

House Select Committee on Tobacco Settlement Funds

March 19, 1999

Room 527-S. Statehouse

(Revised to include action on H.B. 2568)

Members Present

Representative David Adkins, Chairperson
Representative Marti Crow
Representative Phyllis Gilmore
Representative Henry Helgerson
Representative Ed McKechnie
Representative Melvin Neufeld
Representative Rocky Nichols
Representative Shari Weber

Note: The minutes of the March 18 meeting have been corrected to show that Representative Marti Crow attended the meeting.

Staff Present

Alan Conroy, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Carolyn Rampey, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Jim Wilson, Office of the Revisor of Statutes

Model Tobacco Bill

The Committee approved a motion to introduce H.B. 2568, which concerns payment of money into escrow by tobacco manufacturers who are not party to the tobacco settlement.

Presentation by Committee Members

Representatives Helgerson, McKechnie, and Nichols reviewed a packet of material they had prepared explaining features of H.B. 2558. (The material is available in the Kansas Legislative Research Department.)

The legislators explained that the purpose of H.B. 2558 is to establish a framework to ensure that payments from the tobacco settlement are dedicated to specific purposes relating to children. They said their hope is that a constituency will develop, both within state government and among advocacy groups and the general public, for programs and services to be funded from tobacco money. The material they reviewed included an explanation of H.B. 2558 prepared by the Office of the Revisor of Statutes, statements of both general and specific principles embodied

in the bill, and a table showing potential earnings and expenditures of tobacco money for the fiscal years 2000 through 2023.

In discussion following the presentation, the following points or items for consideration were raised:

- Questions were raised about the proposed composition of the Kansas Children's Authority. Under the bill, the Authority would be composed of 11 members who are children's advocates, members of organizations with experience in programs that benefit children, or other individuals who have experience with children's programs and services. The observation was made that members would be representing groups that most likely would be competing for money, which could set the stage for turf fights among Authority members. The possibility of changing the bill to add members who would not be competing for tobacco funding was suggested and the staff was asked to provide information on the composition of other boards and authorities that oversee expenditures from specific funds.
- Committee members discussed the sorts of programs and projects tobacco money should support. Mention was made, for example, of ensuring that most of the money could be used for community projects or for ensuring that the money could not be used to replace existing funding for programs and services.
- Support was expressed for building more flexibility into how tobacco money can be invested and spent than normally is the case with state funds. One purpose of the flexibility would be to allow multi-year projects to be funded.