

## Assembly

## AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE MINUTES

APRIL 3, 1973

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Hickey, Messrs Dini, Young, Howard Hayes, Getto

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Prince

GUESTS: John O'Harra, Dept. of Agriculture  
Harry Galloway, Department of Agriculture  
Jack Armstrong  
Peter E. Marble  
Carolyn Oxborrow  
Royal Crook  
Fred Fulstone Jr.  
Ira H. Kent, Cattlemen's Association  
J. Elrod Starley  
David G. Abel  
Matt Benson  
W. E. "Bill" Adams, City of Las Vegas  
Keith Ashworth, Assemblyman  
Mrs. Noreen Gonce, Dog Fanciers Association

Chairman Hickey began by saying that although a quorum had not yet been established that Mr. Hayes and he would act as a sub-committee to hear testimony and report to the committee as a whole until a quorum could be established.

The first bill to be heard was AB 822, appropriates funds to State Department of Agriculture for animal disease laboratory in Elko. Mr. John O'Hara of the Division of Animal Industry of the State Department of Agriculture spoke on behalf of the bill. Mr. O'Harra stated that this bill had been requested on behalf of the Nevada Cattlemen's Association and Nevada Woolgrowers. It would establish a branch diagnostic laboratory in Elko where high percentage of the State's livestock are located. They are in agreement with the bill and feel that the people in Elko County should have a better service then they have in the past years.

Section 1 appropriates money to establish and equip the laboratory and is sufficient, however, section 2 would put them in a difficult position. The appropriation would not be sufficient for the basic needs. He outlined the amount of funds as follows:

1. Rental - \$4,800
2. Utilities -1,500
3. Travel - purchase of a 4-wheel drive vehicle - \$4,200  
Mileage and per diem - \$3,500
4. Salary for a full time person at the laboratory probably a clerk-typist classification \$6,000

So the total for the first year would be \$36,000 and for the fiscal years after that about \$31,800. The amount of \$21,330 set forth in this bill would not be adequate.

Ira Kent, President of the Nevada Cattlemen's Association then stated that he wished to state that this bill came about as a resolution at the Nevada Cattlemen's Convention, and it had the full support of the Cattlemen's Association.

A quorum was established and Chairman Hickey called the meeting to order.

SB 195 was the next order of business. Mr. Galloway of the Department of Agriculture stated that this bill would require the labeling of commercial livestock feed supplements. It has been amended in the Senate but since the Department has come up with an additional amendment on page 2 line four insert another definition (g) all sheep or animals of ovine species.

This bill came up because of problems arising on the borders of the state. There has been rumors of shipments of low quality feed moving across the state line. This feed is usually of inferior quality and does not meet the minimum standards set by this state.

This bill also needs an appropriation of \$5,000 to go along with it in order to make it workable. The present budget for the Department is not adequate to cover it. Mr. Galloway stated that he was not sure if Senate finance had tacked the additional funds unto the Department budget or had just ignored it.

This bill is a slight diversion from what is normally considered the routine type of feed legislation. Using the so called uniform type of approach requiring registration etc. has extensive administrative overhead costs. This bill is not of that type and with the \$5,000 fund they feel that they can administer it.

Mr. Getto then asked Mr. Galloway if even without the money would this bill have any benefit.

Mr. Galloway said that when they started receiving the complaints how would they handle them without the funds. Without the money it would just be a paper bill.

AB 899 was next on the agenda.\* This bill provides for special property tax on cattle to combat predatory animals. Ira Kent of the Nevada Cattlemen's Association stated that this bill came about as result of resolutions passed in the past years by the Cattlemen's Association Convention. It is due to the fact that the predatory problem has become quite severe in the past years due to the restrictions placed upon the use of poisons by the federal government and the uncertainty of any more funding by them. They request this bill even though it is a tax upon their own industry.

\* see attachment II

Mr. Kent stated that perhaps there should be language in the bill to exclude cattle moving into feed lots under free port.

Mr. Dini stated that he understood that the county assessor does not include free port cattle in his assessments.

Mr. Kent said that he didn't but he had been led to believe that some feed lots have been reporting cattle covered under free port to the assessor.

Mr. Getto asked if the industry had been polled and were they behind the bill. Mr. Kent stated that he had polled quite a few himself and there were very few that were not in favor of it.

Mr. Getto then asked if there was an estimate of how much this would raise in taxes. Mr. Kent stated that he believed that there were about 435,000 taxable cattle last year which make about \$35,000 available. If dairy cattle were deleted it would be a little less as there is approximately 12,000 dairy cattle.

