

MINUTES OF THE SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Les Donovan at 8:30 a.m. on February 7, 2001 in Room 245-N of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Senator Pugh

Committee staff present: Hank Avila, Legislative Research Department
Bruce Kinzie, Revisor of Statutes
Marian F. Holeman, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Sheila Walker, DMV, KDOR
Michael Byington, Envision

Others attending: See attached list

SB 55: Re drivers' licenses; concerning medical & vision requirements

Sheila Walker, Director of Vehicles, Kansas Department of Revenue appeared in support of **SB 55**. The purpose of this Bill is to more adequately define medical and vision standards required to hold a Kansas driver's license. Ms. Walker wishes to recognize new technology and a wide variety of vision-enhancing lenses now available to the visually impaired. The Bill also addresses medical requirements relating to neurological impairments (Attachment 1). She provided historical information regarding the current legislation dealing with these issues and advised this proposed legislation is a "clean up" measure.

Michael Byington, Director Envision Governmental Affairs Office, proposed additional "clean up" language be added to **SB 55**. This language relates to removing extra testing requirement when a license renewal applicant has an observed disability (Attachment 2).

Members questioned Mr. Byington re stages of deterioration, differentiation between birth defects, later life onsets of disabilities, etc. He advised that those who have been born with disabilities, as a rule receive more training in utilization of technology than those with late life onset and birth disabilities usually remain stable over longer periods of time. Staff Revisor advised language needs to be broadened if it is to be expanded to all disabilities.

The idea was expressed that it is the responsibility of this Committee to decide whether or not it is better for us as a state to eliminate the additional driver's test for the few who would be inconvenienced by it, and thus possibly grant licenses to people who should not be driving; or to err on the side of public safety and require such testing. We do not wish to add burdens to the disabled, but we must do all possible to provide for public safety. Ms. Walker agreed this is a public safety issue. She stated her Division follows ADA guidelines which they have relied on for some years that supports appropriate testing. By current statute, visual acuity must be at least 20/60 or better in one eye- with or without corrective lenses- anything worse automatically requires a driving test.

It was requested that Staff obtain some representative case law citations on this issue. It was also suggested that the Division of Vehicles should obtain the most recent ADA guidelines. Hearing closed on **SB 55**. It will be scheduled for possible final action at a later date.

Approval of minutes

Senator Salmans moved to approve minutes of the February 6, 2001 meeting. Senator Schodorf seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 8, 2001.