

Approved April 1, 1991
Date

MINUTES OF THE Senate COMMITTEE ON Governmental Organization

The meeting was called to order by Senator Lana Oleen at
Chairperson

1:40 ~~am~~/p.m. on March 20, 1991 in room 531-N of the Capitol.

~~1~~ members ~~present~~: Senators Oleen, Bogina, Doyen, Francisco and Strick.

Committee staff present:

Julian Efird, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Fred Carman, Revisor of Statutes
Mary Allen, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Gary Stotts, Kansas Department of Transportation

The Senate Committee on Governmental Organization was called to order at 1:40 p.m. by the Chairman, Senator Lana Oleen. Chairman Oleen opened the public hearing on the sunset review of the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT).

House Bill 2080 - Sunset law, department and office of secretary of transportation continued.

Secretary of Transportation Gary Stotts appeared before the Committee to answer questions concerning the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT). After introducing his assistant, Larry Cowdin, Secretary Stotts said that he will provide members of the Committee with copies of organization charts and all other written materials which were presented to the House Committee on Governmental Organization during its recent sunset review of KDOT. He observed that following that review, the House Committee recommended a five year extension, to July 1, 1996, for the office of the Secretary and the KDOT under provisions of the Kansas Sunset Law.

The Secretary answered questions from Committee members. Chairman Oleen asked if there have been many personnel changes made at KDOT since Secretary Stotts has headed that Department. The Secretary answered that he has made no organizational changes up to this point. He observed that he currently has a vacancy in the position of Chief Counsel. He stated that he may need to make some internal adjustments, but he does not plan to make changes unless he receives some indication from the Legislature or internally in the Department that there are things which need to be adjusted. The Chairman asked the Secretary if he sees any changes or deviations at this point in the highway plan program funded previously by the Legislature. Secretary Stotts replied that an internal re-review and a study of options has begun in order for the Department to be prepared if funding for the program is reduced. He reminded the Committee of the recent legislative issue of a one-time \$30 million transfer from the State Highway Fund back to the State General Fund. A one-time transfer would not make a significant impact on the over-all program. A bill pending before the House Appropriations Committee would adjust the demand transfer of 10% back to the 6.25% which existed before the comprehensive program was passed which would amount to about a \$27 million cut in 1992 and which cut would continue in perpetuity. He estimated that over the life of the project this would amount to an approximate \$300 million cut in the program. He stated that this bill has not come out of the Appropriations Committee at this time; however, KDOT is looking at available options if there is a cut in the program. He informed the Committee that the federal law concerning its current highway program is scheduled to end in September of this year so KDOT is studying new programs being proposed at the federal level. He observed that if the President's highway program would be approved as he has presented it, Kansas would fair better than it has in the past. He pointed out, however, that there are some proposed changes in the local match ratios for some of the federal programs which would put more pressure on the local units of government in Kansas.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE Senate COMMITTEE ON Governmental Organization,
room 531-N, Statehouse, at 1:40 ~~am~~/p.m. on March 20, 1991

Chairman Oleen asked if any of the Kansas highway enhancement projects previously selected and approved are in danger of termination or change. The Secretary answered that KDOT is presently analyzing the way it originally prioritized the projects. It is also studying whether any of the scopes should be changed should a reduction in funding occur. He stated that all enhancement projects as well as major modification projects are being studied in order that the Department could be prepared should there be a cut in funding. If current funding levels are passed by the Legislature, the plan progresses as passed by the 1989 Session.

A member requested that Secretary Stotts review the issues raised by a Post Audit Study, made prior to the last sunset review of KDOT in 1983, to determine if those issues have been addressed by the Department. The Secretary indicated that he would prepare the requested information.

In answer to a question concerning what areas in the highway program might be modified if the necessity to do so arises, Secretary Stotts replied that the previous Secretary of KDOT said that if cuts were made in the highway program they would be in the area of system enhancement. Secretary Stotts observed that he is not satisfied that this is the only option for there is much more money allocated for major modification. He pointed out that the basic function of KDOT is, first of all, the maintenance and safety of the existing highway system.

A member requested information concerning whether computerization of KDOT has resulted in a reduction in the number of employees in those areas computerized. Secretary Stotts replied that he will try to provide that information. The Chairman requested information concerning how many persons are employed in the various KDOT facilities in the state. The Secretary was also requested to bring to the Committee's attention any incongruities between KDOT's organizational chart and its statutory authority.

Senator Bogina moved that the minutes of the March 11, 1991, meeting of the Committee be approved. Senator Strick seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The Chairman informed the Committee that a letter has been drafted to the Director of Vehicles urging increased cooperation between his office and the Dealer Review Board. Members of the Committee will receive copies of this letter.

Chairman Oleen called the attention of the Committee to HB 2214 which was heard by the Committee at a previous meeting.

House Bill 2214 - Chairperson of House committee on interstate cooperation.

A member of the Committee commented that the reason the leadership was previously involved in the Interstate Cooperation Committee was that a great deal of funding goes into the Council of State Governments. He observed that a few years ago, the Senate made an exception to this and voted to allow the President of the Senate to designate someone to serve as the Chairperson in his place. It was the consensus of the Committee not to take action on HB 2214 at this time.

Senate Bill 114 - Kansas sunset law; continue in existence the state corporation commission.

Chairman Oleen appointed Senator Francisco and Senator Moran to serve with her as a sub-committee on SB 114. The subcommittee will meet Thursday, March 21, at 1:30 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned by the Chairman at 2:10 p.m.

