Legislative History for Connecticut Act

HB 2231 PA 539 1961

House 3666-3668 (3)

Senate 3111-3113 (3)

Educ. 455-457 (3)

(9)

Transcripts from the Joint Standing Committee Public Hearing(s) and/or Senate and House of Representatives Proceedings

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CONNECTICUT

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HOUSE

PROCEEDINGS

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in accord with the bill and I hope it passes. DKZ

THE SPEAKER:

Will you remark further? If not, all those in favor indicate by saying aye. Opposed no. The ayes have it and the bill is passed.

THE CLERK:

Calendar No. 1165, File No. 1336. Substitute for House Bill No. 3230. An Act providing for Increased Education Grants to Towns. Favorable report House Committee Appropriations.

MR. SHEA OF MERIDEN:

Mr. Speaker, may that matter be passed retaining.

THE SPEAKER:

Hearing no objection the matter will be passed retaining.

THE CLERK:

Calendar No. 1170, File No. 1335. Housd Bill No. 2231. An Act concerning the Powers and Duties of the State Board of Education of the Blind. Favorable report Joint Committee Education.

MR. FELLOWS OF HEBRON:

Mr. Speaker, I move the acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

THE SPEAKER:

The question is on acceptance of the committee's favorable report and passage of the bill. Will you remark?

MR. FELLOWS OF HEBRON:

Mr. Speaker, the Clerk has an amendment.

THE CLERK:

This is House Amendment Schedule A offered by Mr. Fellows of the Town of Hebron. The amendment is as follows: In section 4, line 13, enclose "1,700" in

brackets and insert thereafter "1,900".

MR. FELLOWS OF HEBRON:

Mr. Speaker, this amendment simply brings the bill into line to conform with the one which was passed last week making it possible for the Board of Education for the Blind to increase the amount of tuition paid to the Oak Hill School to $1,900. This is simply to make it conform to the other bill. I move the acceptance.

THE SPEAKER:

Will you remark further? If not, all those in favor say aye. Opposed, no. The ayes have it and the amendment is adopted.

We will now proceed on the bill as amended.

MR. FELLOWS OF HEBRON:

Mr. Speaker, I move the acceptance of the bill as amended.

THE SPEAKER:

The question is on acceptance of the committee's favorable report and passage of the bill as amended. Will you remark?

MR. FELLOWS:

This bill, Mr. Speaker, is primarily one updating the language and the duties of the Board of Education of the Blind. It simply clarifies the language and is mainly technical in nature. There is only one change reported and that is that it does allow an increase in hardship for transportation of blind children from thirty to sixty dollars a year. I urge the passage of the bill as amended.

MR. BARNES OF MONTVILLE:

Mr. Speaker, a point of information. I thought we passed this bill last week. Now how does it come before the House at this time again?

MR. FELLOWS OF HEBRON:

I do not believe it was brought before the House on Friday. There was a

similar bill which was brought before the House on Wednesday and this only was concerned with the amount of tuition that could be paid but this was not this bill.

THE SPEAKER:

Will you remark further? If not, all those in favor indicate by saying aye. Opposed, no. The ayes have it and the bill is passed.

The Chair would now like to turn the gavel over to the Gentleman from Bridgeport.

THE CLERK:

Calendar No. 1171, File No. 1349. Substitute for House Bill No. 3545. An Act concerning Tuition Fees and Scholarships at the University of Connecticut and the State Colleges. Favorable report House Committee on Education.

MR. NOYES OF FARMINGTON:

Mr. Speaker, I move acceptance of the House Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

THE SPEAKER:

The question is on the acceptance of the committee's favorable report and passage of the bill. Will you remark?

MR. NOYES OF FARMINGTON:

Mr. Speaker, in order to properly consider this bill I think it is necessary that the House consider first fact and second philosophy upon which the bill is based. With regard to fact at the present time the costs chargeable to students at the University of Connecticut are substantially lower than those charged in other states supported institutions. In a list of 45 such institutions the University of Connecticut ranks forty-first with a fee chargeable to full time day students of $160. The fees charged in other institutions range all the way

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fairly to both the consumer and the vendor. I urge its passage.

