

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION AND ELECTIONS.

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Rep. Carol Dawson, at approximately 9:00 a.m. on March 12, 1996 in Room 521-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Rep. Dee Yoh, Excused

Committee staff present: Dennis Hodgins, Legislative Research Department
Carolyn Rampey, Legislative Research Department
Jim Wilson, Revisor of Statutes
Donna Lutjohann, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Chuck Yunker, Adjutant, Kansas American Legion
Fred Dumas, Vets Service Rep., American Legion

Others attending: See attached list

Hearing on:

SB 582-Qualifications of veterans service representatives employed by Commission of Veteran Affairs

Madam Chairman Dawson requested a briefing on the bill by Carolyn Rampey. She explained the intent of the bill is to assist veterans when applying for disability and that this bill places current practices in the statutes.

Chuck Yunker was recognized by the Chair as a proponent of the bill. He testified that a veteran feels more comfortable confiding in another veteran when requesting assistance. See Attachment 1.

Fred Dumas was recognized by the Chair as a proponent of the bill. He testified as a worker in the field, the veterans that come to his office for assistance need to be able to bond with the person they see in order to feel at ease. See Attachment 2.

The hearing on SB 582 was closed.

Madam Chairman Dawson requested the Committee take **action on SB 582**. Rep. Dillon made the motion to recommend favorable passage of SB 582 and because it was of a non-controversial nature, be placed on the consent calendar. It was seconded by Rep. Wells. The motion carried.

Continue discussion on:

HB 3000-Prescribing certain standards governing ethics and conduct for public officers and employees

Committee discussion began with Section 30 of the balloon that the Committee had been reviewing.

Rep. O'Connor made a motion to adopt the balloon for the Committee to work. It was seconded by Rep. Nichols.

Rep. Nichols made a substitute motion to adopt the balloon that he then made available to the Committee at that time and recommended favorable passage to the Committee of the Whole. It was seconded by Rep. Gilmore. Committee discussion took place. Clarification of the motion was requested and made. Rep. Nichols again stated that the motion was to adopt the balloon that he had made available to the Committee and he began briefly explaining changes between the previous balloon that the Committee discussed and recommended favorable passage to the House floor for full debate. Rep. Nichols's motion failed.

Rep. Nichols made a substitute motion to recommend favorable passage of the original balloon that the Committee had based previous discussion on with recommendations for additional changes. Rep. Nichols made available to the Committee those recommended changes. As Rep. Nichols was explaining the recommended changes, the Chair terminated the explanation and called the

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION AND ELECTIONS, ROOM 521-S Statehouse at 9:00 a.m. on March 12, 1996.

Committee's attention to the minutes from February 22, February 23-noon meeting, March 5 and 6th, 1996. Rep. Cox made a motion to approve the minutes. It was seconded by Rep. Benlon. The motion carried.

The Madam Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:47 a.m. and announced that the next meeting would be March 13, 1996, at 9:00 a.m. at the Capitol in Room 521-S.

GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE GUEST LIST

DATE: March 12, 1996

NAME	REPRESENTING
KEITH R LANDIS	CARLSON SCIENCE COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATION FOR KANSAS
Oran Burnett	USD 501 #
Richard T. Vogt	U.W.S.F.
Ean Homish	KS Insurance Dept.
Mike Sietkes	League of KS Municipalities
George Ross	State Treasurer's Office
Fancy Daniels	KS Dept of Transportation
Corine Stewart	KS AFL - CIO
Jim Youally	USD # 572
Karen Bueck	ABP
_____	CAP
Greg Breenfield	Tutor
John Marshall	Harris News Service
Charles M Yunker	KS American Legion
Fred Purnce	" " "

Testimony Presented
House Governmental Organizations and Elections Committee
Regarding Senate Bill 582
by Charles M. Yunker, Adjutant
The American Legion Department of Kansas

The single most important reason The American Legion was founded was to insure that veterans - primarily disabled, elderly and needy veterans - were provided care when necessary and in a manner befitting those who defended this nation in time of peril, or who carried out our government's policies through their service in the armed forces.

With few exceptions, those veterans who seek assistance from the VA are the disabled, the elderly, and the needy. And when a veteran finds themselves in need of VA assistance they feel more comfortable confiding in a fellow veteran. I would, with your permission, like to introduce Fred Dumas a Veterans Service Representative with The American Legion who can better relate to you the importance of veterans being placed in positions to serve other veterans when filing for their earned VA benefits.

Testimony Presented
House Governmental Organizations and Elections Committee
Regarding Senate Bill 582
by Fred Dumas, Veterans Service Representative
The American Legion Department of Kansas

My experience as a Veteran Service Representative in assisting veterans with filing claims for disabilities incurred in or aggravated by military service with the Dept. of Veterans Affairs, has touched the lives of veterans of WWI, WWII, the Korean Conflict, Vietnam and the Persian Gulf.

It seems that the "military bond" or comradeship never ends, as military veterans share a special kind of "growing-up" together during our middle or late adolescence. This "bond" continues forever. You can look in our local newspaper, American Legion, VFW, DAV and various other organization's magazines and find listings of "outfits", ships and dates for reunions for former members of the Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, Merchant Marines and Army-Air Corps.

This pride and bonding lives today and when a veteran walks into my office he/she knows that another veteran understands what he/she is getting at or talking about. Further they want to feel that he or she is getting representation from a veterans advocate. Sometimes they come straight out and ask if I'm a veteran. At times they come in already upset and say "that's not what they promised when I went to serve my country", and if I don't tell them what they want to hear they get up from their chair and say "You're no damn veteran!" These situations occur in all Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs Offices whether in a VA Medical Center or Field Office which are located throughout the state.

At times they preface an incident or situation with "you know", "when we", or "remember how it was". This I feel is their way of being at ease with another veteran to talk about certain things that happened to them while in service. Some of which are of a very personal and private nature. When a veteran comes into my office and shares horrible things that make them cry, or good things like crying at parades in honor of veterans or just seeing the Flag, I know they know they're talking to another veteran.

Therefore I urge your vote in favor of Senate Bill 582.