

Approved: March 29, 2000
Date

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Representative Tony Powell at 1:30 p.m. on March 13, 2000 in Room 313-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Representative Rehorn, excused
Representative Henderson, excused
Representative Mayans, excused

Committee staff present: Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes
Russell Mills, Legislative Research
Mary Galligan, Legislative Research
Winnie Crapson, Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Representative Garner

Others attending: See attached list.

Chairman Powell opened the meeting.

Without objection a companion House bill will be introduced as requested by Chairman Powell similar to SB 607, Interlocal agreements with Native American Indian Tribes, which was introduced in the Senate by the Joint Committee on State-Tribal Relations. [HB 3033, introduced March 14]

The hearing was opened on HB 2970, Creating the Kansas civil rights history project task force.

Representative Garner introduced the bill explaining that it would establish the Kansas Civil Rights History Project (Attachment #1). He pointed out that Kansas has a very rich civil rights history, playing a significant role in civil rights and race relations in our nation's development and that we need to acquire a better understanding of this role and proudly promote it through tourism and historic preservation.

In response to questions Representative Garner stated it was hoped the bill would generate interest among universities and others interested in providing curriculum for study of the civil rights history of Kansas. Developing historic sites in addition to Monroe School would promote heritage tourism in Kansas.

Representative Powell noted the fiscal note was \$24,668 from the General Fund for the meeting of the committee in the interim to prepare recommendations for the 2001 Legislative Session.

Meeting was closed on HB 2970.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m. Next scheduled meeting is March 14.

STATE OF KANSAS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

TOPEKA ADDRESS

STATE CAPITOL, ROOM 327-S
TOPEKA, KANSAS 66612-1504
(785) 296-7630

REPRESENTATIVE, ELEVENTH DISTRICT

COFFEYVILLE ADDRESS

601 EAST 12TH, P.O. BOX 538
COFFEYVILLE, KS 67337
(316) 251-1900 (OFFICE)
(316) 251-1864 (HOME)



JIM GARNER
HOUSE DEMOCRATIC LEADER

March 13, 2000

HOUSE FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2970

Mr. Chairman and Member of the Committee:

Thank you for having a hearing on HB 2970 and for allowing me the opportunity to testify in support of this bill. This bill would establish the Kansas Civil Rights History Project.

Kansas has a very rich civil rights history but I am afraid we hide it and do a very poor job of understanding and promoting this history. Kansas has played a significant role in civil rights and race relations in our nation's development. Sometimes in a positive way and other times in a negative way. We need to acquire a better understanding of this role and ensure that Kansans have an awareness and grounding based on this history. Civil Rights history is also something we should proudly promote through tourism and historic preservation.

The following is just a partial listing of important events in Kansas concerning the story of the civil rights movement:

- ★ Statehood - whether Kansas would be a free state or a slave state
- ★ The role of Kansas in the underground railroad in Kansas City, Kansas
- ★ The treatment of Native Americans
- ★ Women's suffrage and Kansas' earlier election of women to political office
- ★ The rise of Ku Klux Klan activity in the 1920's
- ★ The desegregation of public schools through Brown vs. The Topeka Board of Education

This is just a sampling of the many significant events in Kansas history that are in need of greater awareness, understanding and promotion.

HB 2970 would establish a task force appointed by different interests (Legislative Leadership, the Governor, the State Historical Society and the Board of Regents). The task force would make recommendations to the legislature and the governor for promoting the history of civil

House Fed. &
State Affairs

Date 3/13/00

Attachment No. 1

Page 1 of 2

House Federal and State Affairs Committee
Testimony on HB 2970
Page two

rights in Kansas. Their charge would include enhancing the teaching of civil rights history in our schools; preserving historic sites relevant to our civil rights history; and promoting tourism based on our state's civil rights history.

Heritage tourism is a growing trend in this country. Many other states are already well down the path of developing heritage tourism. The Missouri Division of Tourism is actively working to market its African-American and Hispanic history and culture.

We are not doing all we can to properly teach, promote and preserve our history concerning civil rights. This bill is simply the first step of identifying what is our history in a coordinated and unified manner. Let's not squander this rich and stimulating history that we share as Kansans.

I urge the committee to give favorable support for HB 2970. I would be glad to stand for questions.

House Fed. &
State Affairs
Date 3/13/00
Attachment No. 1
Page 2 of 2