

Approved 2-20-92

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS.

The meeting was called to order by Sen. Edward F. Reilly, Jr. at 11:00 a.m. on February 10, 1992 in Room 254-E of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Senators Daniels and Ehrlich were excused

Committee staff present:

Mary Galligan, Legislative Research Department
Mary Torrence, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Jeanne Eudaley, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Sen. Ross Doyen
Gene Gleason, Past President, Kansas Square Dance Assoc.

Others attending: See attached list

Senator Reilly called the meeting to order and introduced Senator Ross Doyen, sponsor of SB 554. Senator Doyen thanked the committee for scheduling this hearing on Monday, and introduced Gene Gleason, past president of Kansas Square Dance Association and chairman of the KSDA Legislative Committee.

Mr. Gleason presented history and factual information on SB 554 (Attachment 1) to the committee and also introduced members of several square dance clubs from across the state.

Senator Reilly asked Mr. Gleason if there were any other states designating the square dance as the state folk dance, and Mr. Gleason responded that 15 to 16 states have made that designation.

Senator Reilly announced that tomorrow the committee will discuss bills for introduction and consider bills previously heard by the committee.

The meeting adjourned at 11:25.

Gene Gleason, PRES.
(Attach.)

SENATE BILL No. 554

You can trace some type of folk dancing back to the fifteen and sixteen hundreds. Square Dancing was brought to America in the mid 1600's and is a form of folk dancing from Poland, Ireland, Germany, Russia, Austria and other foreign countries. It was brought to Kansas by the pioneers when they came west in wagon trains. Wherever there was a fiddle and a banjo, there were people gathered to square dance. They used this as a way to forget their problems from living on the frontier - they would also clean out a barn and enjoy "barn dancing." They would ride their horses and drive their buggies and come from miles around to enjoy an evening of square dancing. It became a tradition among the Kansas pioneers. It is still a tradition in Kansas to enjoy an evening of square dancing. Other forms of folk dancing enjoyed at a square dance are contra, line, and clogging.

We have over 108 member clubs in Kansas that belong to the Kansas Square Dance Association with over 6000 dancers belonging to these clubs. We also have the South Central Federation in the Wichita area and the Kansas City Federation, with many more dancers belonging to these organizations. We have dancers from 8 to 80 years old. Our Members include doctors, bankers, teachers, lawyers, farmers, construction and factory workers, law enforcement people, city, county and state employees. Square dancing is a good form of relaxation and exercise. Square dancing is a form of aerobics and equivalent to over five miles of walking in a three hour square dance.

Clubs have special dances during the year and income from those dances are donated to different charities such as the heart association, Jerry's Kids, muscular dystrophy and many others.

Square dancing, as we know it today, is enjoyed in many countries around the world, and as it is an American folk dance, all calling is done in English. The people in the different countries may not be able to speak or understand english, but they can square dance to english speaking callers.

13 states have already passed this bill and another 14 states have legislation to enact the bill.

Square dancers are known to be some of the friendliest people on earth - You are always welcome at any club you visit.

As spokesperson for the square dancers of Kansas, we encourage you to pass Bill 554 and make square dancing the state folk dance of Kansas. We would like to invite all of you to Salina the 5th and 6th of June for our state convention which is held at the bi-centennial center there. You will certainly witness "friendship in action."

Att. 1
1