

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

July 6, 1979

The Studies Committee of the Legislative Council was called to order at 11:10 a.m. on Friday, July 6, 1979 in Senate Committee Room 22 of the State House in Des Moines. Committee members present for the meeting were:

Senator Calvin O. Hultman, Co-chairperson
Speaker of the House Floyd H. Millen
Senator C. Joseph Coleman
Senator Lowell Junkins
Senator Richard Ramsey
Senator Ray Taylor
Representative Donald Avenson
Representative John Clark
Representative Norman Jesse

Other persons attending the meeting included Representative Betty Jean Clark, Bernie Koebernick and Phil Burks of the Legislative Service Bureau, and numerous other legislative staffers and interested persons.

Senator Hultman stated that the Studies Committee had received requests for approval of three more interim studies, in addition to those which had been approved by the Legislative Council at its June 12, 1979 meeting. He recognized Representative Betty Jean Clark to present the first of these requests.

Representative Betty Jean Clark stated that she feels there is a genuine need at this time for development of a comprehensive statement of legislative goals regarding the institution of the family in Iowa, as proposed by House Concurrent Resolution 43 of the 1979 Session. She noted that 1979 has been designated the International Year of the Child, and therefore such a study would be particularly appropriate at this time.

Representative Betty Jean Clark continued that in the past laws have often been premised on the assumption that when society becomes aware that a child is experiencing serious difficulties because of a troubled family situation, the most appropriate way to begin correcting the situation is to remove the child from that family. However, she stated that in recent years much expertise has been developed toward strengthening troubled families as opposed to removing children from these family situations. She said that the basic idea of the study proposed by HCR 43 is to develop an overall policy goal for the state, against which proposed legislation could be evaluated. She expressed concern about the long-range future of the family in Iowa, although she acknowledged

that Iowa is in a better situation in this regard than are many other states.

Speaker Millen expressed concern, not about the merits of the study requested by HCR 43, but about the overall interim workload of the General Assembly. He stated that the initial goal of the Studies Committee had been to establish approximately sixteen interim studies, but that twenty such studies have already been approved. He related the efforts by Representative Avenson and himself to balance the workloads of individual House members, and to utilize all of the members on interim committees. He concluded by stating that he is opposed to approving any more interim legislative studies, regardless of the merit of the proposals involved.

Representative Avenson inquired about the total number of meeting days to be recommended for visitation committees under the jurisdiction of the Legislative Fiscal Committee. Senator Hultman replied that he did not yet know what the Legislative Fiscal Committee would recommend to the Legislative Council. In response to a further specific question from Representative Avenson, Senator Hultman said he anticipates that the Council will approve an interim study in the corrections area.

Senator Ramsey asked Representative Betty Jean Clark whether the immediate objective of the study proposed by HCR 43 would be a bill to be introduced in the 1980 Session of the General Assembly. She replied that she is uncertain as to the form in which the policy this interim subcommittee would be asked to formulate would be expressed. She noted that the ad hoc way in which particular bills affecting the family structure have been developed in the past has contributed to the problem, which she hopes the proposed study would help to overcome. She stated she realizes that the procedure she is proposing is a departure from previous practice with respect to legislative interim studies.

Representative John Clark asked whether Representative Betty Jean Clark can identify any particular statutory problems which the proposed interim subcommittee should review. Representative Betty Jean Clark replied that she is not certain whether there are any particular changes in current statutes that the proposed interim study should consider, adding that conclusions about the need for changes in particular statutes might depend on the overall goals developed by the interim study.

Speaker Millen moved that the request for approval of an interim study pursuant to HCR 43 be rejected. The motion was adopted by a unanimous voice vote.

Senator Hultman noted the receipt of a request from Representatives Virginia Poffenberger and Larry Kirkslager for a study of the need for changes in statutes governing the operation

of the vehicles commonly referred to as mopeds. Speaker Millen commented that he favors some changes in laws governing these vehicles, but expressed belief that the needed changes can be fairly readily identified and there is no need for an interim study of the matter.

