

MINUTES

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Monroe at 9:40 a. m. on February 27, 1969. He announced there would be a hearing at 10:00 a. m. for the "Blind bills".

Committee members present: Chairman Monroe
Senator Bunker
Senator Christensen
Senator Dodge
Senator Hug
Senator Young

Committee member absent: Senator Swobe

Guests: Members of the Legislative Committee
of the Nevada Federation of the Blind.

Came in at 10:00 a. m.

Jean Savage, President
K. O. Knudson
Audrey Tait
Carl Clontz
Jim Osmond
Walda Kerner
Mary Mossheart

Mark Savage
Elmer Kerner

SB 84 was discussed. (Provides for investment of moneys deposited in court.)

Senator Dodge explained in the court revision report it had been suggested the State take over the costs of the Judicial system. They do pay the salaries of the District Judges but do not pay the fees and costs in criminal cases and the counties are now obligated to pay for the prosecution. If a County did not want to have a criminal case prosecuted in their county they could turn it down and it could possibly be untried, because of the costs. They tried to get more money into the general fund to take care of these costs. There is money deposited in various courts (trusts, suits over right-of-way, etc.) and the money is just laying there sometimes for a period of two or three years. This bill would provide for a short term investment of these funds and the interest would bring in additional money to the general fund. It could bring in \$20,000 to \$30,000 per year in interest. Frank Daykin said he thought it would be better to leave the bill as it is now and if we wanted to it could be changed at a later date. If this bill was passed now it would go into effect when the system was changed.

Senator Christensen remarked he had always found that once extra money gets into a system of the government it was hard to take it away, they always found a way to use it and it was hard to get it away once they had it.

Senator Young stated he still felt it should go into the County General Fund instead of into the State General Fund. He could see a justifiable reluctance in delegating funds.

Chairman Monroe stated it was not going to mean as much going into the State funds as it would into the county funds. The state would not use the \$25,000 as fast as the County would use that much additional money.

Senator Dodge said they had tried to get the money somewhere as these were idle funds and they felt there could be use for the interest earned from it. It would help support the court system and he felt the bill was all right as it was.

Chairman Monroe remarked it would go into the court funds but could not be used until budgeted and would be carried over on the books for a year. There would be time to put some control on it.

Senator Dodge mentioned that if the State did take over they would have to define just where the money should be spent.

There was further discussion as to the merits of the money going into the county or state general fund, however Senator Young stated he still was not satisfied and would like the opportunity to discuss this with Frank Daykin.

Senator Monroe brought up the question that it might not be constitutional to use funds of others and collect interest on it for the states use.

This was set aside until Senator Young could discuss it with Mr. Daykin.

The representatives from the Nevada Federation of the Blind were asked to come in for their hearing.

Chairman Monroe asked their spokesman to present their views.

President Jean Savage introduced each member of her committee and asked Mr. Knudson to speak.

MR. K. O. KNUDSON: We appreciate the opportunity of being here today. We have prepared a summary and will pass a copy of it to each member. After it has been read we will be glad to answer any questions there are.

Chairman Monroe read the following on SB 153: (Changes residency requirements for blind persons entitled to aid.)

To all Legislators, 1969:
Discussion summary of SB 153

Abolishes residence as requirement for obtaining aid to the blind.

Residence requirements impose limitations on vocational and educational opportunities

Federal funding will eventually be denied to states imposing residency requirements

Several major states have already removed residential requirements

Legislative Committee
Nevada Federation of the Blind

SENATOR DODGE: Mr. Knudson, what would say the residency requirements are? Would they be the same for voting?

MR. KNUDSON: There would be a six month residency requirement, according to the law. This is what is required by the State for voting. We have no right to tell the State what constitutes a residence to vote. We would have to comply with the State law. Some states have now removed the residency requirement for aid.

SENATOR DODGE: How many states have removed this requirement?

MR. KNUDSON: Nine, and California was the last to do so. It has been said that if the residency requirement were removed the blind would flock here to receive the aid but they did not do so in California, and California is close so there would not be any coming from there. The bill to reduce residency requirements was offered two years ago but some feared that it would cause a rush to Nevada so it was not passed. Our big objective is to allow the blind to come to Nevada to live with their relatives or for occupational reasons and they should not lose their aid just because they had to move to this State. Many states do pay for a period of time until they are eligible to receive aid in another state.

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Federal funding will eventually be denied to states imposing residency requirements.

AUDREY TAIT: California will pay one year aid when a resident moves to another state. Other states will pay for six months. Some pay nothing. New York and Massachusetts have no residency requirements and in New York they allow \$90.00 per month for rent. Two years ago our intentions were that if you moved to Nevada and established the intent to establish a residency you could get the aid. Some States will pay aid until you have established residency elsewhere.

MR. KNUDSON: There are a number of blind living in the Las Vegas area and most of them moved there to be with relatives and not because of the aid.

SENATOR DODGE: How many blind are in the state of Nevada?

CARL CLONTZ: There are 850 blind in the State of Nevada and about 50 new cases. There are about 160 receiving aid.

CHAIRMAN MONROE: How does the aid paid by Nevada compare to other States? Is it more liberal?

AUDREY TAIT: In 1956 we thought it was a model law but there was no provision for additional aid as the cost of living raised. The requirements for aid vary. Some need more money than others. You would not give a college student the same amount of aid you would give a farmer. The average paid to each now is \$99.00.

