

Assembly

MINUTES OF MEETING ON AGRICULTURE - 55th Nevada Assembly

Virgil Getto, Chairman

Tuesday, Feb. 25, 1969

Present: Getto, Brookman, Close, Young, Howard, Dini, and Hafen.

Absent : None

Chairman Getto introduced Senator Len Harris, James W. York, York Meats; Emile J. Iratcabel, McCoy Meat Company; Eddie Bracken, Ruby Mountain Packing; Bill Mendes, Carson Valley Meat Company, Minden; Larry Wolf, City-County Health Department, Fallon; Dr. Ernest Gregory, Department of Environmental Health; Webster Hunter, and Mr. Ray Knisely.

He announced the purpose of the meeting was another hearing on the meat inspection law. The budget, mentioned in the minutes of the first Meat Inspection hearing on February 5th, was presented to the committee by Mr. Web Hunter.

Mr. Getto announced that Dr. Amsiejus would not be able to attend the meeting, as his plane had been unable to leave Phoenix due to the snow.

He said he had talked briefly with Senator Cannon about getting a moratorium, and he said it was possible, (although he was not too encouraging).

He said he had taken the Resolution down to the bill drafter yesterday and asked for a redrafting. The first request was asking for a stay, or a moratorium. The moratorium is December 15, 1969.

Mr. Hunter said the way this law reads, they can't oppose everybody. "In a matter of 15 years, every meat plant in the country will be Federal. State plants won't be existing at that time."

Mr. Young asked Dr. Gregory what he had to say about this. "Are you pretty much of the opinion that the situation is going to be right on the 15th of December that these plants will have to be up to standard?"

Senator Harris said, as he understood it, if you were in the process of building a plant, they would give you time; otherwise, it would have to be on that date."

Hunter: "If the Meat Act is not adopted at this Session, there won't be another year. If the Nevada Meat Act is not adopted, the Federal people are coming in here and intimidate Nevada people".

The Federal Government has laid down pretty much of a guideline, such as how many plants one person can be in charge of, and has even taken into consideration the pay scale, to make it commensurate with the Nevada State pay scale, including retirement, etc. (Referring to the proposed budget, he said, there are 27 meat processors and 4 poultry plants. It will take this many people to take care of this thing, as guided by the Federal regulations.)

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One man could have 3 plants if they located within a reasonable proximity.

Regarding veterinarians - these are contract veterinarians. They would be employed in the manner they now are.

Mendes: "It will cost more to inspect these places than I make net profit in my business. I wonder if the State of Nevada wouldn't be better off to pay us to get out of business? Really, from my point of view, I would just as soon allow these people in Washington to have this on their conscience, and do like the Governor of Ohio said, "You got it, now take it, and eat it". I think it would be a good thing to tell them in Washington that 7,000 businesses are going down the drain".

Dr. Gregory said he would like to see the program completed within the State agencies.

Senator Harris said that last year they passed Resolution after Resolution asking for a closer look at this on a Federal level, and "I would like to ask Mr. Hunter what happened to this? If that had been followed through, we would have had the moratorium we asked for."

Mr. Hunter said not to blame this on Dr. Amsiejus, as Dr. Summers was then in charge, and this was sometime before they started their secret inspections.

Mr. Knisely said there was no point in fooling ourselves. "The only remedy is to get help from Washington. As far as talk about dirty meat in Nevada, the public now realizes it wasn't dirty meat in the State, but dirty politics in Washington. He said we certainly eventually should come up with something reasonable to Federal qualifications. Undoubtedly, a few will be put out of business anyway. If the Feds take this over, they can't get inspectors before 2 years anyway. A lot of things can happen in Washington in 2 years."

He suggested getting Norman Glaser to present this to our Nevada representatives, this Resolution, while he is back there.

Young: (to Chairman Getto) "Didn't you talk to the Senator (Cannon) about this? Getto replied, "He didn't give us much hope".

Harris: "In that Resolution, you should insert in there that they obtained this meat inspection act under fraud."

Knisely: "We have tried that. It only causes harm and does no good".

Getto: "When I talked to Senator Cannon, I told him I had been made aware that there was some fraud in their assessment of the meat industries. He said they had verified statements to back them up".

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Mendes said he still maintains that if the Federal Government can loan money to disaster areas, why can't they loan money to legislative disasters, "and that is what this is to the meat industry". "The dairy people are not too far away from here. Let's hope they aren't sitting here 3 years from now going through what we are going through right now".

Mr. Young asked Mr. Getto if he had a copy of the proposed plans, and Mr. Getto replied he had them.

Mr. Iratcabel said they could get their plans up to what they thought was Federal level of standards, and they could still put them out of business for one little violation.