Representative Avenson said he concurs with Speaker Millen's views regarding a moped study per se, but expressed belief that there is a need for a broader study of problems in the transportation area than is likely to be undertaken by the committee on truck weight, length and registration fees which was approved at the June 12 Council meeting. He cited as particular areas of concern, in addition to laws affecting operation of mopeds, such matters as the threatened abandonment of the Milwaukee Railroad's trackage in Iowa, availability of barge fleeting sites along the banks of the Mississippi River which border Iowa, and availability of diesel fuel for Mississippi River twoboats.

After some discussion, Representative Avenson moved that the Studies Committee not recommend a separate study on statutes governing the operation of mopeds. The motion was adopted by a unanimous voice vote.

Senator Hultman reported the receipt of a letter from Studies Committee Co-chairperson Representative Roger Halvorson, who had been unable to attend the present meeting, requesting that the Committee recommend approval of an interim study of Iowa's water laws pursuant to the concerns expressed by William Harbor at the preceeding Legislative Council meeting. (See minutes of Legislative Council's meeting of June 12, 1979, page 8.) Speaker Millen said that he agrees that there are potentially serious problems in the area of water laws in Iowa, but said he does not believe that the kind of limited study which it would be possible for an interim legislative subcommittee to undertake is likely to be productive. He added that the Legislative Council should formally request that the Governor appoint a blue ribbon study committee to review Iowa's water laws, on which some legislators should serve, but which would be composed primarily of knowledgeable nonlegislators.

Representative John Clark moved that the Studies Committee not recommend approval of a water laws study. The motion was adopted by a unanimous voice vote.

Representative Avenson moved that the Studies Committee recommend that the Legislative Council ask the chairpersons of the standing Committees on Transportation to convene their respective committees for the one-day meeting which they are allowed by statute during each interim, and that that meeting be utilized to consider the various problems in the area of transportation which are likely to be taken up by the 1980 Session of the General Assembly and to prepare recommendations to the Legislative Council,

regarding any need for interim work in these areas. The motion was seconded by Speaker Millen, and adopted by a unanimous voice vote.

Representative Avenson requested that the letter to be sent to standing Transportation Committee chairpersons, should the Council approve the Studies Committee recommendations, particularly note the problems in the transportation area which he had mentioned in the course of the discussion on the request for a study of statutes affecting the operation of mopeds. It was agreed that this should be done.

Senator Hultman noted that a list of proposed House appointees to the various interim subcommittees and committees approved by the Legislative Council had been submitted for consideration by the Studies Committee. He said he had been advised that some last minute revisions would be required in a similar list of Senate appointees, before it is ready for action by the Studies Committee. The Studies Committee was therefore recessed briefly at 11:35 a.m.

The meeting was reconvened in Senate Committee Room 22 at 11:45 a.m. Senator Hultman stated that due to difficulties in contacting a few individual Senators, it would not be possible to act upon the list of Senate appointees to interim subcommittees and committees until after lunch.

Speaker Millen presented the recommended list of House appointees prepared by himself and Representative Avenson, and moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Representative Avenson, and adopted by a unanimous voice vote.

The meeting was recessed for lunch at 11:50 a.m., and reconvened in Senate Committee Room 22 at 1:20 p.m. Senator Junkins presented the list of proposed Senate appointees to interim committees and subcommittees prepared by Senator Hultman and himself and moved its adoption. The motion was adopted by a unanimous voice vote.

Senator Junkins then moved that a special interim study committee on corrections be recommended to the Council, to be composed of five members of each house drawn from the standing Committees on Human Resources and Judiciary and the joint Social Services Appropriations Subcommittee, appointed by the Speaker of the House and Majority Leader of the Senate, and to be initially authorized four meeting days during the 1979 legislative interim. The motion was seconded by Representative John Clark, and adopted by a unanimous voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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