

HB 8359

PA 636

1971

Rules

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House

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**JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS**

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WEDNESDAY

APRIL 7, 1971

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Senator Harry S. Burke, presiding

Members present: Senators: Burke, Dowd, Hammer
Dzialo, Morris, Hill, Gagliardi, Green, Frate,
Groppo, Tudan, Bigos, Orcutt, Cohen, Palmieri,

Chairman Burke: The Rules Committee will now come to order.
Representative Bruno you may begin.

HB 5201 - (Bruno-132nd Dist.) AN ACT CONCERNING THE SALARY OF
MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

Rep. Robert Bruno-Bridgeport 132nd Dist. I am here to favor a
Bill No. 5201 concerning reduction of salaries for
members of the General Assembly. The only purpose of
this bill gentlemen, is due to the financial condition
of the State it is my belief and many constituents through-
out the state that the legislature should show the way
during this period of financial condition. Some consideration
should be given and the House should start it by giving
favorable action to this bill.

Sen. Burke: Thank you Rep. Bruno. Anybody else want to speak on
HB 5201? Well, if not we will continue with the hearing.

Chairman Dzialo: If you all don't mind waiting, I would like to
wait five or ten minutes before we open this thing up
in order that you might testify and I am hopeful that
we can have more members of the committee here present.
If not we will just go ahead and carry on, but I would
like to stand at ease for five or ten minutes.

Sen. Burke: Rep. Morris did you wish to speak on your bills.

Rep. Julius Morris-32nd District: Mr. Chairman, members of the
Rules Committee I have four bills before you today which
I would like to comment on all on the favorable side.

HB-8359 - (Rep. Morris-32nd Dist.) AN ACT PROVIDING FOR PENSIONS
FOR LEGISLATORS.

Rep. Morris: The first bill is 8359, this is a bill to provide
pensions for legislators. My bill would take effect
in 1973 for all legislators who have ten or more years
service in the legislature. To qualify you have to be
fifty five years of age and be re-elected subsequent to
November 3, 1970. This bill would cost the state no
money at least until 1975 as nobody would be qualified

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until they are re-elected which would be 1973 which I assume nobody re-elected in 1973 would resign if all is qualified for ..merely for this purpose of collecting the pension. So therefore at the earliest it would cost the state money again in 1975. There are other limitations on it but the bill is self explanatory. I would also like to discuss and testify on 8787.

HB 8787 - (Rep. Morris, 32nd Dist.) AN ACT CONCERNING THE SALARIES OF LEGISLATORS.

Rep. Morris: This is a salary increase bill for legislators. This too would take effect in 1973. My proposed salary increase would be \$8,000 on the even number of years and \$12,000 on the odd numbered year, with revision for the leadership to receive on the odd number years \$18,000 and on the even number years \$12,000 and that leadership is spelled out the speaker of th house, the majority leader and minority leader of the house and the President pro-tem. of the senate, the majority leader of the senate. My third bill is 8788.

HB 8788 - (Rep. Morris, 32nd Dist.) AN ACT CONCERNING THE EXPENSES OF LEGISLATORS.

Rep. Morris: This is increasing the expenses and this will take effect immediately and currently to increase the expense account from the present \$1,500. for bi-annum to \$4,000 with the ...some additional increase for the leadership which is again spelled out in the bill some \$500 addition for the leaders which I had failed to mention in the previous bill. My next bill is 8789.

HB 8789 - (Rep. Morris, 32nd Dist.) AN ACT CONCERNING THE TRAVEL ALLOWANCE TO MEMBERS AND OFFICERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

Rep. Morris: This bill is pertaining to travel expense. As you know at the present time excluding special sessions the travel expense is ten cents per mile now this is pretty equitable as far as the people who live around the perimeters of the state but, to those who live in the immediate vicinity it is not fair. So my proposal would be to keep the ten cents per mile but increase it on a per diem basis of ten dollars for each day of attendance. I hope that you will favorable view these bills. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Dzialo: If we may we would like to continue on with the hearing. Rather than go down the row why don't we just take the lady from the League of Women Voters..if you would like to come up, I presume you would want to testify.

Mrs. Russell Romeyn of South Windsor: speaking for the League of

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Are there further remarks on the bill? If not, all those in favor indicate by saying aye, opposed? The bill is passed.

THE CLERK:

Calendar No. 943, Substitute for House Bill No. 8359, An Act Concerning the Creation of a Commission on Compensation for Elected State Officials.