Mr. Hickey asked Mr. Kent if this would be enough to do any good. Mr. Kent said that there were other sources of funds and that combined with this they felt that it would be a good start as the federal money is becoming less and less and could be cut out completely. Various district grazing boards contribute funds.

Senator Young has introduced a bill to put this control of predatory animals under the fish and game department of the state.

Mr. Dini then asked why tax the cattle when the biggest problem has been with the sheep. Mr. Kent stated that it has been until this year. The coyote population has doubled in this state. Estimate that there may be up to 100,000 coyotes in the state. A female coyote may have up to 5 pups per litter and the gestation period is about 90 to 120 days so they increase at a rapid rate.

Mr. Hayes asked how they managed to get rid of them if they did not use poisons. Mr. Kent replied that they had to either trap them, shoot them, and they also used aerial methods which have been quite successful in the snow. Aerial method can only be used effectively after a storm or when there is snow on the ground. Not any good in the summer or when the ground is bare.

Mr. Howard asked if the revised budget which includes \$150,000 for predatory control were adopted would this bill be needed. Mr. Kent said that it may not but it would take two years to have funds available and they would not be assured that the funds would keep being allotted for this by the State.

An additional problem with the predatory animals is that there could be an large outbreak of rabies because rabid bats infect the coyote and coyote infects the farm animals. It would then become a State Health department problem which would be much more costly.

Mr. Marvel of Elko who is in the ranching business and is a former president of the Cattlemen's Association then spoke against AB 899. He stated that although he was in great sympathy with the problem he would like to suggest that it be made on the voluntary basis. Perhaps it could be stated that anybody that owns livestock and wishes to be exempt from this bill could do so by notifying the assessor in writing. He said he felt that this was important not because he did not feel that there was a problem but because there was great division of thinking in the industry as to how the problem should be treated. There were many ranchers that believe that the coyote had a very definite part in the ecological balance and would not permit the killing of one. He also stated that in the case of the ranching business he was connected with which was quite large, between 60,000-70,000 head, the tax would amount to \$500 a year and they would have no guarantee that have any results. This amount would be enough to hire a ranch hand for two months to just kill coyotes.

Also the amount raised would be about enough to hire an additional two trappers and Mr. Marvel said that he did not believe that these two trappers would do that much more to help eliminate the problem.

Next was Royal Crook of Fallon representing the Churchill Farm Bureau who stated that they have been aware of the problem for many years but this is the first year that he had heard of the coyote actually attacking the cattle. He stated that he had found very few people who were against this type of control.

Mr. Crook stated that would suggest that dairy cattle be exempt as they were not really involved with the problem. He was sure that his people would go along with this.

He also stated that he did not feel that it should be voluntary as the large operators would probably not choose to join and then the whole program would be ineffective. Also if the large operators would not control their problem they would become area havens for the predators who would prey upon the small operations around.

Fred Fulstone, Jr., of Smith, Nevada spoke next stated that the Nevada Woolgrowers were in support of this bill. This had previously been their problem and they had carried the burden of it but now with the restrictions on poisons and ecology mood of the public the coyote problem was becoming the cattlemen's problem.

He also did not feel it would work if were on the volunteer basis. They would have no way of estimating how much money they would have and would not be able to plan ahead. His losses had been up from 2% of last year to about 15% now.

Mr. Getto asked him if he had a trapper, and Mr. Fulstone stated that he did but the modern day trapper is restricted so that it takes more trappers to do the job and the modern trapper is not like the old timer.

Mr. Fulstone also stated that the federal government used to put millions into predatory control and now they want to give it all back to the state to control.

The final speaker on AB 899 was Matt Benson from Douglas County who is on the board of directors for the Cattlemen's Association. Mr. Benson stated that this is the first year he has ever known of a cattle to be attacked by a coyote. These incidents are on the increase and he felt that the sheepmen have been carrying the burden long enough. He also stated that he did not feel that it should be put on the volunteer basis.

Feel that this bill should be passed before it became a health problem and cost the State much more. He also wished to point out that the industry is asked the State to tax themselves rather than use State funds.

Mr. Howard stated that he also felt that this is a state problems and that it was very meritorius for the industry itself to want to take this step.

Mr. Young stated that grazing board in his area had spent \$12,000 for control and that they had found that the use of helicopter was very effective.

AB 793 was final bill up for consideration. This bill would permit operation of noncommerical dog kennels in areas zoned for residence: exempts such kennels from business license requirements.

Assemblyman Ashworth began by stating that as one of the sponsors of the bill he wished to say that he felt that this was a good piece of legislation. At the present time you can only have 3 dogs on the premises in a residence area. This has been hard on those people who are dog fanciers and raise dogs for show or trials.