THE CHAIR:

Are there further remarks? No further remarks, the question is on the acceptance of the committee's favorable report and passage of the bill. Those in favor will signify by saying AYE, opposed, the bill is passed.

THE CLERK:

Continuing on page 11, Cal. No. 3013, file No. 1391. Sub. for HB No 3442. An Act concerning state policemen's survivors benefits.

SENATOR GLADSTONE:

Mr. President, that's a one starred action, may we go on to the next matter.

THE CLERK:

Cal. No. 3014, file No. 1335, HB No. 2231. (As amended by House Amendment Schedule A). An Act concerning the powers and duties of the State Board of Education of the Blind.

SENATOR DiLORETO:

I move suspension of the rules for immediate consideration of this bill.

THE CHAIR:

Question is on suspension of the rules for immediate consideration of this bill. Is there objection? The rules are suspended.

SENATOR DiLORETO:

I move acceptance of the committee's favorable report and passage of this bill.

THE CHAIR:

Will the Clerk please read House Amendment Schedule A?

THE CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule A to HB 2231, file No. 1335. "In Section 4, line 13, enclose "$1700. in brackets, and insert thereafter "$1900."

SENATOR DILORETO:

I move passage of the bill, favorable committee's report and passage of this bill as amended.

THE CHAIR:

Do you care to remark on the House Amendment?

SENATOR DILORETO:

The amendment deals with upgrading the amounts that are given to the blind from $1700. to $1900.

THE CHAIR:

Are there further remarks on the House Amendment?No further remarks, the question is on the adoption of the amendment. Those in favor will signify by saying AYE, opposed, House Amendment Schedule A is adopted. Do you care to remark on the bill as amended?

SENATOR DILORETO:

The bill in essence amends the statutes governing the powers and duties of the Board of Education of the Blind to bring them up to date. Such has not been done since the year 1893. Further the amendment, as it has been read, upgrades the sum from $1700. to $1900. for education of the blind. In addition to that, the sum is upgraded from the sum of $800. to

$900. for medical treatment and care of the blind.

THE CHAIR:

Are there further remarks? No further remarks, the question is on acceptance of the committee's favorable report and passage of the bill as amended. Those in favor will signify by saying AYE, opposed, the bill as amended is passed.

THE CLERK:

Cal. No. 3015, file No. 1386, HB No. 3597. An Act authorizing Henry E. Goetz and John Willard Bossung to sue the state of Connecticut.

SENATOR ALFANO:

May this bill be temporarily passed?

THE CHAIR:

It will be passed, one star item.

THE CLERK:

Cal. No. 3016, file No. 1390, Sub. for HB No. 4213. An Ac t concerning qualifications for retirement of judges. (As amended by House Amendment Schedule A).

SENATOR GLADSTONE:

May this bill be recommitted?

THE CHAIR:

Question is on recommittal. Any remarks? Senator Ives.

SENATOR IVES:

Mr. President, I rise to oppose recommittal. For the first time in a good many years a committee of this General Assembly saw fit to ask the judges to not contribute to their retirement for at least serve ten years before their retirement. Our present

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EDUCATION COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 2:oo P.M. MARCH 16, 1961

I might also add that in adjoining states which have a somewhat similar program, for example, in Massachusetts, the state pays $2850 tuition for the blind child; so the request that we're making is certainly very reasonable in proportion to the requests made in terms of other states.

I began by answering your question. Perhaps I should just leave it at that point unless you wish me, sir, to comment further.

Chairman Carlson: That's all right. Anyone else wish to speak in favor of H. B. 2230 (Mr. Marsters) AN ACT CONCERNING STATE AID FOR EDUCATION OF THE BLIND. There's a question here, Mr. Noyes.

Rep. Noyes: Mr. MacArthur, could you or Dr. Faye enlighten me as to how many blind children, roughly, are receiving instructions from the local boards, in the state?

Harvey MacArthur: The number of children at the Oakhill School is just over 160. My understanding is that about half the children, the visually handicapped in school, are in our school and the other half are attending various public schools which receive some special assistance. I think that's correct. Mr. Markezio, I'm sure, would have more precise information.

