

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

April 20, 1993 Hearing Room E 1:30 p.m. Tapes 55-56

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rep. Carolyn Oakley, Chair Rep. Jim Whitty, Vice-Chair
Rep. John Meek Rep. John Schoon Rep. Larry Sowa Rep. Sharon Wylie

MEMBER EXCUSED: Rep. Patti Milne

STAFF PRESENT: Linda Sample Brown, Committee Administrator
Carolynn Gillson, Committee Assistant

MEASURE & ISSUE CONSIDERED: HB 3350 - Directs OSB E to develop curriculum commemorating formation of provisional government at Champoeg, PAW Infor. on proposal to relocate School for the Blind to the School for the Deaf

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These minutes contain materials which paraphrase and/or summarize statements made during this session. Only text enclosed in quotation marks report a speaker's exact words. For complete contents of the proceedings, please refer to the tapes. [--- Unable To Translate Graphic ---]

TAPE 55, SIDE A

005 REP. CAROLYN OAKLEY, chair: Calls the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

Public Hearing on HB 3350 Rep. John Meek Norma Paulus, Superintendent of Public Instruction Marv Evans, Confederation of Oregon School Administrators (COSA) Jim Green, Oregon School Boards Association (OSB A)

028 REP. JOHN MEEK, District 5: Reviews the three elements in the bill: recognizes May 2 as birth of Oregon; asks OSB E to develop curriculum; and sets aside the week of May 2 for schools to study Oregon history. > Refers to the -1 amendment which deletes "shall" and inserts "is encouraged to" (EXHIBIT A).

075 NORMA PAULUS, Superintendent of Public Instruction: Supports the bill with the -1 amendment. Refers to brochure containing activities that are tied to the 150th anniversary of the Oregon trail (EXHIBIT B).

136 MARV EVANS, COSA: Supports the bill with the amendment.

151 JIM GREEN, OSB A: Supports the bill as amended and will get the word out to school boards and local districts concerning the subject.

Information on proposal to relocate School for the Blind to the School for the Deaf Norma Paulus, Superintendent of Public Instruction Maureen Otiz, Department of Education (DOE) Karen Brazeau, DOE Jane Mulholland, Oregon School for the Deaf (OSD) Rick Burke, DOE Greg McMurdo, DOE Marty Haggerty, Oregon School for the Blind (OSB) parent and Alliance for the Blind Cheron Mayhall, OSD parent Doris Marcy, Oregon Council for the Blind Sharon Bendtzen, OSB parent Carla McQuinlan, National Federation

for the Blind (NFB)

178 CHAIR OAKLEY: Reviews the issue to be discussed and refers to letter from the House Appropriations Committee (EXHIBIT C).

195 NORMA PAULUS, Superintendent of Public Instruction: There have been many unsuccessful attempts in the past to close the School for the Blind. Governor's Program Review Committee from last interim recommended closing both schools. > Reviews the steps she and the DOE have taken to come up with a better plan to serve those students. Proposes closing School for the Blind at the present location and relocating the program at the School for the Deaf. > Provides statistics and budget information concerning both schools (EXHIBIT D). > Ample room at the School for the Deaf for both programs and still keep them separate. Never intended to merge programs. > Under the Governor's budget, if programs continue the way they are, only can handle 30 students at the School for the Blind and 77 at the School for the Deaf. > Sending children back to their own district is not an option. > Relocation is best way to continue programs budget-wise and content-wise. > Suggests putting proceeds from sale of School for the Blind building into a trust fund to be used for renovation and maintenance costs. > Parent and staff representatives visited Arizona where the two programs are on the same campus. > Committee of parents and staff from the School for the Blind are involved in decision-making. > Arrangements for sale not made yet.

391 REP. SHARON WYLIE: Is there a continuing population of students at the two schools as well as recently impaired students who go to the schools for instruction and return to their community?

PAULUS: Blind School has 47 permanent residents who are multiply handicapped and 400 who come in for daily or weekly training. Population has diminished because of state policy and federal law.

422 REP. JOHN SCHOON: If you sell the building, can you spend the money without legislative approval?

PAULUS: Explains the process set forth in HB 2092 which is before the House Appropriation Committee. > DOE can do a lot of the work without legislative approval but would rather come to some agreement with the Legislature. > Met with city representatives concerning improving accommodations for blind students. > Neighborhood association supports the improvements.

TAPE 56, SIDE A

022 CHAIR OAKLEY: Have you had any estimates on construction costs?

PAULUS: We received authority from the E-Board to start the process but have delayed taking further steps until the Legislature acts on it. > Department of General Services appraises the Blind School at \$4.5 million which we feel is low. Proceeding to get private appraisal done. > Lists groups that would be interested buying the property.

059 MAUREEN OTIZ, DOE: Explains population at both schools is starting to increase. Waiting list for assessments but not placement at the School for the Blind.

084 KAREN BRAZEAU, associate superintendent, DOE: Reviews background on programs at both schools prior to 1976 when the law was changed

and local school districts were required to serve all children with disabilities. > Since 1976, capacity to serve these kids locally has increased. > Need a ranges of options for these kids and a state center of knowledge for teaching kids with vision and hearing impairments. > Explains how the move would help the staff for the School for the Blind concentrate on their program and not on threats of closure. > Similar issue across the nation. > Refers to information on costs per student at both schools (see EXHIBIT D).