GEORGE HANNON, 16th District:

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

MR. SPEAKER:

Will you remark?

GEORGE HANNON, 16th District:

Mr. Speaker, the Clerk has amendments, sir.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Clerk will call House Amendment Schedule "A".

THE CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule "A" offered by Mr. Hannon of the 16th:

In line 11, strike out "June" and insert in lieu thereof "July"

In line 23, strike out "June" and insert in lieu thereof "July"

GEORGE HANNON, 16th District:

Mr. Speaker, I move adoption of the amendment.

MR. SPEAKER:

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Question is on adoption of Amendment Schedule "A", will you remark?

GEORGE A. HANNON, 16th District:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, the bill in Section 1, the file in Section 1, called for all members of the commission shall be appointed before June 1st, 1971, obviously it's a physical impossibility, the amendment simply pushes the date back to July.

MR. SPEAKER:

Further remarks on Schedule "A"? If not, all those in favor indicate by saying aye, opposed? "A" is adopted.

GEORGE HANNON, 16th District:

The Clerk has House Amendment Schedule "B", Mr. Speaker.

THE CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule "B" offered by Mr. Carrozzella of the 81st:

In line 37, strike out the word "and" and insert a comma in lieu thereof

In line 38, after the word "and" insert the following:
"judges of the courts of the state, except judges of probate, and"

GEORGE HANNON, 16th District:

Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of discussing House Amendment Schedule "B" I would yield, temporarily, to the gentleman of the 81st.

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JOHN CARROZZELLA, 81st District:

Mr. Speaker, I move adoption of House Amendment Schedule "B".

MR. SPEAKER:

Will you remark?

JOHN CARROZZELLA, 81st District:

Mr. Speaker, as this bill is intending to do is to study compensations on all levels of government, I submit to you, sir, that it is also important that we study the compensation to be paid to the judiciary of the state. There is no question but what they are underpaid, there is no question but that they deserve a pay raise. Hopefully, with the adoption of this amendment this commission can study their salary ranges and report back to the next session so that we can do something in this area. I move adoption of the amendment.

MR. SPEAKER:

Further remarks on Schedule "B"? If not, all those in favor indicate by saying aye, opposed? Amendment "B" is adopted.

GEORGE HANNON, 16th District:

Mr. Speaker, I move acceptance and passage in accordance with House Amendment Schedule A and B.

MR. SPEAKER:

Will you remark?

GEORGE HANNON, 16th District:

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Yes, Mr. Speaker. We have heard since January the words "landmark legislation." We have heard "innovative legislation" and I frankly think this particular bill is both landmark and innovative. This General Assembly on previous occasions has been criticized for thinking of itself with salary increases and pension plans both in the '67 and the '69 General Assembly, is, in fact, true. But that this General Assembly in 1971 made a giant stride for the proper review of its salary and its travel expense and if any pension plan could be adopted at some future date, is, indeed, innovative. This bill was heard before a large segment, indeed, probably the largest public hearing held by the joint Rules Committee in 1971, it was a most controversial bill, it was a bill wherein the fingerprints of the leadership and rank and file members on both sides of the aisle are indelible in the subject matter of today's discussion. We frankly think that the file before this body is the best possible compromise that we could come out of the Rules Committee with. It sets up an 11 man commission, a commission that the Governor of the state of Connecticut appoints three and that the leaders on both sides of the aisle appoint the remaining eight. They are mandated to report back to this General Assembly by February 15, 1972 with their recommendations. Recommendations that this General Assembly may either accept, adopt or reject. And we think that in the best interests of keeping self-serving

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interest out of whatever pay raises or pensions come to this General Assembly, this is, indeed, the proper vehicle to use and I most strongly urge the adoption of this bill.

FRANCIS COLLINS, 165 District:

Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to rise in support of this particular bill. I join in with the comments of the gentleman of the 16th and the gentleman of the 81st that this is a matter which is in my humble opinion, long overdue. The present status requires us to pass on compensation not only for ourselves as elected state officials but also for the Governor, Lt. Governor and other state officials. I think it is only proper and fair that impartial citizens committee, as proposed by this bill, to set the compensation and benefits for not only legislators but also for judges and all elected state officials. As I indicated I think it is a long overdue step, I think it is a step in the right direction and I do think it is of service to the state of Connecticut, rather than having us, as individuals act on any pay increases or any pay questions whatsoever, I strongly support it.