Guy Markezio: It's interesting that you should ask for that figure because we've just about completed our account for the federal government. 204 children, legally blind children, in public schools and 159 at the Oakhill School for the blind. They actually have more students than that but these are residents of Connecticut.

Chairman Carlson: Thank you. Thank you. Anyone else wish to speak in favor of H. B. 2230 (Mr. Marsters) AN ACT CONCERNING STATE AID FOR EDUCATION OF THE BLIND. Anyone wish to speak in opposition to this bill? Seeing none, why I declare the hearing closed on H. B. 2230. Anyone wish to speak in favor of

H. B. No. 2231 (Mr. Marsters) AN ACT CONCERNING THE POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE BLIND

Kenneth McColombe: Mr. Chairman, McColombe, Board of Education

of the Blind. This H. B. 2231 (Mr. Marsters) AN ACT CONCERNING THE POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE BLIND is a rather lengthy bill and in the essence of time, I don't know that you people would want me to go into the various details of what we are doing but basically, we are trying to amend the statutes governing the powers and duties of the Board of Education of the Blind to bring them up to date. Some of the statutes have been on the books since 1893 and have never been modernized or much of the language that is contained in the old statutes, no longer applies. For instance, there is a provision in the statutes that every bill be signed by the Governor before put through for payment, but we all know that other fiscal regulations have come into the state in the meantime but these statutes have gone by without being changed.

Another provision that calls for a vote of 3 members of the Board to approve institutional or instructional cost. We do have the regulation that 3 members of the Board must sign applications before children going into school but beyond that, the payment of cost is all carried on through the regular fiscal regulations of the office of finance and control.

There are many different factors involved in this, as I have said, and I don't know that you want me to take them up separately. One thing that we did do. We submitted all this material to the legislative research commission and have been guided by their advice and help in drawing up the present bill. We have tried to bring the definition of blindness which applies wherever the word blindness occurs in the statutes up to the beginning of the bill so it acts as a general definition throughout.

In addition to our statutes as contained in this bill, besides the tuition changes and a few of the things we've mentioned already, is the matter of confidentiality of our case records. We have recently faced a problem in having certain professional people refuse to test our children. This happened to be in the area of psychological testing, and to render reports to us if those reports were to be opened to the public, or to parents or to people who did not have the proper concept of the value of psychological reports. We have, with the help of the legislative council, written in a confiden-

tiality statement which would apply to our case records.

I sincerely trust that you people will give this every consideration and will report favorably on this change of statutes.

Chairman Carlson: Thank you. I have read the bill but I assure you the committee will give it very close attention.

Anyone else wish to speak in favor of, yes, Mrs. Hutton has a question.

Rep. Hutton: I wonder if you could give us the thinking behind lowering the age for attendance, compulsory attendance from 18 to 16.

Kenneth McColombe: I'd be glad to. We feel that the blind child is no different from the sighted child and we merely brought about that change to conform to what is standard procedure now in the public schools. We did make one other change in the method of enforcing compulsory attendance at school. It seemed to us that the regulations as spelled out in the old statutes were so involved that it seemed almost impossible to follow what the intent was. We have attempted to simplify that language and, incidentally, that is a statute that is really rarely used. In the history of the agency, and I have been with the agency some 20 years, and not in my time, has there been any case where we have had to resort to compulsory attendance of a blind child. I think prior to my coming to the agency, it had been involked at one time and a probate court in one district ruled that the child should go to a school for the blind but the family promptly moved to another district, another probate district, and avoided the effect of this as a ruling.

Chairman Carlson: Thank you. Anyone else wish to speak in favor of this bill? Anyone wish to speak in opposition to it? Seeing no opposition, I declare the hearing closed on H. B. 2231 (Mr. Marsters) AN ACT CONCERNING THE POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE BLIND.

Anyone wish to speak in favor of
H. B. No. 3226 (Rep. Marsters) AN ACT CONCERNING THE POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE BLIND.

Harvey MacArthur: Mr. Chairman, my name is still Harvey MacArthur