

Approved: 2/23/94
Date

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Clyde Graeber at 1:30 p.m. on February 8, 1994 in Room 526-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Representative Phill Kline, Absent
Representative Robert Krehbiel, Excused
Representative Thomas Robinette, Excused
Representative Kathleen Sebelius, Absent
Representative Kenny Wilk, Excused

Committee staff present: Mary Galligan, Legislative Research Department
Lynne Holt, Legislative Research Department
Mary Ann Torrence, Revisor of Statutes
June Evans, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Representative Dennis McKinney
Russ Smith, Director, Ford County Fire Department
Jim Coder, Assistant Attorney General, Kansas
Fire Marshall's Office
Jerry L. Smith, Chief, Greensburg Fire Department

The Chairperson opened the hearing on HB 2783 which concerns the insurance commissioner, in coordination with the state fire marshal, shall conduct a statewide educational campaign on fire control and extinguishment for public warehouses.

Representative Dennis McKinney testified in support of HB 2783 and stated that standpipes on grain elevators are exterior mounted pipes that would allow firefighters to hook up water lines at the bottom of the elevator, pipe it through the standpipe, and immediately and easily have water at the top of the elevator. This bill would provide a non-regulatory approach to improving public safety, especially the safety of firefighters. (See Attachment #1)

Russ Smith, Director, Ford County Fire Department, Dodge City, Kansas, testified in support of HB 2783 and stated he had responded to approximately 15 elevator fires. If all elevators had a dry standpipe with fire department connections, the time and effort to get water to the top would be greatly reduced. The standpipes could help ensure rapid deployment of firefighters to the area of a fire, leading to extinguishing of the blaze and lead to a reduction of fire losses. (See Attachment #2)

Jim Coder, Assistant Attorney General, Kansas State Fire Marshal's Office, testified in support of HB 2783 stating they encourage the installation of standpipes on grain elevators. If the educational campaign is successful, it would be of great benefit to the fire service. (See Attachment #3)

Jerry L. Smith, Chief, Greensburg Fire Department, testified supporting HB 2783, stating there was an elevator fire at Collingwood. He stated that standpipes would have been beneficial in extinguishing this fire. (See Attachment #4)

Representative Empson asked if there was a fiscal note...would this be done thru their own budget? She further asked if this couldn't be accomplished thru Rules and Regulations rather than a Bill.

Representative Standifer stated she did not know anything was needed until this Bill came out.

Representative Empson stated she had not received any correspondence about this problem.

Representative Lynch stated because of the size, location and number of people involved, this is important for public safety. If this is left to the discretion of the elevator owner, possibly nothing will be done and there could be sizeable losses. Something needs to be done.

Representative Standifer asked how many elevators there are in the state.

Mr. Coder responded there are 370 state licensed elevators and 100 federally licensed elevators.

Representative Myers asked if the education of these people should be encouraged; not sure this is needed.

Mr. Coder said he did not believe legislation is needed. The Fire Marshal was out of town so he was not contacted on this, but believe he would encourage education.

Representative Myers asked, isn't this his job?

Mr. Coder responded, yes.

Chairman Graeber asked Mr. Coder if he had visited with any of these elevators?

Mr. Coder responded, no, this is not a high priority.

Chairman Graeber stated, maybe this is not a high priority item, but possibly it would help a community in a situation that could be dangerous.

Representative Smith moved and Representative Rock seconded to move HB 2783 out of committee favorably and place on the Consent Calendar. The motion carried.

Representative Standifer moved and Representative Gilbert seconded to approve the minutes of January 31 and February 3, 1994. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 PM.

The next meeting will be on February 14, 1994.

Date:

FEDERAL and STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

[illegible]

DENNIS MCKINNEY
REPRESENTATIVE, 108TH DISTRICT
612 S. SPRUCE
GREENSBURG, KS 67054
(316) 723-2129

STATE CAPITOL—278-W
TOPEKA, KS 66612-1504
(913) 296-7658



TOPEKA

HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS
MEMBER: ENERGY & NATURAL RESOURCES
TAXATION
TRANSPORTATION

February 8, 1994

Thank you Mr. Chairman for the opportunity to testify on HB2783.

First I might explain that standpipes on grain elevators are exterior mounted pipes that would allow firefighters to hookup water lines at the bottom of the elevator, pipe it through the standpipe, and immediately and easily have water at the top of the elevator.

The need for standpipes became obvious last year when Kiowa County firefighters were delayed 20-30 minutes in fighting an elevator fire and encountered extra safety risk by having to carry hose to the top of the elevator to fight a fire. Fire Chief Smith can explain the case in more detail.

I want to explain how we arrived at the present version of the bill. Rather than go through the normal regulatory process--require everybody to have a standpipe and authorize the fire marshall to promulgate rules and regs.--I wanted to try something more creative.

It was brought to our attention that grain elevators might save significant money on insurance premiums if standpipes were installed. Therefore our goal is to get the information out to the grain elevators on the safety advantages and possible premium reductions gained with the installation of standpipes.

I believe that this avoids the hard feelings and expense of more government regulations. However, it should encourage the installation of standpipes on many elevators, most of which are served by volunteer fire departments and many of which are several miles from fire stations.

