



Pierre Report

Appropriations Work Goes On

BY STATE SEN. JEAN HUNHOFF
R-District 18 (Yankton)

The last two weeks of session have fewer committee meetings but more behind the scenes discussions on what will be offered for additions/deletions to the General Appropriations bill. Bills that have directed dollar amounts are sitting in both houses with one dollar of appropriations attached to each. Once the Appropriations Committees concludes on the revenue projections for FY14 then the debate will begin as to where any available dollars may be directed.

The theme presented at the State Chamber's Business Day dinner by House and Senate leadership of both parties was that economic development is a must for the state. Education, health care and recruitment/expansion of business in South Dakota are all part of any economic development package. This is the process and, though often criticized for its last action of the Legislature, it has guided South Dakota to always have a balanced budget at the end of each session.

Local government has had a flurry of bills, but none raising much opposition.

HB 1076 will repeal the requirement to separately publish certain information concerning county poor relief from minutes of the county commission. Currently, the county publishes the facilities and the amount of dollars that that individual is requesting for the county to pay to the individual. This is current practice and what the legislation is proposing. The bill moved to the floor.

HB 1078 revises the location where certain county highways maps be filed. It will now be up to the county commission as to what offices the maps will be filed. The law currently states they should be located in the County Auditor's Office. If passed, the law would allow for the most logical place for access to interested parties.

HB 1079 proposes to increase the fee for certain property tax deeds. The fee is proposed to increase from \$1 to \$5. The fee has not been changed since 1939. There was no opposition to this bill and moves to the Senate floor.

HB 1099 allows for municipalities to pay for certain services in advance. Some contracts that municipalities enter into ask for advance payment. This can be cost-effective for some contracts. In the statute, it requires the governing body of any municipality may authorize the prepayment of claims, against the municipality for services before than have been provided if the municipality has adopted an ordinance in advance that specifies the maximum amount allowable for any such prepayment

House Bill 1087 was heard last Friday morning and earned my vote to pass it out of committee alongside four of my colleagues, with four votes cast against it. If you're not familiar with House Bill 1087, it's one of the most controversial topics we're dealing with — granting greater local control to schools.

And make no mistake — despite the controversy surrounding it, the School Sentinel bill is all about local control.

We've heard demands for years on allowing more local control in education because of school district size limitations, and instruction, and expenditures, and any myriad of reasons. The argument against some forms of local control is very often the need to give every student an identical curriculum and opportunities equal to students in other areas of South Dakota. But make no mistake — the local level is the ONLY place decisions about safety can and should be made.

When it comes to keeping children safe at school, the playing field is automatically tilted against smaller, and more rural schools. Cities and larger towns have school resource officers to help keep crime and the people who would do our children harm out of schools. Sioux Falls has school resource officers, armed and roving between buildings if not stationed in specific locations. Faith, South Dakota does not.

In response to the School Shootings in Sandy Hook, President Obama has proposed legislation to put 1000 more school resource officers in schools across the country. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, there were 98,817 public schools during the 2009-2010 school year. How many of those one thousand new federally funded resource officers do we think will end up in Faith or Alcester? My best guess is none.

For the same reason we're treading cautiously on ex-



J. Hunhoff

and if a service contract exits.

HB 1158 specifies that the positing of public notices for meetings of public bodies includes the proposed agenda, date, time and location of the meeting.

Senate Health and Human Services held a joint meeting with House H&HS on Wednesday to allow citizen testimony on Medicaid expansion. The room was packed, with the majority of individuals speaking for the expansion. No action was taken at the conclusion of the hearing. There is no bill for expansion so the amendment would need to be added to the appropriations bill for funding for the expansion.

HB 1126 was originally a repeal of the massage therapy licensure law in the state. Due to licensure application process and perceived functions of the board, frustration had surfaced among the therapists in the state. Two groups emerged, one supporting licensure others wanting to do away with the licensure. The bill originated in the House and was amended on the floor to reinstate licensure. When the bill came over to the Senate, the request was made for the two groups to sit down and work out a compromise that would result in maintaining licensure. The groups put forth a compromise that was passed by the committee and sent to the floor.

