

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND INSURANCE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Sandy Praeger at 9:30 a.m. on February 13, 2001 in Room 234-N of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Committee staff present:       Dr. Bill Wolff, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
  Ken Wilke, Office of the Revisor of Statutes  
  JoAnn Buntten, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

                  Kansas State Senator Lynn Jenkins  
                  Kathleen Sebelius, Kansas Insurance Commissioner  
                  Meg Stockton, Topeka Mother  
                  Gary Brunk, Executive Director, Kansas Action for Children, Inc.  
                  Melissa Ness, CEO and VP of Services and Advocacy, Kansas Children's Service League  
                  Jim Redmon, Director of Prevention and Community Based Services, KCSL  
                  Andy Sanchez, Executive Assistant, Kansas Association of Public Employees

Others attending: See attached list.

**Hearing on: SB 151 - State employee health plans; removal of waiting period for child coverage**

Kansas State Senator Lynn Jenkins, testified before the Committee in support of **SB 151** which would require employers participating in the state employees health benefit program to pay the full cost of covering employees' children who would be eligible for HealthWave benefits. Senator Jenkins pointed out that a small group of kids are not getting the health care they require due to a provision within the Federal Program that excludes families that have access to state employee insurance. This bill would provide health insurance to those children. (Attachment 1) During Committee discussion Senator Jenkins noted that Texas is one state that addressed this problem in their "SKIP" program as they saw the need to cover children of state employees. She suggested the Committee might want to consider this issue as a pilot project or have the state provide a portion of the cost for coverage of the child. Kansas currently contributes approximately 35% of the cost of dependent coverage or \$33.19 per employee.

Kathleen Sebelius, Kansas Insurance Commissioner, expressed her support for the bill. She stated that it is a well-known fact that access to health care coverage is crucial to the well-being of Kansas children. (Attachment 2)

Meg Stockton, Topeka Mother, told of the experience with her daughter who suffered from ear infections since birth. The Stocktons currently have no health insurance because they can't afford the extra \$250 per month that health insurance through either of their employers would cost. (Attachment 3)

Gary Brunk, Executive Director, Kansas Action for Children, Inc., (Attachment 4); Melissa Ness, CEO and VP of Services and Advocacy, Kansas Children's Service League, (Attachment 5); and Jim Redmon, Director of Prevention and Community Based Services, KCSL, expressed their support for the bill.

Andy Sanchez, Executive Assistant, Kansas Association of Public Employees, said that he has had a number of inquiries from both employees of the state for their own concern as well as for the concern of fellow employees about the unavailability of HealthWave, and urged the Committee's support for the bill. (Attachment 6)

During Committee discussion on the fiscal note of the bill, it was agreed upon that it would be difficult to determine the number of children who would benefit from **SB 151** because the number of eligible children of state employees is currently unknown. It was also suggested that a cap could be placed on expenditures for employees with children who would meet the income guidelines for HealthWave or the cost be subjected to tobacco settlement money.

## CONTINUATION SHEET

There were no opponents to **SB 151**.

### **Action on SB 101 - Health Insurance; HIPAA technical changes**

Senator Feleciano made a motion the Committee recommend **SB 101** favorable for passage, seconded by Senator Corbin. The motion carried.

### **Action on SB 142 - Authorization of special orders by bank commissioner**

Committee discussion on the bill, also known as the “wild card” authority of the bank commissioner, related to deletion of subsection (f) on page 2, lines 26 to 29, that defined “insured depository institution” or just striking the words “or a credit union” in that subsection.

Senator Teichman made a motion to strike the words “or a credit union” on page 2, line 27.

Senator Feleciano made a substitute motion that would add two new sections in the bill relating to savings and loans and credit unions having full parity with banks, seconded by Senator Corbin. The motion carried

Senator Feleciano made a motion that the Committee recommend **SB 142 as amended** favorable for passage, seconded by Senator Corbin. The motion carried.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Senator Corbin made a motion to approve the Committee minutes of February 6, 7 and 8, seconded by Senator Feleciano. The motion carried.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m. The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for February 14, 2001.