

Approved: May 7, 2008  
Date

## MINUTES OF THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dwayne Umbarger at 10:35 A.M. on February 27, 2008, in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Senator Steve Morris - excused

Committee staff present:

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

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Senator Ralph Ostmeier  
Senator Tim Huelskamp  
Kevin Robertson, Executive Director, Kansas Dental Association  
Joyce Tibbals, Assistant Director, Rural Health Education & Services, KU Medical Center  
Ashley Jones, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)  
A. Michael Klein, Divisional Government Relations Director, Salvation Army  
Monika Eichler, Office of Mental Health Research & Training, School of Social Welfare,  
University of Kansas  
Jay Preston My Father's House, Paola

Others attending:

See attached list.

### **Bill Introductions**

Senator Schodorf moved, with a second by Senator Wysong, to conceptually introduce a bill concerning virtual schools in education. Motion carried on a voice vote.

Senator Kelly moved, with a second by Senator Schodorf, to introduce a bill regarding a comprehensive statewide smoking ban (7rs1953). Motion carried on a voice vote.

Senator Goodwin moved, with a second by Senator Emler, to introduce a bill conceptual bill for the Governor's KPERS COLA. Motion carried on a voice vote.

The Chairman referred the Governor's KPERS COLA bill (no bill number at this time) to the KPERS Budget Subcommittee.

Chairman Umbarger opened the public hearing on:

### **SB 618--Relocation of state offices**

Staff briefed the committee on the bill (Attachment 1).

Senator Ostmeier spoke in support of **SB 618** which would examine the possibility of utilizing existing vacant office space in numerous rural communities throughout Kansas (Attachment 2). It was noted that it would improve the local economy in rural areas, but also that it would require research to determine the

## CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE Senate Ways and Means Committee at 10:35 A.M. on February 27, 2008, in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

potential savings in rent, salaries and setting guidelines to determine where to locate the remote offices.

Senator Tim Huelskamp testified in support of **SB 618** and also addressed that the purposes of the bill would be to save money for the state government and to provide an economic stimulus to rural areas of Kansas (Attachment 3). He addressed positions in rural areas in that technology is already there to make that happen and it is a good possibility for savings. Senator Huelskamp provided additional information in his written testimony from the National Council of State Governments that addresses this subject matter.

Dr. Jay Anderson spoke in support of **SB 618** and noted that the National Council of State Governments addressed in their February 2008 publication some of the information stated in the bill (Attachment 4). In Topeka there appears to be a bucket for state jobs only in Topeka. Dr. Anderson showed photos of a building in Oberlin that could be used for these purposes. He noted that it would cut state costs and provide economic development in rural areas of Kansas.

The Chairman closed the public hearing on **SB 618**.

Copies of the Kansas Legislative Research Department Budget Analysis Report for FY 2008 and FY 2009 were available to the committee.

### **Subcommittee reports on:**

#### **State Conservation Commission (Attachment 5)**

Subcommittee Chairwoman Carolyn McGinn reported that the subcommittee on the State Conservation Commission concurs with the Governor's recommendation in FY 2008 with adjustment and concurs with the Governor's FY 2009 recommendation with adjustments and notations.

Senator McGinn moved, with a second by Senator Steineger, to adopt the subcommittee budget report on the State Conservation Commission in FY 2008 and FY 2009. Motion carried on a voice vote.

#### **Kansas Water Office**

Subcommittee Chairwoman Carolyn McGinn reported that the subcommittee on the Kansas Water Office concurs with the Governor's recommendation in FY 2008 and concurs with the Governor's FY 2009 recommendation with adjustments.

Senator Emler moved, with a second by Senator Teichman, to amend the subcommittee budget report on the Kansas Water Office in FY 2009 and consider Item No. 2 and Item No. 3 at Omnibus. Motion failed on a voice vote.

Senator Bets moved, with a second by Senator McGinn, to adopt the subcommittee budget report on the Kansas Water Office in FY 2008 and FY 2009. Motion carried on a voice vote.

Chairman Umbarger opened the public hearing on:

#### **SB 597–Dentistry Bridging Loan Program**

Staff briefed the committee on the bill.