HB1233 will be heard on Wednesday. This was brought forth by Rep. Elkland, a physician in Sioux Falls. His intent was to provide for retired licensed physicians to be granted limited immunity for the provision of voluntary medical services under certain circumstance. He was creating an option for retired physicians to volunteer at free clinics in communities. Due to existing statute and wording of the bill, other licensed health care providers were unsure if their volunteer efforts would be immune from civil liability. A working group consisting of health care providers came together to propose an amendment that would grant limited immunity for voluntary medical series for those health profession licensed under Title 36.

Finally HB 1214 will be heard in committee. The bill provides for Medicaid coverage of prenatal care for immigrant mothers who do not have citizenship status. Under current law, the birth of the child in this country makes him/her a U.S. citizen and then the child becomes eligible for Medicaid services.

Thank you for your input on bills of interest this session. It is a privilege serving the people of Yankton County. The last cracker barrel will be at 10 a.m. March 2 at the Avera Pavilion.

That's where the School Sentinel bill comes in. The School Sentinel bill is simply enabling legislation. It does not turn schools into armed camps. In fact, I anticipate that most school districts will pass on the measure, and a majority of school boards would not adopt the program. But for those schools in the middle of rural areas that have parents shifting nervously in their seats at any mention of school violence because any law enforcement response is a minimum of 20 or more minutes away? This bill gives schools that seek an option something they can do to protect themselves until first responders can arrive. They deserve the same solution that children in our cities have.

If someone is trained and certified in the use of a firearm, they pass tests and agree to take on the responsibility, and the school wants them to assume the role of a School Sentinel, then why not? Any weapon would be stored securely in a manner safe and inaccessible to children just like any responsible gun owner. It's a local decision made by local school board members at the behest of the local parents. What could be more reasonable than that?

Allow schools the ability to make their own decisions on how to best keep students safe, and give them the tools to do so at their discretion. Most won't use it, and that's up to them. If only one District chooses to exercise local control in this manner, then it was still the right decision.



Lederman

Pierre Report

School Sentinels And Local Control

BY STATE SEN. DAN LEDERMAN
R-District 16 (Dakota Dunes)

panding Medicaid, we can't depend on the federal government to honor its promises to follow through for South Dakota. And we can't depend on the federal government to solve our school safety concerns. We need a South Dakota solution for South Dakota kids. And it needs to be tailored on a district by district basis.

That's where the School Sentinel bill comes in. The School Sentinel bill is simply enabling legislation. It does not turn schools into armed camps. In fact, I anticipate that most school districts will pass on the measure, and a majority of school boards would not adopt the program. But for those schools in the middle of rural areas that have parents shifting nervously in their seats at any mention of school violence because any law enforcement response is a minimum of 20 or more minutes away? This bill gives schools that seek an option something they can do to protect themselves until first responders can arrive. They deserve the same solution that children in our cities have.

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OPINION | OTHER THOUGHTS

For Koop, Patients Always Came First

THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER (Feb. 27): At one time, his face was one of the most recognizable in the country. That's because no U.S. surgeon general before or since C. Everett Koop has used the job's bully pulpit so effectively to prod Americans into taking better care of themselves.

Koop died Monday at age 96, his own longevity a testament to his relentless advice on living a long life. Atop the list: Don't smoke. Using research connecting cancer to tobacco use, Koop urged people not to smoke if they hadn't started, and to quit if they had.

Wearing the gold-braided naval uniform of surgeons general, Koop, with his Captain Ahab beard and stern demeanor, was an imposing figure. When he said smokers are 10 times more likely to develop lung cancer, people listened. During his 1981-89 tenure, the share of Americans who smoked dropped from 33 to 26 percent.

A special report that Koop prepared in 1986 still represents the best advice for avoiding the sexual transmission of the AIDS virus: Either practice abstinence or monogamy, or use a condom. The Reagan White House wanted him to leave out the condoms part, but Koop wouldn't let politics get in the way of the truth.