He cited his own case of having 2 hunting dogs and 1 poodle. The objections have been the noise and sanitary problems. Mr. Ashworth stated that you would find that a dog raised for show or trials is much better cared for and trained then the average dog and did feel that this was a ligitimate objection.

He said that he supported the bill because it would give relief to these people allowing them to have more dogs in their residence and if it does become a nuisance there are plenty of nuisance laws on the books.

Next was Mrs. Noreen Gonce, speaking on behalf of all dog fanciers, stating that they had really worked hard on this bill and they would like to see the dog hobbyist or fancier be recognized as a legal term for the owner. It would not change the commercial ownership and would only effect show dogs.

In most cases the dog fancier keeps up to 6 dogs in his home at one time. This includes 1 or 2 old dogs that have passed their prime, 1-2 dogs in their prime and used for show and 1-2 puppies who are being raised for show. The present ordinance puts a real crimp on people who are trying to establish a kennel.

This bill would also allow the selling of puppies without obtaining a license. This would not amount to alot of puppies but would help these people defray their expenses involved.

Feel that this would raise the prestige of Nevada. There are 5 clubs in Reno and 14 clubs in Las Vegas. Perhaps a combined membership of 1,000 members. About 3500 are shown here in a year and they come from all over the country. They are planning a show in Las Vegas and the National Kennel Award will be given at it.

Asked for a bill at the state level because there are hobbyists all over the state.

The objections of noise and sanitation should not be valid because a hobbyists would take the chance of losing a prized animal because of such things. Kentucky has had such a law and they have not had a single complaint. Las Vegas has had no complaints about dog fanciers. Just about pet owners who do not train their animal and let them run loose.

Ms. Oxborrow stated the hobbyists also wanted the problem of dogs running loose controlled.

Mr. Young asked if the selling of puppies did not compete with the kennels that do this for a business. Mrs. Gonce said that she felt that they did not compete to that extent.

Mr. Getto asked if the bill did not allow a hobbyists to have say up to 30 dogs in his home. Mrs. Gonce said that no hobbyists would have that many as he could not handle that many in a home. The average hobbyist would have no more than 6 dogs at any time.

Mr. Getto said that the bill did not set any limitations and perhaps some language as the number of puppies that could be sold should be inserted into the bill.

Mrs. Gonce said that this would be agreeable and that she would work on some time of amendment to that affect and present it to the Chairman for consideration.

Attachment I

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As there was no further business and the morning session was about to begin Chairman Hickey adjourned the meeting at 9:35.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandee Gagnier,  
Assembly Attache

ASSEMBLY

AGENDA FOR COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Date 4-3-73 Time 8:00 Room 224

<u>Bills or Resolutions to be considered</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Counsel requested*</u>
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AB 793	Permits operation of noncommercial dog kennels in areas zoned for residence; exempts such kennels from business license requirements.	
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AB 822	Appropriates funds to State Department of Agriculture for animal disease laboratory in Elko.	
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AB 899	Provides for special property tax on cattle to combat predatory animals.	
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SB 195	Requires labeling of commercial livestock feed supplements to show net weight and ingredients by percentage.	
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\*Please do not ask for counsel unless necessary.



Amendment to AB 793

Section 4, Subsection 1 add the following words after the words  
kep by him in such kennel:

"a provision that the number of dogs to be sold in a year  
be limited to either 4 litters or 15 dogs, whichever is  
greater."



Attachment II

ARTHUR J. PALMER, Director

CLINTON E. WOOSTER, Legislative Counsel  
EARL T. OLIVER, C.P.A., Fiscal Analyst  
ARTHUR J. PALMER, Research Director

April 3, 1973

Assemblyman Thomas J. Hickey  
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture  
Assembly Chambers  
Carson City, Nevada 89701

Dear Tom:

I appreciate the opportunity to express my views relative to A.B. 899 which provides for a property tax on cattle to combat predatory animals.

I am opposed to this type of a mandatory checkoff tax on cattle for the following reasons:

(1) Cattle losses from predators is either nonexistent or very small.

(2) Coyotes are beneficial in many respects. They help control mice, gophers, squirrels, rabbits, and other rodents. This is their primary food supply.

(3) Coyotes and bobcat pelts are bringing premium prices, and many trappers are now running extensive trap lines to catch them. A subsidized program would be unfair to the private trapper.

I'm sure 90 percent of the cattle ranchers would be opposed to A.B. 899 if they knew of its existence and the financial implications. I urge your committee to defer action on A.B. 899 until the next session of the legislature. In the meantime, the Farm Bureau and cattle association will have the opportunity to discuss this approach to predatory control at their annual conventions in November.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Norman D. Glaser".

Norman D. Glaser  
Box 1  
Halleck, Nevada

NDG/jd