159 OTIZ: Costs more for the students at the School for the Blind because they are often multiply handicapped and need more support services. > Identifies main areas of need for the School for the Blind including student assessment, transition services, staff professional development and keeping up with changing technology. > Talks about the planning process for providing an appropriate education program to both deaf and blind populations. If relocation takes place, the same level of service can be provided with 10 fewer staff positions. > Talks about the costs of maintenance at the present School for the Blind location. > Energy savings from the relocation would be substantial. > Reviews steps OTAC, the architectural firm, has taken when considering building design. > Talks about addressing concerns of the Highland Neighborhood Association. > Lists some improvements resulting from the relocation. > Will have proposed costs in mid-May.

333 JANE MULHOLLAND, principal, Oregon School for the Deaf: Reviews her background and talks about the program of OSD. > Talks about program in Arizona.

TAPE 55, SIDE B

006 MULHOLLAND: Conflicts will arise and can be dealt with. School environment is good place to work on confrontation skills. Really is a diversity issue with two very different populations. > Reviews list of resources and services that could be maximized with the relocation (EXHIBIT D). > Programs located together can be successful.

063 RICK BURKE, DOE: Costs could range between \$5 and \$6 million for new construction and remodeling. The net difference between the proceeds of the sale from the current Blind School property and the construction costs will be available later. Plan involves finding funding and creating a living trust for improvements.

124 REP. LARRY SOWA: Sounds like you are talking about a \$5 or \$6 million sale and spending \$5 or \$6 million to build on the other campus.

BURKE: Yes, and in return we hope to have a better, lower cost program.

160 GREG McMURDO, DOE: We are talking about a possible 10-year time period. We have two different figures - value of property sold which can be used for capitol construction and approximately \$1 million a biennium savings in maintenance costs.

169 MARTHA HAGGERTY, president of Alliance for the Blind Children and parent of son at OSB : The Alliance supports the proposed move of OSB . > Explains how important the OSB program and staff are for her son. > Talks about her visit to Arizona and how impressed she was.

214 CHERON MAYHALL, OSD parent: Talks about past proposals to close OSB and send the children home. > Explains the importance of congregated opportunities for deaf and blind students. > Talks about

the kids who go to these schools. > Decline in student population at OSB and OSD makes costs per pupil greater. > Consolidation on one site is not preferred but may be only way for both programs to be strong and survive.

306 DORIS MARCY, executive director, Oregon Council for the Blind: Reviews her testimony which outlines the reasons why the Council does not support moving the OSB (EXHIBIT E). > Refers to list of 39 questions they are seeking answers to. > Have not had opportunity to review construction plans. > No written report issued by the various groups convened by the Superintendent to study the merger of the schools. > Would like opportunity to consider options other than closure. > Need assurance all the revenue from the sale of OSB will be used for the new facility.

TAPE 56, SIDE B

043 SHARON BENDTZEN, parent of blind student: Reviews her testimony listing several areas of concern related to closing OSB and moving to the OSD campus (EXHIBIT F). > Feels the two populations are incompatible.

125 CARLA McQUINLAN, National Federation for the Blind of Oregon: Long standing policy of NFB not to support any move, relocation or changes in the current location of the OSB. > In light of Measure 5, we have determined the program is the critical issue and it should be kept intact. > Without necessary skills, blind children will not stand a chance for competitive employment. > If extra effort is made to protect these children from certain circumstances beyond their control in their daily travel and in efforts to fully participate in society, we are in fact placing greater limitations on them than society already does. They need to be equipped to travel in any environment. > Convenience is rarely offered in terms of transportation and children need to learn when they are very young children how to handle challenges. > Relocation of the campus will provide a larger capacity for student influx for short periods to learn skills and then return to mainstream classrooms. > NFB hopes to see the quality of education for the blind improve tremendously with this change.

208 REP. SCHOON: Expresses his appreciation for those who have worked to continue the program wherever it is located.

CHAIR OAKLEY: We will be bringing this issue back and give the DOE an opportunity to address some of the questions that have been raised. The Appropriations Committee would like a recommendation from this committee as soon as possible.

Work Session on HB 3350

255 MOTION: Rep. Meek moves to adopt the HB 3350-1 amendment. > There are no objections.

MOTION: Rep. Meek moves HB 3350 as amended to the floor with a do pass recommendation.

VOTE: In a roll call vote, the motion carries with all members present voting AYE. Reps. Milne and Wylie are excused. Carrier: Rep. Meek.

Reviewed and submitted by:

Carolynn Gillson Assistant

EXHIBIT LOG: A - HB 3350-1 amendment - Rep. John Meek - 2 pages B -
Testimony on HB 3350 - DOE - 10 pages C - Testimony on OBS relocation
proposal - House Appropriations Committee - 1 page D - Testimony on OBS
relocation proposal - DOE - 3 pages E - Testimony on OBS relocation
proposal - Oregon Council of the Blind - 11 pages F - Testimony on OBS
relocation proposal - Sharon & Bob Bendtzen - 2 pages