Koop grew up in Brooklyn, N.Y., but Philadelphians considered him one of their own. After finishing at Cornell University Medical College, he completed his residency at University of Pennsylvania Hospital and then became chief surgeon at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, a post he held for 35 years.

Koop was a star surgeon who did groundbreaking work. His team was known for its surgeries to correct birth defects. In fact, his statements extolling the rights of infants with congenital defects to receive medical care caught the attention of the antiabortion movement, which recommended his appointment as surgeon general to President Ronald Reagan.

Koop's conservative backers became agitated, though, when the devoutly religious surgeon general reported that he could not conclude that abortions are medically unsafe. Thus, he said, whether a woman has an abortion must in most cases be decided on the basis of her morality or religion.

Too few in today's golden age of political expediency similarly allow truth to overrule ambition. Some say Koop's candor cost him an appointment as secretary of health and human services. It doesn't matter. Koop's service to his country was outstanding.

TODAY IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Feb. 28, the 59th day of 2013. There are 306 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Feb. 28, 1993, a gun battle erupted at a religious compound near Waco, Texas, when Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms agents tried to arrest Branch Davidian leader David Koresh on weapons charges; four agents and six Davidians were killed as a 51-day standoff began. (The siege ended April 19 as fire erupted while federal agents smashed their way into the compound; Koresh and 78 other people were killed.)

On this date: In 1844, a 12-inch gun aboard the *USS Princeton* exploded as the ship was sailing on the Potomac River, killing Secretary of State Abel P. Upshur, Navy Secretary Thomas W. Gilmer and several others.

In 1861, the Territory of Colorado was organized.

In 1911, President William Howard Taft nominated William H. Lewis to be the first black Assistant Attorney General of the United States.

In 1942, the heavy cruiser *USS Houston* and the Australian light cruiser *HMAS Perth* were attacked by Japanese forces during the World War II Battle of Sunda Strait; both were sunk shortly after midnight.

In 1951, the Senate committee headed by Estes Kefauver, D-Tenn., issued an interim report saying at least two major crime syndicates were operating in the U.S.

In 1953, scientists James D. Watson and Francis H.C. Crick announced they had discovered the double-helix structure of DNA.

In 1960, a day after defeating the Soviets at the Winter Games in Squaw Valley, Calif., the United States won its first Olympic hockey gold medal by defeating Czechoslovakia's team, 9-4.

In 1972, President Richard M. Nixon and Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai issued the Shanghai Communiqué, which called for normalizing relations between their countries, at the conclusion of Nixon's historic visit to China.

In 1975, more than 40 people were killed in London's Underground when a subway train smashed into the end of a tunnel.

In 1983, the long-running TV series "M-A-S-H" ended after 11 seasons on CBS with a special 2 1/2-hour finale that was watched by an estimated 121.6 million people.

In 1986, Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme was shot to death in central Stockholm. (The killing remains unsolved.)

In 1988, the 15th Olympic Winter Games held its closing ceremony in Calgary, Canada.

Ten years ago: NASA released video taken aboard Columbia that had miraculously survived the fiery destruction of the space shuttle with the loss of all seven as-

tronauts; in the footage, four of the crew members can be seen doing routine chores and admiring the view outside the cockpit. The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals stood by its ruling that reciting the Pledge of Allegiance in public schools was unconstitutional because of the words "under God." The Food and Drug Administration announced that every bottle of ephedra would soon bear stern warnings that the popular herb could cause heart attacks or strokes, even kill. (The government banned ephedra in Feb. 2004.)

Five years ago: President George W. Bush told a White House news conference the country was not recession-bound; Democratic candidate Barack Obama said the economy was "on the brink of a recession" and blamed economic policies espoused by Bush and Republican presidential contender John McCain. Defense Secretary Robert Gates told his Turkish counterpart that Turkey should end its offensive against Kurdish rebels in northern Iraq as soon as possible. Deposed Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra returned to Thailand from 17 months in exile to face corruption charges. Mike Smith, lead singer for the British band Dave Clark Five, died outside London at age 64.