SENATOR HUG: 150 receiving aid out of a total of 850 is a small percentage.

MR. KNUDSON: That is all that have applied for it. Many have other independent sources of income and retirement benefits and are self sufficient. We are not concerned about those, only the blind with no other income but the aid they receive.

CHAIRMAN MONROE read the prepared remarks from the Committee on SB 154 (Provides change in amount presumed necessary for persons claiming aid to the blind.)

To all legislators, 1969,
Discussion summary of SB 154

In behalf of Nevada's Aid to the Blind recipients, we are requesting your whole-hearted support of SB 154. We hope

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this bill will help to establish a decent standard of living for the less fortunate blind people of our State who are dependent upon public assistance for their livelihood.

The present standard was established in 1959 and budget items have been cut since that time. Some of the reasons for the cuts were because aid to the blind was tied in with other aid group recipients, such as Old Age Assistance and ADC.

In order to alleviate this condition, the Aid to the Blind floor should be placed at \$135 a month instead of the present \$100. No one will challenge the fact that the cost of living has increased more than 35% since 1959. SB 154 will make sure that a blind person's aid check keeps pace with the current cost of living rather than the present practice of tying it to a standard of ten years ago.

Remember, we are only talking about approximately 160 people who are blind and need your help.

Legislative Committee
Nevada Federation of the Blind
K. O. Knudson, Chairman

Additional information of SB 154

Should the Department of Health and Welfare oppose SB 154 on the ground that it would have to use as a standard of income for the 'medically needy' under Title XIX of the Social Security Act the highest standard of any category of public assistance in the State, may we point out that all that has now been changed. Due to changes in the Social Security Act and regulations made in pursuant thereof, states are required to use an income measurement for the medically needy 140 percent of the standard for Aid to Families with Dependent Children, effective January 1, 1969. Furthermore, by January 1, 1970, the measurement for the medically needy will be 135 percent of the standard for Aid to Families with Dependent Children.

You will see from this that the size of the grant in Aid to the Blind has no relevance whatsoever.

Legislative Committee
Nevada Federation of the Blind
K. O. Knudson, Chairman.

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MR. KNUDSON: Two years ago we were able to get a similiar bill thru the Assembly Committee, but it was defeated on the floor. This was for \$125.00.

CHAIRMAN MONROE: I think this bill is needed but it will have to go to the Senate Finance Committee after we approve it.

MR. KNUDSON: The Senate Finance Committee invited us to a hearing at 2:30 p. m. this afternoon.

SENATOR CHRISTENSEN: In this same room this afternoon we are holding a committee meeting of the Health and Welfare Committee you are also invited too.

SENATOR HUG: According to the working in this the actual needs are to be determined by the welfare department.

MR. KNUDSON: The way we actually feel about this is that we would achieve no purpose in removing the floor. The welfare department could at times be promiscuous and the needs will vary. Old people, little children, farmers or college students. We don't know who to give the authority too, but a small group should not be allowed to make the decision.

AUDREY TAIT: Most good welfare departments are very fair but some are not. To leave the decision in the hands of the welfare department would be very sad. There should be laws to protect the individual in cases like this.

MR. KNUDSON: We are here to tell you of our needs, we have no authority or right to tell you what laws to pass. There have been hardships on many, as Mrs. Mosshart can tell you.

MRS. MARY MOSSHART: I lived in Oregon for twenty five years and four and one-half years I came to Nevada to live with my only relatives. My aid was cut off from Oregon when I came to Nevada and for two years I had to live on my old age pension alone. It was very hard.

MR. KNUDSON: We all thank you for the opportunity to present this to you today. Thank you.

The Committee representing the Nevada Federation of the Blind left the meeting.

Senator Young remarked he would like to have something from the Executive Branch on this to see if this is agreeable to them.

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Senator Dodge stated that Senators Slattery and Herr introduced this bill and perhaps they should be contacted to find out what their intent was on the cost of living. This could present a problem with the budget.

Senator Young recommended they amend the bill and take out the last three sections, section 5, 6, and 7, and refer it to Senate Finance Committee.

Senator Young then moved that sections 5, 6, and 7 on page 2 be stricken and do pass.

Senator Christensen seconded the motion.
Motion carried.

Chairman Monroe asked if the committee wished to vote on SB 153.

Senator Young moved it be passed.
Senator Bunker seconded the motion.
Motion carried.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a. m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne M. Smith

Approved: _____

To all Legislators, 1969:

Discussion summary of SB 151

In behalf of Nevada's Aid to the Blind recipients, we are requesting your whole-hearted support of SB 151. We hope this bill will help to establish a decent standard of living for the less fortunate blind people of our State who are dependent upon public assistance for their livelihood.

The present standard was established in 1959 and budget items have been cut since that time. Some of the reasons for the cuts were because aid to the blind was tied in with other aid group recipients, such as Old Age Assistance and ADC.

In order to alleviate this condition, the Aid to the Blind floor should be placed at \$135 a month instead of the present \$100. No one will challenge the fact that the cost of living has increased more than 35% since 1959. SB 151 will make sure that a blind person's aid check keeps pace with the current cost of living rather than the present practice of tying it to a standard of ten years ago.

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