

M I N U T E S
STUDIES COMMITTEE
OF THE
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

September 10, 1980

The meeting of the Studies Committee was called to order in Committee Room 22 of the State House at 11:20 a.m. on September 10, 1980 by Senator Calvin O. Hultman, Co-chairperson. The following members were present in addition to Co-chairperson Hultman:

Senator C. Joseph Coleman
Senator Richard R. Ramsey
Senator Ray Taylor
Representative Donald D. Avenson
Representative Norman Jessee

Also present were Serge H. Garrison and Burnette E. Koebernick of the Legislative Service Bureau and other interested persons.

Senator Coleman moved that the minutes of the July 15, 1980 meeting of the Studies Committee be approved as submitted. The motion was adopted on a voice vote.

Co-chairperson Hultman noted that the primary purpose of the meeting is to consider a study proposal submitted by Representative Chiodo to the Legislative Council at its meeting on August 13, 1980. Representative Chiodo proposed that the Legislative Council approve a study during the 1980 interim of public utilities and utility rate increases.

Representative Avenson suggested that since Representative Chiodo is present that he be permitted to address the Studies Committee regarding the proposed study.

Representative Chiodo noted that Iowa Power & Light Company has recently requested a 31 percent increase in its rates and that this increase is in addition to the 19 percent increase requested in 1978 upon which the Iowa State Commerce Commission has not acted. He noted that he has received a number of calls from irate citizens and that local governments and various citizen groups are organizing to fight the latest proposed increase. Representative Chiodo stated that the General Assembly must look at this problem and have some recommendations which can be developed during this study prepared for consideration by the next session of the General Assembly. He suggested that the study include the following three areas:

1. A study of the extended period of time required by the Iowa State Commerce Commission to evaluate and act upon requests for rate increases.

2. A proposal to allow the Iowa State Commerce Commission to set interim rates while a final rate is being negotiated, rather than allowing the public utility to collect the rate increase request under bond.

3. A proposal to grant the Iowa State Commerce Commission the authority to refund excess profits of public utilities to its customers.

Representative Avenson moved that the Studies Committee recommend to the Legislative Council that an interim study of public utilities and utility rate increases be approved with the study of those three areas of concern enumerated by Representative Chiodo.

Senator Ramsey indicated that he has discussed the subject with Senator Holden, Chairperson of the Senate Standing Committee on Commerce. Senator Holden has indicated that the Standing Committees on Commerce of the House and Senate can hold one meeting of the Standing Committees without the approval of the Legislative Council and review the subject matter during that meeting. If it is determined that additional study is required and warranted during the interim, the respective Standing Committees on Commerce may request additional meetings for the study from the Legislative Council.

Senator Ramsey moved a substitute motion that the respective Standing Committees on Commerce be directed to use the statutory meeting day authorized by law to review the area of public utilities and utility rate increases, that the meeting be held prior to the October meeting of the Legislative Council and the Studies Committee, and that the recommendations of the respective Standing Committees on Commerce regarding subsequent action necessary during the 1980 interim be submitted to the Studies Committee and Legislative Council at their respective meetings in October.

Representative Avenson noted that he has no objection to the substitute motion so long as there is a deadline for some action on the proposed study. The substitute motion by Senator Ramsey was unanimously adopted on a voice vote.

Co-chairperson Hultman referred the members of the Studies Committee to a letter from the Co-chairpersons of the Grain Elevator and Grain Grading Subcommittee which is requesting two additional meeting days for the Subcommittee. A copy of the letter is on file in the offices of the Legislative Service Bureau. Senator Coleman moved that the request for two additional meeting days be approved. Representative Avenson suggested that due to the amount of interest in the subject matter throughout the state, the Subcommittee ought to be encouraged to hold one of those meetings

outside of Des Moines for the purpose of receiving input from concerned citizens. Co-chairperson Hultman noted that the suggestion will be brought to the attention of the Subcommittee Co-chairpersons. The motion to approve two additional meeting days for the Grain Elevator and Grain Grading Subcommittee was adopted on a voice vote.

Co-chairperson Hultman noted that the Co-chairpersons of the Funeral Directors Subcommittee has submitted a written request for one additional meeting. A copy of the letter is on file in the offices of the Legislative Service Bureau. Senator Coleman moved that the one additional meeting day be approved. The motion was adopted on a voice vote.

Co-chairperson Hultman noted that Senator Hutchins has submitted a request in writing that the Studies Committee and the Legislative Council disband the Fair Play Subcommittee. A copy of the letter is on file in the offices of the Legislative Service Bureau. Following a brief discussion by the members of the Studies Committee, it was agreed that the recommendation that the Fair Play Study be deleted from the list of 1980 interim studies be referred, without recommendation, to the Legislative Council for its consideration.

There being no further business, the meeting of the Studies Committee was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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