One year ago: Republican Mitt Romney won presidential primary victories in Arizona and Michigan. Sen. Olympia Snowe, R-Maine, announced she would not seek re-election, citing what she called the increasingly polarized climate of Washington. Angela Castro, 88, an elder sister of Cuban leaders Fidel and Raul Castro, died in Havana.

Today's Birthdays: Producer Saul Zaentz is 92. Architect Frank Gehry is 84. Actor Gavin MacLeod is 82. Actor Don Francks is 81. Actor-director-dancer Tommy Tune is 74. Hall of Fame auto racer Mario Andretti is 73. Actor Frank Bonner is 71. Actress Kelly Bishop is 69. Actress Stephanie Beacham is 66. Writer-director Mike Figgis is 65. Actress Mercedes Ruehl is 65. Actress Bernadette Peters is 65. Energy Secretary Steven Chu is 65. Actress Ilene Graff is 64. Nobel Prize-winning economist Paul Krugman is 60. Comedian Gilbert Gottfried is 58. Basketball Hall-of-Famer Adrian Dantley is 57. Actor John Turturro is 56. Rock singer Cindy Wilson is 56. Actress Rae Dawn Chong is 52. Actress Maxine Bahns is 44. Actor Robert Sean Leonard is 44. Rock singer Pat Monahan is 44. Author Daniel Handler (AKA "Lemony Snicket") is 43. Actor Rory Cochrane is 41. Actress Ali Larter is 37. Country singer Jason Aldean is 36. Actor Geoffrey Arend is 35. Actress Michelle Horn is 26. Actor Bobb'e J. Thompson is 17.

Thought for Today: "Education is learning what you didn't even know you didn't know." — Daniel J. Boorstin, American historian, educator and Librarian of Congress (1914-2004).

FROM THE BIBLE

Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid. Matthew 14:27. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

YOUR LETTERS

Passing Judgment

Steve Vande Kop, Yankton

There has been much talk in the *Press & Dakotan* and elsewhere as to the situation at the Auditor's Office and the issue with the real estate taxes.

I know the kind of people who live in Yankton and the surrounding area. My wife and I started a business here about 14 years ago and I can assure you I have never lived in a community where people come together to help each other out like they do here.

Paula Jones is one of those people who will do anything for you. She takes her job seriously.

When the truth finally comes out as to what

the entire situation actually was, I think there will be individuals who will wish they would have been more patient before passing judgment.

Funding Priorities

Fran Livingston, Yankton

To our District 18 lawmakers:

I'm writing concerning an article (*Press & Dakotan*, Feb. 23) about fiscal notes. It stated: "A legislative rule requires bills that would have an effect on state revenues or spending to carry a fiscal note estimating how much extra revenue or spending it would generate. ...

"That was the case last week with a bill that would provide prenatal care for illegal immi-

grants. The House passed the bill after the fiscal note predicted it would cost about \$242,000 in state funds and \$286,000 in federal funds to provide the care through Medicaid next year."

REALLY? Our Legislature is willing to provide free prenatal care for illegal immigrants and is in a battle over providing Medicaid to our CITIZENS who need health coverage?

Our governor, along with some legislators, have repeatedly stated that they are concerned about whether or not the federal government for sure can pay its share, yet for some reason, there is no concern over its ability to pay this estimated \$286,000 next year. By the way, these estimates probably are way too low, since illegal immigrants do not want their status known for fear of deportation.

My youngest daughter, who is a full-time college student and works part-time, had Medicaid coverage until she turned 19. Now she, along with all the others who no longer are eligible for Medicaid, does not have health insurance because she does not have the finances to do so. Since I am on Medicare, and as far as I know her father still has no health insurance, she is on her own.

There is something fundamentally wrong with the thought process that rewards irresponsibility and illegal acts over the care of our own citizens who through no fault of their own find themselves unable to afford health insurance.

If that can't be done, there is something very wrong in Pierre.

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