Again, I think HB2783 is a nonregulatory approach to improving public safety, especially the safety of firefighters. Please note that the information campaign may be done by mail and please note that the bill carries a sunset date for the program. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

F&S A
2-8-94
Atch #1

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

RE: HB ON STANDPIPES FOR ELEVATORS

IN 18 YEARS OF SERVICE WITH THE FORD COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT, I PERSONALLY HAVE RESPONDED TO APPROXIMATELY 15 ELEVATOR FIRES, EITHER WITHIN MY JURISDICTION OR BY MUTUAL AID. IN ALMOST ALL INSTANCES WATER WAS NEEDED TO THE TOP OF THE BINS (100-120 FT.) IF ALL ELEVATORS HAD A DRY STANDPIPE WITH FIRE DEPARTMENT CONNECTIONS THE TIME AND EFFORT TO GET WATER TO THE TOP WOULD BE GREATLY REDUCED. GREATLY REDUCING TIME AND EFFORT SHOULD REDUCE THE TIME IT TAKES TO EXTINGUISH FIRES AND REDUCE FIRE LOSSES.

I HAVE TWO FACILITIES WITHIN OUR JURISDICTION WITH THESE STANDPIPES, ONE OF THESE FACILITIES HAS HAD A FIRE AND THE STANDPIPE MADE A CONSIDERABLE DIFFERENCE IN EXTINGUISHING THE BLAZE. THE OTHER FACILITY HAS MERELY PLACED THE STANDPIPE AS A PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE, VOLUNTARILY.

THE STANDPIPES COULD HELP ENSURE RAPID DEPLOYMENT OF FIREFIGHTERS TO THE AREA OF A FIRE, LEADING TO QUICKER EXTINGUISHING OF THE BLAZE AND LEAD TO A REDUCTION OF FIRE LOSSES.

Russ Smith

RUSS SMITH DIRECTOR
FORD COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT
100 GUNSMOKE AVE.
DODGE CITY, KS. 67801

*F&SA
2-8-94
Atch #2*



"Where Fire Safety Is A Way Of Life"

Kansas State Fire Marshal Department
700 Jackson, Suite 600
Topeka, Kansas 66603-3714
Phone (913) 296-3401
FAX (913) 296-0151

Joan Finney
Governor

Edward C. Redmon
Fire Marshal

TESTIMONY OF
JIM CODER
ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL
KANSAS STATE FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE
BEFORE HOUSE FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS

FEBRUARY 8, 1994
HOUSE BILL 2783

The State Fire Marshal's Office supports House Bill 2783 in its efforts to encourage the installation of standpipes on grain elevators. If the educational campaign is successful, it would be a great benefit to the fire service. I'll try to explain the problem of fire in grain elevators and how if standpipes were installed it would be much easier to respond to those fires. Most fires which occur in grain elevators occur in the headhouse, where all the machinery is. Therefore, to fight a fire in such a place, the fire department must haul in excess of 200 foot of hose up the outside of the elevator. Although, I've certainly never done that, it doesn't sound like fun. Additionally, the problem which this bill attempts to rectify is that hauling the hose up the side of an elevator is very labor intensive. That problem is magnified with volunteer departments. Without standpipes the fire departments have to spend time, which is critical at the beginning of a fire hauling hose. It would be much better for all parties involved to let the fire departments fight the fire while it is still small rather carrying hose. According to the data our office has collected, the fire problem in elevators is documented as follows.

1990	20 fires	\$458,050 loss
1991	15 fires	\$ 28,250 loss
1992	27 fires	\$ 55,610 loss

Data for 1993 not yet compiled

One of the common misconceptions we have heard since this bill was introduced was concern about having a pipe full of water on the side of an elevator. This is simply not the case. The standpipe would be dry, with fire department connections on both ends. The only time water would be put in the standpipe would be when a fire department hooks up a pumper to the pipe.

Greensburg Fire Department
Jerry L. Smith, Chief

On May 26, 1993 at 6:10 P.M. the Greensburg Fire Department was called to respond to a fire at the Collingwood Elevator located 1 mile west of Greensburg. The fire whistle blew but our fire department pager had not been activated. We were very shorthanded at the onset and we found out the repeater for our pagers was located on the top of this elevator and when the fire was discovered the elevator employees shut the power off to the elevator.

Upon investigation we were informed by Collingwood employees that two bins were involved containing approximately 15,000 bushels of Milo. We knew we were dealing with a volatile situation. We moved all of our equipment to a staging area across the road. As we had never encountered a situation quite like this, my First Captain and I went to the fire station for our information file. I called a Fire Chief friend of mine and told him of our situation. He said he would call back with someone who could possibly assist us. He called back and said one of the best elevator fire experts in the United States was at Dodge City. He gave me his name and home phone number. I called Mr. Russ Smith of Ford County Fire Department. I told him what we had and he said he would be glad to come over and advise us. We called our neighboring fire department at Haviland as they had a new rural pumper which had much more pumping capacity than our trucks.

Two officials of Collingwood Grain Company flew in from Hutchinson. After Russ Smith arrived, we made plans of attack based on information furnished by Collingwood.

The height of the grain in each bin involved was calculated. The head house of the elevator was 112 feet high and completely full of smoke. We took rolls of hose up the man lift elevator and connected it together outside the head house. We dropped hose over the side down to the pumper. A rim off of an anhydrous trailer was used to prevent damage to the hose. We had 2-way radio communication with the pumper and fire and law enforcement. We set up a relay system using our tanker filling from two large 18 wheel tankers to Haviland's tanker in turn supplying their new pumper.

F-5A
2-8-94
A-4 #4

We were fortunate and extinguished the fire in the middle bin on the East side without any problem. The bin on the Southwest side was a different story however. A crew from Collingwood using a jack hammer cut a hole through the side of the bin. Milo poured out of the hole as well as water, but we still had fire in this bin. There was a large steel plate inside the elevator on the North side of this bin which we had removed and finally we started getting out black, charred chunks of milo. What a relief! After about thirteen hours we finally had this fire completely extinguished without any casualties and minimal damage. We were very lucky.