate State Director, Kansas Farm Bureau (KFB) Governmental Relations urged passage of the bill which is needed in the cotton industry to facilitate the movement of cotton from field to gin during harvest (Attachment 6). Robert Miller (former Speaker of the Kansas House), President, Kansas Cotton Association, explained some aspects of this rapidly expanding new industry in the State of Kansas. The cotton module trucks do

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not quite fit in with the scheme of things in Kansas. The only place they run is between fields and gins. There are now three gins and they anticipate building more in the near future. Cotton growing and ginning is a very important, new economic development industry in the state. Many water growers are going to cotton because it takes far less water. It conserves both water and gas, as well as the land (Attachment 7). He introduced Gary Feist, Manager of the gin in Anthony. Mr. Miller is chairman of the Board for the Winfield gin. Leslie Kaufman, Director, Government Relations, Kansas Cooperative Council spoke in support of the bill. You may request from her information regarding the water savings in growing this crop. This industry is vital to the economy of the state. It is making a great economic contribution. The growth of this industry has been very rapid and Kansas has not yet developed the infrastructure and regulatory frameworks necessary to support. The transportation arena is where they are trying to fit new vehicles and delivery needs into existing state and federal parameters. That is why this bill is needed (Attachment 8). Tom Whitaker, Executive Director, Kansas Motor Carriers Association, has worked with all interested parties on this issue to accommodate the needs of this new industry and they are happy to support this bill (Attachment 9). Hearing closed.

Approval of minutes

Senator Schodorf moved to approve minutes of the meeting of February 19, 2004. Senator Jackson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Meeting closed at 9:30 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 11, 2004.