Kevin Robertson, Executive Director, Kansas Dental Association, testified in support of **SB 597** (Attachment 6). Mr. Robertson noted that there would be a community match with the program. There are vacant dentist offices across Kansas and students have large debt student loans after graduation. Rural students have a more difficult time. Mr. Robertson explained that there is trouble for the students making ends meet in paying off the students loans and purchasing their own dental offices. The number of Kansas students at UMKC has increased substantially, but it is difficult to get them to go out into rural Kansas. Mr. Robertson addressed

## CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE Senate Ways and Means Committee at 10:35 A.M. on February 27, 2008, in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

the new Advanced Education in General Dentistry program starting in Fall 2009 at Wichita State University which will house around ten dental students in each class of a two-year residency program that will include a rural rotation during the second year. In closing, he explained that the “dentistry bridging loan program” is specifically designed to encourage dental school graduates to locate in the less populous areas of the state and would be a positive step toward increasing access to oral health care in rural Kansas.

Joyce Tibbals, Assistant Director of Rural Health Education and Services, University of Kansas Medical Center, spoke in support of **SB 597** (Attachment 7). Ms. Tibbals explained that the Rural Health Education and Services of the University of Kansas Medical Center will accept responsibility for the administration of the Dentistry Bridging Loan Program should additional funds be appropriated for the program. Their office has been asked to administer the program because they administer a similar program, the Kansas Bridging Plan. She noted that the University of Kansas Medical Center officials recommend that the appropriation be a separate line item and not become part of the University of Kansas Medical Center base, similar to the Kansas Medical Student Loan Program and its Repayment Fund.

Written testimony was submitted by:

Teresa Schwab, Executive Director, Oral Health Kansas (Attachment 8).

The Chairman closed the public hearing on **SB 597**.

The Chairman opened the public hearing on:

### **SB 605–Housing Trust Fund; collection of fees**

Ashley Jones, Assistant Program Officer, Greater Kansas City LISC, testified in support of **SB 605** (Attachment 9). Ms. Jones mentioned that housing is in the forefront at this time due to the disasters. She noted that housing in Kansas was a problem even before the disasters, but now it has been elevated to a crisis level. Ms. Jones explained that the disasters shed light on the fact that Kansas is lacking in community development tools. In closing, Ms. Jones noted that by expanding and enhancing the current State Housing Trust Fund to meet the needs of Kansans not eligible for federal programs, it would help improve the available housing options for all Kansans; and in turn, contribute to the economic vitality of Kansas communities and leverage available resources.

Michael Klein, Divisional Government Relations Director, The Salvation Army, spoke in support of **SB 605** (Attachment 10). Mr. Klein explained that **SB 605** provides resources that fund workforce housing, senior housing and housing activities and supports that each family needs during this rebuilding of residents, their spirit and their hope. In closing, Mr. Klein noted that this funding source will assist in ensuring safe, quality and affordable workforce housing accessible for all Kansans.

Monika Eichler, Research Associate, Office of Mental Health Research and Training, University of Kansas School of Social Welfare, testified as a proponent on **SB 605** (Attachment 11). Ms. Eichler clarified that the opinions in her testimony were her own and they do not represent official policy of the University of Kansas nor are necessarily views of the University of Kansas administration. She addressed two elements of the bill that do not specifically cover the critical housing needs in Kansas: one has to do with the beneficiaries of the fund, second one has to do with the programs that it serves. Details are provided in Ms. Eichler’s written testimony. Ms. Eichler suggested two recommendations:

- Bill is targeted to those who earn 80% or less of the area median income
- Set aside 50% of the funds to use for tenant rental assistance

Jay Preston, Director, My Father’s House, Paola, testified as a neutral conferee on **SB 605** (Attachment 12). Mr. Preston explained that he is testifying because he had a great concern for people all around the state living without housing. He asked that the committee reconsider the 120% median income threshold and reduce it to 80% and reconsider setting housing trust funds aside for disaster counties only. Mr. Preston addressed the seriousness of homelessness in the state which has been going on for a long time (details are in his written testimony).

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE Senate Ways and Means Committee at 10:35 A.M. on February 27, 2008, in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

Due to time constraints, the public hearing on **SB 605** will continue on March 4, 2008.

The meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m. The next meeting was scheduled for February 28, 2008.