

MINUTES OF MEETING - COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE FUNCTIONS
56TH ASSEMBLY SESSION

38

March 3, 1971

PRESENT: N. Lauri, Chairman, R. Young, D. Mello, W. Wilson,
N. Glaser, J. Schofield and R. Torvinen.

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, N. Lauri, at 10:15 a.m., in Room 224, to discuss two Assembly Bills.

A.B. 449 Prohibits legislators from voting on certain bills in which they have a direct or indirect pecuniary interest.

Discussion followed on this proposed measure, which is already covered somewhat in the standing rules of the Assembly. When the bill refers to "indirect pecuniary interest" it was generally felt that it covered a lot of ground. Mr. Lauri stated that the penalty section is in the standing rules and necessary action taken on each individual case that might be called to the assembly's attention.

Mr. Schofield felt that anyone in this body has either direct or indirect conflict of interest. He said that those elected by the people were so elected because of belief in their integrity, fairness and good judgment in voting on all issues. Several members stated that if an issue came up for vote, which they believed would reflect on them and possible conflict of interest, they would refrain from voting on this measure.

Mr. Mello stated that we might need some type of conflict of interest legislation, but did not feel that this bill was the one. There would be too many times where a person would not even realize that a conflict of interest might be involved.

Paragraph 2 of the bill was discussed, and Mr. Torvinen brought up the principle that you do not raise your salary but the salary of that office or seat and you cannot guarantee you will be re-elected to enjoy any such raise. He also thought that an error had been made in the printing and that a comma should follow the word "taxation"

Motion was made by D. Mello, seconded by J. Schofield that this bill be indefinitely postponed. Motion carried unanimously.

A.B. 509 Authorizes legislators to participate in group plan of life, accident and health insurance of state officers and employees.

Mr. Lauri read a letter from a woman whose son had been working for eight years for the State Museum; but since his wages were paid from dedicated funds, he could not be included in any state insurance plan. She had hoped that cases such as these would be covered under the provisions of this bill by the addition of a clause.

Mr. Lauri was going to check into possible coverage for this type of employee since there are other agency positions that are paid by special grants.

Mr. Young did not see how the bill was workable. If a person was not re-elected, could he still be covered?

Mr. Torvinen said it would depend on the plan and its particular coverage and suggested someone get in touch with a person who services the state policy for further information.

Mr. Lauri asked who would pay the other share of this? Mr. Torvinen said that this would come out of a department's budget - in this case the Legislative Fund.

Mr. Glaser felt the plan was really not needed, since nearly everyone had a policy and, while they were actually on the job in the Legislature, would be covered by NIC, in case of an accident. Mr. Torvinen said that recent changes in laws had made it possible for payment to be made from several policies, covering one case - one paying a certain portion and the other picking up the balance.

Mr. Mello felt that there would be unfavorable publicity if this plan was accepted by the Legislature.

Motion was made by Mr. Torvinen, seconded by Mr. Glaser, that this measure be indefinitely postponed. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.