Mr. Howard suggested getting Dr. Amsiejus here to talk to them about federal building standards for the plants and about the needed Federal appropriation to bring the plants up to standard.

Mr. Hunter said he would suspect that Dr. Amsiejus would say that this is not in his category, and he is just a meat inspector himself. "But in all fairness, I think you should talk to Dr. Amsiejus. He will tell their side and how they are going to toy along with these little meat plants".

Mr. Getto asked him if he meant if we have a state program, or if we have a Federal policy it will be stiffer?

Hunter: "If Federal people take over, it will be strictly a federal house, like Blue Ribbon".

Mr. York asked if foreign meats would be inspected under these same regulations.

Mr. Hunter replied no, he didn't believe so, that there were other regulations governing imported meat.

Mr. Mendes asked about the appropriation of funds necessary to bring Nevada plants up to Federal standards.

Mr. Getto replied that the money had not yet been appropriated.

Mr. Hunter said the Federal Government would not come up with their half until it had been determined that this State law had been adopted. Then they will come up monthly with a check to Nevada. He said when we talk about \$200,000, this is the overall program, providing the Federal Government has funds for it.

Mr. Getto announced the Resolution would be out "today or tomorrow". He said, "To summarize, the feeling is that the industry is not in a position for a State program. Is that right? From the comments you have made, we just as well drop it in the laps of the Federal Government?"

Young: "I think we would be better off."

Getto: I think we should tell them, No. 1, the State cannot participate in this program, the Wholesome Meat Act.

2. We should ask for a definite stay of the moratorium - 2 years.

3. We should ask the State of Nevada for cheap money - low cost financing.

Dr. Gregory told the committee that meat inspection in the State of Nevada is presently handled under the Bureau of Environmental Health, under an environmental health program. They inspect, besides slaughter houses and meat processing plants, hotels and motels, restaurants in general, all places where food is served or dealing with food. That is the basis on which the Feds say we have no meat inspectors in the State of Nevada. They say that the meat inspectors should be in the plants at all times, on the floor 8 hours a day. If that is so, then why not an inspector in each restaurant all day to see if the eggs are properly fried?"

Mr. Getto said he could see inspectors in the plants where the killing is done, possibly for the purpose of anti-mortem as well as post mortem inspections.

Mr. Bracken replied that anti-mortem as well as post mortem inspections are presently being given, and paid out of their own pockets, and not by the State.

Dr. Gregory asked if we couldn't write our own law, but make it more stringent than the Federal law.

Mr. Iratcabel said California is writing their own.

Mr. Hunter said that according to the Federal Wholesome Meat Act, no matter what kind of State law you have, the Feds still can come in and inspect, and if it isn't up to Federal standards, they can still close you down".

Mr. Getto agreed and said that the Feds can come in any time without notifying you.

Mr. Hunder said the Federal people at this time could care less about the retail level. "Just the people in the wholesale business they are after".

"Mr. Gregory is still going to be in the meat inspection business regardless of how this thing goes, because his people will have to take care of local markets, etc."

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Getto: "Senator Cannon said to go ahead and draft a Resolution for a moratorium. He thought it might go".

Brookman made a motion that the committee invite Dr. Amsiejus to come talk to them. Seconded by Howard. Unanimously carried.

Senator Harris said he was going downstairs to the Governor's Office and place a call to Senator Bible and Congressman Baring in Washington, and invited the people from the industry to go down with him.

Chairman Getto again went over the points to be included in the Resolution.

1. Moratorium

2. That it is the conclusion of the Legislature of the State of Nevada that these people are in dire need of cheap money, and ask that they consider the interest rate.

3. The fact that the State of Nevada, at this time, cannot cooperate with the Federal Government in the Wholesome Meat Act, unless they ~~can~~ comply with us.

Chairman Getto adjourned the meeting.

MEAT PROGRAM

SALARY COSTS			
Position	No. of Positions		Total
Meat Inspectors	14		\$110,726.42
Veterinarians	5	Part Time - On Contract Basis	24,000.00
Meat Pathologist	1		12,000.00
Program Director	1		11,485.45
Secretary - Clerk	1		<u>4,575.70</u>
TOTAL SALARY COST			\$162,787.57
TRAVEL COSTS			
Inspectors			9,800.00
Director			<u>2,400.00</u>
TOTAL TRAVEL			\$12,200.00
TRAINING COST		42 days Out-of-State @ \$25.00 per day for all inspectors and director	\$15,750.00
RENT, PHONE, HEAT, SUPPLIES, ETC.		10% of Other Costs	\$19,073.75
ESTIMATED TOTAL YEARLY COST OF PROGRAM			\$209,811.32

1. Staffing requirements were determined from U.S. D.A.'s criteria for proper staffing under Title III of Wholesome Meat Act.
2. Training cost will be considerably reduced after program is fully staffed and trained.