

MINUTES OF THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dwayne Umbarger at 11:10 A.M. on March 26, 2007, in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Senator Carolyn McGinn- excused

Committee staff present:

Jill Wolters, Senior Assistant, Revisor of Statutes
Alan Conroy, Director, Kansas Legislative Research Department
J. G. Scott, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Audrey Dunkel, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Heather O'Hara, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Michael Steiner, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Melinda Gaul, Chief of Staff, Senate Ways & Means
Mary Shaw, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Sandy Praeger, Kansas Insurance Commissioner
Doug Farmer, Chief of Staff, Office of Attorney General

Others attending:

See attached list.

Bill Introductions

Senator Morris moved, with a second by Senator Taddiken, to introduce a conceptual Senate Concurrent Resolution regarding four counties in southwest Kansas and port authority (7rs1404). Motion carried on a voice vote.

Senator Teichman moved, with a second by Senator Schodorf, to introduce a bill concerning recodification of criminal statutes (7rs1406). Motion carried on a voice vote.

Chairman Umbarger opened the public hearing on:

SB 214--Repealing the salary cap on employees of the attorney general and the insurance commissioner

Staff briefed the committee on the bill.

The Chairman welcomed Sandy Praeger, Kansas Insurance Commissioner, who testified in support of **SB 214** (Attachment 1). Commissioner Praeger explained that current state law prohibits all but two employees (actuaries) of the Kansas Insurance Department from making a salary that is greater than the Insurance Commissioner. She noted that it has been a real challenge to attract and retain experienced, qualified individuals in the area of company analysis and the law, and who can go head-to-head with the industry on key financial issues of solvency and best practices.

Chairman Umbarger welcomed Doug Farmer, Chief of Staff, Office of Attorney General Paul Morrison, who spoke in support of **SB 214** (Attachment 2). Mr. Farmer explained that current law prohibits employees in the Office of Attorney General from making a salary greater than that of the Attorney General. **SB 214** seeks to remove the employee salary restriction. Since taking office, Mr. Farmer mentioned that Attorney General Morrison has recognized a need for additional resources to attract top tier attorneys to state government employment.

There being no further conferees to come before the Committee, the Chairman closed the public hearing on **SB 214**.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE Senate Ways and Means Committee at 10:30 A.M. on March 26, 2007, in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

Senator Teichman moved, with a second by Senator Betts, to recommend **SB 214** favorable for passage. Motion carried on a roll call vote.

Senator Morris mentioned that it will be necessary in the future to address the pay of state officials and other elected state officials.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for March 27, 2007.