CARL AJELLO, 118th District:

Mr. Speaker, I certainly rise in support of this bill and what's been said about it so far is completely what I think. This has been done in other states and according to the information that we have it has worked extremely well from the standpoint both of the public and of the members of

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the legislature. For too long we have labored here in these particular vineyards with a dual handicap, in my opinion, we are grossly underpaid for the kinds of time, talent and effort that every member of the General Assembly is required, absolutely by his office, to put in. No matter how imperfect you may view our process, it certainly is a lot of hard work and at the same time we are faced with the difficult problem of assessing our own worth and determining our own pay, which has resulted up to now at least, in a situation where we are grossly underpaid and have many of the others that have already been alluded to. Similarly, the judges in Connecticut are of the highest caliber and I think it is fair to say that they are entitled to very careful consideration. The kind of consideration that will bring them into line for their time and their talent with what is paid in other states and other jurisdictions. So, this approach, through the commission is, I think, both the most effective, efficient and fair that could possibly be devised and I am most happy to see the bill passed here today.

MR. SPEAKER:

Are there further remarks? If not, the question....

FRANK REINHOLD, 171st District:

Mr. Speaker, I think this bill is tremendously important and certainly should pass but do I observe a problem -- it states that all members of the commission shall be appointed

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on or before June 1, 1971?

(Unidentified):

The amendment takes care of that.

MR. SPEAKER:

Will you remark further on the bill as amended by Schedule "A" and "B"? If not, all those in favor indicate by saying aye, opposed? The bill is passed.

THE CLERK:

Calendar No. 994, Substitute for House Bill No. 8914, An Act Concerning the Penalty for Non-Addict Drug Pushers.

JOHN A. CARROZZELLA, 81st District:

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

MR. SPEAKER:

Will you remark?

JOHN CARROZZELLA, 81st District:

Mr. Speaker, I think it is of major concern to each and every one of us in this House the problem of drugs. And I think it is of even more concern to those of us who are parents. I, myself, have four boys and I live in the fear of the day when they come back to my home and say they smoked marijuana or whatever. And, of course, the big problem is what is the real answer. I think we all know what the real answer is, we cut off the supply and therefore, there is no drug problem. But, we, as a state, cannot do that by ourselves so we've got

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Cal. 1191 File 1374 Substitute for H.B. 7041 An Act Concerning the Use and Operation of Snowmobiles.

Cal. 1193, File 1387, Substitute for H.B. 7483 An Act Concerning the Husband And Wife Retirement Income Option Under the Probate Court Retirement System.

Cal. 1194, File 1378 Substitute for H.B. 8330 An Act Concerning the Expansion of the Wequetequock Fire District in the Town of Stonington.

Cal. 1195, File 1293 Substitute for H.B. 8541 An Act Providing a Bonus for Veterans Who Were Eligible But Did Not Receive a Bonus for Service in World War II or the Korean War.

Page 10, Cal. 1206 File 1389 H.B. 7484 An Act Concerning Disability Retirement for a Judge of Probate.

Cal. 1207, File 1383 Substitute H.B. 7490 An Act Concerning the Definition of Average Final Compensation for a Judge of Probate

Page 11, Cal. 1209, File 1236, Substitute for H.B. 5574 An Act Concerning the Benefits Paid to the Spouse of a Teacher Who Dies Before Retirement.

Page 12, Cal. 1219, File 1187 H.B. 8712 An Act Concerning the Establishment of a Drug Dependency Unit at Veterans' Home and Hospital.

Cal. 1222, File 1422 Substitute for H.B. 8343 An Act Concerning Mandatory Refusal of Liquor Permits.

Cal. 1223, File 983, Substitute for H.B. 8359 An Act Concerning the Creation of a Commission on Compensation for Elected State Officials.

Page 13, Cal. 1225, File 1435 Substitute for H.B. 8798 An Act Concerning Public Hearings on Proposed Layout of State Highways.

Cal. 1229, S.B. 1830 An Act Concerning Participation of Hospitals in the Health And Educational Facilities Authority Act.

Page 14, H.B. 5491, File 916 An Act Granting Payment of the World War II Veterans' Bonus to Edward david Wellins.

Cal. 1233, File 777 H.B. 5672 An Act Granting Payment of the Korean War Veterans' Bonus to John P. Belansky, Jr.