

Approved: January 27, 1999
Date

MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE ON FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Senator Lana Oleen at 11:00 a.m. on January 21, 1999 in Room 254-E of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Senator Vratil, excused

Committee staff present: Mary Galligan, Legislative Research Department
Theresa Kiernan, Revisors of Statutes
Judy Glasgow, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Alex Kotoyantz, Kansas Academy of Sciences
Jean Duncan, Kansas Real Estate Commission
William V. Minner, Kansas Human Rights Commission
Mike Hollar, Kansas Human Rights Commission
Wayne White, Kansas Legal Services
Caryl Hines, Kansas Human Rights Commission
Jack Hawn, KPERS

Others attending: See Attached list

Chairman Oleen recognized Alex Kotoyantz, representing the Kansas Academy of Sciences. Mr. Kotoyantz requested the introduction of a bill that would allow the Kansas Academy of Sciences tax exempt status in the amount of \$2500.00. Chairman Oleen noted that this particular organization was not specifically identified nor included in the tax exempt bill past last year. Senator Gooch moved for the introduction of the bill. The motion was seconded by Senator Harrington, Motion carried.

Chairman Oleen recognized Jean Duncan, Director of the Kansas Real Estate Commission. Mrs. Duncan requested the introduction of a bill that would increase fees imposed by the Kansas Real Estate Commission. Senator Becker moved for the introduction of the bill. The motion was seconded by Senator Vidricksen. Motion carried.

Senator Oleen introduced William Minner, Executive Director of the Kansas Human Rights Commission (KHRC).

Mr. Minner presented an overview of the KHRC for the last five years. The commission was directed by the legislature to correct past deficiencies and improve the productivity and effectiveness. In 1995 there was a backlog of cases awaiting investigation by the KHRC of 2,768 and the average case processing delay was approximately 22-24 months. As of June 1998 there were 943 open pending complaints and the average processing time was 7.6 months. Mr. Minner presented a break down of the claims filed as of FY 1998; 25.9% of all claims filed represented complaints on sex; 21.32% of claims filed represented claims on race; 14.46% represented complaints on age; 16.50% represented complaints filed disability; 14.50% of claims represented complaints on retaliation and 8.3% represented other complaints. The turn around of the KHRC was accomplished without the request of additional moneys or people. Mr. Minner stated that it was because of the charge directed at the commission to correct past deficiencies. The Commission is now the top rated Human Rights Commission in the Nation, and it received the Overall Human Rights Award in 1998.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS, Room 254-E, Statehouse, at 11:00 a.m. on January 21, 1999.

Mike Hollar, Budget Director of KHRC addressed the committee concerning the budget and stated that the budget submitted for this session has ask for less money and for 2 less authorized persons because of the agency's turnaround. Mr. Hollar stated there were over 7500 inquiries of the commission last year and of that number 1,221 cases were filed. An intake department goes over all inquiries and eliminates those that are outside the states jurisdiction, not timely filed or obviously do not merit a case. Mr. Hollar stated that because of the partnership with the Kansas Bar Foundation and Southwestern Bell, the funds were available for the third party mediation program.

Wayne White, Kansas Legal Services (KLA), stated that it has been a pleasure to be in association with the Kansas Human Rights Commission. In 1995 The KLA was contacted to be a part of the solution to turn the agency around. The pilot project was started in 1996 and it is now in the third full year. He explained that the actual cost per settlement went down in 1998. Last year there were 991 referrals out of 1221 cases filed. Out of the 991 referrals, 238 mediations were pleaded. One Hundred seventeen settlements were reached, this is a 49% settlement rate.

Senator Harrington moved that a letter be sent from the committee to Southwestern Bell, the Kansas Legal Services and the Kansas Bar Foundation commending and encouraging them in their support of this program. Senator Becker Seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Caryl Hines, KHRC, appeared before the committee and displayed the award presented to William V. Minner from the National Association of Human Rights Workers.

Mr. Minner and Mr. Hollar answered questions from the committee regarding the commission and its overall operation. Senator Jones commended Chairman Oleen for her work with the Human Rights Commission in recent years.

Chairman Oleen recognized Jack Hawn, Deputy Executive Secretary of KPERS, who had been asked to brief the committee on KPERS. Mr. Hawn stated that he testified before the Legislative Compensation Commission regarding of the continuation of the annualization of salaries and expenses. After a lengthy discussion, the Commission voted to adopt its original recommendation in regard to the treatment of salaries and expense allowances for retirement purposes. Mr. Hawn noted that in 1990 it was determined by the Legislative Council that the legislature's contracts ran from term to term. Since 1991 legislators have accrued benefits at the same rate as all other KPERS employees.

Senator Oleen noted that two documents had been provided to the Committee from questions raised at the last meeting. The first pertains to leadership salaries and the history of those figures. The other one deals with proposals studied by the legislative budget committee a number of years ago..

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m. The next meeting of the committee is scheduled for January 25, 1999.

SENATE FEDERAL & STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
GUEST LIST

DATE: Jan 21, 1999

NAME	REPRESENTING
Alex A. Kobyanetz	Kansas Academy of Sciences
Mike Holler	Human Rights Comm.
BARBARA GIRARD	KANSAS HUMAN RIGHTS COMM.
Caryl Hines	KS Human Rights Comm.
Bill Minner	KS. Human Rights Comm.
Brandon Myers	" " " "
Jack Hawn	KPFRS
Wayne White	KS Legal Services
Martha L. Cooper	KACHA
Bob Anderson	Casey's General Stores
Rebecca	KRLDA + KCA
Karen France	KS Assn of REALTORS
Jimmie Cannon	KRG