

Approved

Stephen R. Cloud  
Date 3-28-86

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

The meeting was called to order by Representative Stephen R. Cloud at  
Chairperson

9:05 a.m./p.m. on Tuesday, March 18, 1986 in room 522-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Representative Fuller - Excused  
Representative Graeber - Excused

Committee staff present:

Avis Swartzman - Revisor  
Carolyn Rampey - Legislative Research Department

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Steve Paige - Kansas Department of Health and Environment

The meeting of the House Governmental Organization Committee was called to order at 9:05 a.m. on Tuesday, March 18 by Representative Stephen R. Cloud, Chairman. He introduced his wife, Barbara, and youngest son, Jeffrey David. He directed the Committee's attention to the latest issue of Kansas magazine, which contained an article on "Big Brutus".

The hearing began on HB 3102, relating to the duties of the Secretary of Health and Environment with respect to veterans exposed to chemical agents while serving in the armed forces.

Steve Paige, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, distributed copies of testimony to the Committee. He stated that the annual report on agent orange has outlived its usefulness. Thousands of forms are sent out each year, with a response of only one or less returned. In reality, what this bill really would be is a paper reduction bill. There was a time when there was some concern over the possible health effects of veterans exposed to toxic chemicals such as defoliants and pesticides. Now there is a good system to get the proper health care that is provided by the Veterans Administration. This makes the language that KDHE has on the books outdated. (See Attachment A)

The Chairman read from K.S.A. 73-1703, paragraph A, the sections that would be stricken. The veterans groups have responded they do nothing but file the reports. They mentioned the report is unnecessary because if veterans are exposed to a particular type of chemical they would go directly to the VA and be treated for it.

A few questions were asked of Mr. Paige. As there was no one else to speak to the bill, Chairman Cloud declared the hearing closed on HB 3102.

He announced the joint Senate and House Governmental Organization dinner would be held this evening, with a social hour at 6:30 p.m. and the dinner at 7:30 p.m.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 9:12 a.m. and received a round of applause.

A-8



KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

TESTIMONY ON H.B. 3102

PRESENTED TO: House Committee on Governmental Organization, March 18, 1986

This is the official position taken by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment on H.B. 3201.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In the late 1970's and early 1980's concern developed with regard to the possibility of certain health conditions of veterans being caused by exposure to herbicides including Agent Orange in Southeast Asia. In response, the 1982 Kansas Legislature mandated that physicians or medical facilities report to the Secretary names of veterans being treated that may have been exposed to certain chemicals including Agent Orange. The purpose of the legislative mandates was to determine the extent of health problems experienced by veterans exposed to certain chemicals in Southeast Asia. Gradually, the Veterans Administration has developed programs and services meeting the needs of veterans exposed to chemical defoliants and herbicides including Agent Orange. The registry of veterans' names maintained by the KDHE includes 23 individuals with one individual being added in 1985. Services provided by the Veterans Administration include fat tissue biopsies, genetic counseling and genetic screening to determine if any individuals have suffered physical damage as a result of exposure to chemical defoliants or herbicides. These services are believed to be adequate to meet the needs of veterans.

STRENGTHS:

H.B. 3201 repealing K.S.A. 73-1701 et seq will eliminate duplication of services and information currently available from the Veterans Administration.

WEAKNESSES:

There are no weaknesses associated with passage of H.B. 3102.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment supports passage of H.B. 3102.