

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

July 14, 1976

The Studies Committee was reconvened by Co-Chairperson Senator Kinley in the Speaker's Office, State House, Des Moines, at 10:25 a.m. Wednesday, July 14, 1976. Members present in addition to Co-Chairperson Kinley were Representative Fitzgerald, Co-Chairperson, Senators Hill and Van Gilst, Speaker Cochran and Representatives Hargrave, Millen and Varley. Others present included Senators Minnette Doderer and Steve Sovern, Representative Delwyn Stromer, Senior Research Analyst Phil Burks of the Legislative Service Bureau, and representatives of the news media and other interested persons.

Co-Chairperson Kinley noted that on the previous day the Studies Committee had neglected to set any specific number of authorized meetings for the two joint interim subcommittees of standing committees which had been recommended for approval by the Legislative Council. On his suggestion, the Studies Committee agreed that each of these joint subcommittees should initially be authorized three meetings.

Co-Chairperson Kinley then recognized Senator Sovern, who distributed copies of a document on his legislative letterhead entitled "Proposal to the Legislative Council." A copy of the document is attached to and by this reference made a part of these minutes.

Senator Sovern explained that the proposal relates to establishment of a study committee to generate and study alternatives regarding reforms of the legislative process and make recommendations to the next General Assembly. He added that the reaction to his recent resignation from the Senate and the reasons he had stated for that resignation has been quite strong. That, and various comments he has heard during his two-year tenure from legislators with longer service than his own, have led him to conclude that the time is right for a thorough study of the legislative process in Iowa with a view to expediting it and thereby shortening sessions so that persons who must support themselves with other jobs or through businesses of their own may better serve in the General Assembly.

In the discussion which followed, Studies Committee members expressed no opposition to the objective of the study proposed by Senator Sovern. Senator Hill suggested that the study be assigned to the standing Committee on Rules or Rules and Administration. Representative Varley suggested that it might be appropriate to add this charge to the jurisdiction of the proposed study committee on legislative oversight capabilities, which the

Studies Committee had recommended pursuant to H.C.R. 162. Representative Millen commented that the recommended joint interim subcommittee on legislative staff and staff compensation could also be assigned the proposed study, although that would probably necessitate increasing the number of members on that subcommittee. Co-Chairperson Kinley expressed the view that the proposed study is of sufficient magnitude and importance to merit its being conducted by a separate special interim study committee of fairly substantial size.

After some additional discussion, Representative Fitzgerald moved that the Studies Committee recommend to the Council the establishment of a special interim study committee on the legislative process, to consist of ten members drawn from the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration and the House Committee on Rules.

Speaker Cochran moved to amend Representative Fitzgerald's motion to provide that the study committee be composed of 14 members, rather than ten. The amendment and then the amended motion were passed by unanimous voice votes.

Co-Chairperson Kinley next recognized Senator Doderer, who stated that she had served as chairperson of the Juvenile Justice Study Committee which functioned during the 1975 legislative interim and that it has been her assumption that the Study Committee would continue its work during the current interim. She noted that this study is not among those recommended to the Council for approval at its meeting on the present date, and asserted that failure to continue it would make all of the work done during the 1975 interim a waste of time. She explained that the bill developed by the Study Committee needs to be reviewed and perfected. She also commented that if this Study Committee is continued, it would be desirable to replace two members, Senator Nolin and Representative Spradling, who are not seeking re-election.

Co-Chairperson Kinley stated that the Studies Committee expects to do some checking on several proposals to continue studies from the previous interim prior to the Council's August meeting. Representative Fitzgerald said it is his understanding that Representative Tom Higgins, who was Vice Chairperson of the Juvenile Justice Study Committee last year, also favors continuation of the legislative effort in this area but not necessarily in the format of a special interim study committee. Senator Doderer remarked that she has made several attempts to contact Representative Higgins about this matter in recent weeks, but without success.

Senator Hill pointed out that continuation of the Penal and Correctional Systems Study Committee has also been requested, and suggested that this study and the Juvenile Justice study might be combined. Senator Doderer responded that the two areas had both originally been under the jurisdiction of a single study committee, and that they had been separated because there is always some

pressing problem in the corrections area which causes the juvenile justice matter to be side-tracked. She added that if the two matters are again combined, the same result will occur.

Representative Varley moved that the Studies Committee recommend to the Legislative Council continuation of the Juvenile Justice Study Committee for the 1976 legislative interim. He commented he had expected the Studies Committee to come back to this particular matter before the end of its meeting on the previous day. He added that a decision now on this study would make it easier for the standing committee chairpersons to evaluate other proposed interim studies. Representative Fitzgerald said he had asked at the previous day's meeting for more time so that he could contact Representative Higgins and clarify his desires in the matter.

In the following discussion, Senator Van Gilst supported Representative Varley's motion while Senator Hill urged that no action be taken until August. Speaker Cochran and Representative Hargrave said that if the Juvenile Justice Study Committee is to be continued, the Penal and Correctional Systems Study Committee should also be continued. Co-Chairperson Kinley said he is inclined to agree, but would support a deferral if Representative Fitzgerald wishes to confer with Representative Higgins before a decision is made.

Senator Van Gilst then asked unanimous consent that action on Representative Varley's motion be deferred until the Studies Committee's August meeting. Representative Varley objected. Senator Van Gilst moved that action be so deferred, and the motion was adopted by voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

PHIL BURKS
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