

[Jt. Res. No. 28, S.]

[Deposited Apr. 2, 1931.]

No. 54, 1931.

JOINT RESOLUTION

Relating to a special committee on the cut-over land and tax problem in northern Wisconsin.

WHEREAS, Tax delinquency is a problem of alarming and increasing seriousness in the great majority of counties of northern Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, Many of the local governmental units in northern Wisconsin are virtually bankrupt and taxes throughout this portion of the state are so high as to stifle development; and

WHEREAS, This situation calls for a carefully thought out, comprehensive program to help northern Wisconsin in such a manner as to insure its steady economic development and enduring prosperity; therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, the Assembly concurring, That a special committee consisting of three senators and four assemblymen, to be appointed by the presiding officers of the respective houses, be created to study the cut-over land and tax delinquency problem in northern Wisconsin and to make recommendations thereon to the legislature.

That said committee shall inquire particularly into the reasons for the existence of the high rate of delinquency and the present high tax rates. It shall also study the possible uses to which unproductive cut-over lands might be put, including more extensive forestry and reforestation and the feasibility of employing prison labor in such work. It shall further investigate the present methods of forest fire prevention and forest fire fighting, the efficiency thereof, and the best possible organization of this governmental function. It shall further consider the value and advantages of economic surveys to determine the best uses to which the lands in northern Wisconsin may be put, including the feasibility of removing persons now located on isolated lands or lands not suited for agriculture to better located and more fertile lands. It shall also consider the possibilities for reducing taxes through the con-

solidation of governmental units and otherwise, and shall generally inquire into all phases of the economic situation in northern Wisconsin and the practicality of suggested measures for relief.

That the specific mention of any line of inquiry herein shall not in any way limit the field of investigation which said committee is empowered to enter upon and which it shall deem expedient in connection with the subject matter assigned to it for consideration.

That the said committee is authorized to hold such meetings and at such dates as it may deem advisable, and any member of said committee shall have power to administer oaths to persons appearing before it.

That said committee may, by subpoena issued over the signature of its chairman or acting chairman and served in the manner in which circuit court subpoenas are served, summon and compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of all books, papers, documents, and records necessary or convenient to be examined and used by them in their investigation.

That if any witness subpoenaed to appear before said committee shall refuse to appear to answer inquiries propounded, or shall fail or refuse to produce books, documents, papers, or records within his control when the same are demanded by the committee, it shall report the facts to the circuit court of Dane county, and it shall be the duty of such court to compel obedience to such subpoena by attachment proceedings for contempt, as in the case of disobedience of the requirements of a subpoena issued from such court or a refusal to testify therein.

That said committee shall make a preliminary report to the present legislature, with such bills as it may see fit to recommend, and after the adjournment of the legislature shall continue its studies and investigations as an interim committee, and shall make a final report to the legislature of 1933 at the opening of its session, with drafts of bills in accordance with its recommendations.