

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE KANSAS FUTURES COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairman Bob Bethell at 1:30 p.m. on January 24, 2001 in Room 526-S of the State Capitol.

All members were present except: Representative Gene O'Brien - excused
Representative Mike O'Neal - excused

Committee staff present: April Holman, Legislative Research Department
Lynne Holt, Legislative Research Department
Amy Kramer, Legislative Research Department
Lois Hedrick, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:
Michael Farmer, Executive Director, Kansas Catholic Conference

Others attending: See attached list.

Chairman Carlos Mayans joined the meeting shortly after its start.

A Perspective for the Future

Michael Farmer presented testimony based on a document issued by the Catholic Pontifical Laity Council relating to aging people and their roles in churches and in the world. He noted the current demographic transition of an increasing number of the aging population, the dramatic increase in the birth rate, and the changed social strata posing social, economic, cultural, psychological and spiritual problems. Summarily, Mr. Farmer stated the many problems associated with old age will demand specific responses from civil society and churches. (See testimony, Attachment 1.)

Mr. Farmer indicated volunteers for senior services can be recruited and trained through churches and other groups by individual encouragement; and through counseling seniors, they can be guided to retraining so they can rejoin the workforce. Transportation plays a major role for seniors, many needing transportation to work, to doctors appointments, to the grocery store, and to church. Many seniors are proud and will not ask for help. He stated the formation of this committee is important to establish strategies for future planning and response.

Chairman Mayans indicated Vice-Chairman Bethell is chairing a two-day meeting of the Long-Term-Care Task Force on January 29 and 30, and invited members to sit in on the meeting when possible.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 29, 2001.