

FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

February 10, 1969

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman who introduced Senator Doyen to discuss H.B. 1134. The Senator explained that this bill is the result of a Legislative Council study, and would set up a commission of five individuals who would be charged with safety and fire prevention, and to administer the laws in the state. He then introduced Pete Dwyer who lives in Caney, Kansas, but who works for Phillips Petroleum in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. He pointed out that many of the laws dealing with fire prevention are very old and need repealing, and pointed out the various sections where this would happen. He explained the proposed make-up of the commission; three from various segments of industry who are qualified and interested in this, one member from the general public and one representing the fire services of the state. He stated he believed this would provide a proper balance and would be workable. It would authorize the hiring of a Fire Marshall and all necessary administrative personnel. He made a detailed explanation of the bill (see memo in exhibit file).

Mr. Buchele inquired concerning the lack of the word "manufacture" and Mr. Dwyer explained this is intentional because most of the problems in the past have been in the transportation, storage and use.

Mr. Kirk Hammer, Director of the State Food Service and Lodging Board testified that he is in a neutral position insofar as this bill is concerned; that they are in favor of upgrading the fire standards, and want to be certain only that they have representation on the Commission. He states that they are already in direct contact in an inspection program and they should continue to do so, but that he has no objection to a Commission which would establish standards.

The Fire Marshall, Mr. Ramey, stated that his department was handicapped by the archaic laws. He cited instances where buildings are provided with egress in line with "the letter of the law" but are really dangerous. He cited the case of the Osawatomie fire and discussed the construction material, stating that with proper laws and regulations this sort of thing could be avoided.

Mr. Tom Foster of the Fire Fighters' Association, stated that his association heartily approves the efforts which the bill suggests, with one exception--the make-up of the Commission. He urged that there should be one fire fighter on the Commission; that they understand inspections, causes of fire and many means of prevention.

Because the allotted time had elapsed, the Chairman asked that the hearing be continued until Thursday, February 13th.

The Chairman asked Mr. McGill to discuss a proposal which the Committee had been requested to introduce. Mr. McGill stated that this bill was introduced last year but got lost in the closing moments of the session, and that the Hotel and Motel people have requested that it be introduced again. He then moved that the bill be introduced as a committee bill and re-referred to the committee. Motion was seconded by Mr. Turner and carried.

The Chairman then displayed a proposed House Concurrent Resolution which the Kansas Council of Churches had requested to be introduced. Mr. McCray moved that it be introduced as re-referred to the Committee. The motion was seconded by Mr. Buchele and carried.

Mr. McGill inquired if the Chairman would entertain a motion to kill HB 1134 and submit a new bill. The Chairman suggested that the people be heard and then if the committee felt it wise and the sponsoring people could agree, this might be done. Thereupon, the Chairman appointed Messrs. Turner, Buchele and Harper as a sub-committee to study this proposal.

The meeting was adjourned.