

Assembly

MINUTES OF MEETING - WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE - NEVADA STATE LEGISLATURE
1968 SPECIAL SESSION - FEBRUARY 24, 1968

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Glaser at 8:30 AM in the Ways and Means Room.

Present: Glaser, Mello, Bowler, Ashworth, Young, Tyson, Howard,
Webb, Jacobsen

Absent: None

A. B. 24: Provides for psychiatric treatment at Nevada state prison

Mr. White said this was amended to read "A psychiatrist shall be employed, if available"

Mr. Bowler said this still did not spell it out clearly that he could be moved between the hospital and prison as the need arises. He wants to eliminate any possibility of conflict.

Mr. White agreed with the interpretation that A. B. 20 provides for psychiatric care at the prison but no additional staff while A. B. 24 provides for a higher level of care.

Mr. Bowler felt it was unnecessary to have 2 bills dealing with the same thing which would be the case if A. B. 24 left it with intent. Then A. B. 20 would suffice.

Mrs. Tyson pointed out that A. B. 24 has the money in it.

Mr. Norman Hilbrecht relayed the situation at the prison. He said there are 2 in maximum charged but not convicted because of being seriously mentally ill. They are in a 5 by 9 cell because they can't join the regular prison population - too dangerous. The intent of these cells is penal in nature. He gave a description of these cells which are certainly not conducive to cure. In fact, they would make one psychotic if not already. A psychiatrist, with the use of drugs and other treatment, could get them out of these cells into the normal facilities. When they are treated to come out of this vegetable stage they would be able to stand trial. There is no staff to back up Dr. Brown, a psychiatrist who is able to spend only a few minutes with prisoners because of his limited time. He has seen only 150 out of a total of 600 prisoners. It is necessary to interview all these inmates to determine where the problems are. It is mandatory that people who are security risks go to prison facilities. Unless their illness is of a mild condition, they must go into these cells. We have no choice. We have to provide care for them.

Mr. Bowler asked if A. B. 24 was really needed inasmuch as we have a responsible superintendent who would send psychiatric care to the prison if he could. Mr. White said the superintendent is now responsible but the prison is receiving no help, so A. B. 20 just does not cover it.

Mr. Glaser said that A. B. 23 increases the salaries. Hopefully, this would allow a full staff and under A. B. 20 he could send one of these to the prison on a full time basis. The only need for A. B. 24 is to

provide additional supporting personnel and a higher level of care.

Mr. Ashworth asked if we go with A. B. 24 and give them \$50,000 to increase the staff, would this mean that in the near future we would have to expand the facilities at the prison for this.

Mr. Hilbrecht said they are planning eventually for a security unit at the hospital. Then we would never have to put the patients at the prison. Until that time, the facilities at the prison now will suffice. With the use of drugs, etc. to get them out of their catatonic state, they can be put in the facility of the regular prison population. There is no need for supporting equipment at the prison, just staff.

Mr. Webb said that Mr. McAllister's strongest point was that he would put a psychiatrist at the prison full time if he could. The increase in salary would relieve this situation.

Discussion on number of staff positions allowed by A. B. 23. A. B. 23 takes out 2 positions, so out of the 6 positions, if the extra one for the prison were not authorized, the hospital would be left with 5. It was the point of the Ways and Means Committee that this is what Mr. McAllister said he wanted - 5 positions.

Miss Dungan pointed out the need for supportive staff, which could not be hired without the additional money.

Mrs. Tyson, for clarification, asked the number of ill prisoners. There are 2 in solitary confinement; 4 others and 2 who have been there for years. Outside of these 6, there remains a definite need for treatment of at least 10% of the total prison population. Mrs. Tyson pointed out the need, stated by Mr. McAllister, for one nurse 24 hours a day.

S. B. 23: Adjusts number and salaries of psychiatrists in state service

Mr. Glaser summarized that this bill cuts the number of positions from 8 to 6, raises the salary of senior psychiatrist to \$23,000 for Grade A and \$25,000 for Grade B, and raises the salary of the superintendent to \$26,000 to come under the 95% limitation.

Discussion of jump in salary of \$3,000. However, the savings in salaries and decrease of positions offsets this.

Mr. Mello had some statistics on psychiatrists in Montana, Wyoming and Idaho. The board qualified and state licensed psychiatrists receive from \$19,000 to \$24,000 in Montana; Wyoming, slightly higher; Idaho, slightly lower. All three states have difficulty filling the positions. Private practice yields salaries 3 to 4 times greater.

Mr. Howard moved that S. B. 23 be reported out with a DO PASS.
Mr. Mello seconded the motion.
Motion passed unanimously.

A. B. 25: Amends 1967 general appropriation act to authorize use of moneys appropriated to department of health, welfare and rehabilitation for child welfare services in both fiscal years 1967-1968 and 1968-1969

Mr. Young moved that A. B. 25 be reported out with a DO PASS.
Mr. Jacobsen seconded the motion.
Motion passed unanimously.

A. B. 26: Authorizes employment of state park construction engineer after July 1, 1968; makes appropriation therefor

This provides for a construction engineer, registered or professional

Mr. Bowler moved that A. B. 26 be reported out with a DO PASS.
Mr. Jacobsen seconded the motion.
Motion passed unanimously.

A. B. 24: Provides for psychiatric treatment at Nevada state prison

Mr. Howard moved that A. B. 24 be indefinitely postponed.
Mrs. Tyson seconded the motion.
Mr. Mello voted no.
Mr. Glaser voted no.

Motion passed.