

STATE OF WISCONSIN
Assembly Journal
Ninety-First Regular Session

THURSDAY, August 18, 1994

The chief clerk makes the following entries under the above date:

COMMUNICATIONS

May 17, 1994

Speaker Walter Kunicki
Room 101 - Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Speaker Kunicki:

As you are aware, I have been elected to the position of Green County Circuit Court Judge for a term which begins August 1, 1994.

Accordingly, I am hereby resigning from my position as State Representative for the 80th Assembly District, effective July 31, 1994.

I have very much enjoyed my tenure in the Wisconsin State Assembly and my association with you and other members of the Legislature during this time. I am looking forward to the opportunity to serve the residents of Green County in a new capacity.

Sincerely,
DAVE DEININGER
State Representative

SPEAKER'S APPOINTMENTS

August 16, 1994

Representative Lorraine Seratti
100 North Hamilton, Room 403
P.O. Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Representative Seratti:

Due to the election of Representative David Deininger as the Circuit Court Judge of Green County, it is my pleasure as Speaker of the Assembly to appoint you to the Joint Legislative Council to fill his vacancy.

This appointment is effective immediately.

Sincerely,
WALTER KUNICKI
Assembly Speaker

REFERRAL OF AGENCY REPORTS

State of Wisconsin
Commissioner of Insurance
Office of Health Care Information
Madison

June 1994

To the Honorable the Legislature:

Pursuant to s. 153.25, Wis. Stat., the Office of Health Care Information (OHCI) is pleased to submit to the Governor and to the Legislature its fourth hospital report on mortality and morbidity. As stipulated in s. 153.40 (6), Wis. Stat., OHCI provided hospitals the opportunity to review and comment on their data. Written hospital comments have been included in the report.

OHCI wishes to express its appreciation and thanks to the members of the Mortality/Morbidity Technical Advisory Committee for their valued assistance in the planning and organization of this report, as well as to all Wisconsin hospitals that were part of the reporting process.

Please contact OHCI if you or your staff would like additional copies of this report, or have any questions.

Sincerely,
TRUDY KARLSON
Director
Office of Health Care Information

Referred to committee on Health.

July 11, 1994

Mr. Thomas T. Melvin
Assembly Chief Clerk
1 East Main Street, Suite 402
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Mr. Melvin:

Pursuant to Chapter 231.35(8) of Wisconsin Statutes, the Wisconsin Health and Educational Facilities Authority submits the following report for distribution under s. 13.172(2):

The Rural Hospital Loan Guarantee Program (RHLGP) is operational. Announcements and information about the program are periodically published in WHEFA newsletters and other healthcare newsletters. The first and only application to-date for the program was received and a guarantee issued during the past

Authority fiscal year ending June 30, 1994. The Osceola Medical Center secured a \$100,000 guarantee amount from the Rural Hospital Loan Guarantee Fund to enhance a \$500,000 local bank loan. The annual revenue of Osceola Medical Center for the fiscal year ending December 31, 1993 was \$3,834,419. To the best of our knowledge, no default on the guarantees has or is occurring.

The Rural Hospital Loan Guarantee Fund has been funded with \$500,000 of state appropriations and currently has a fund balance of \$553,521.42, with \$100,000 of that balance designated to Osceola Medical Center.

The Authority will continue to administer the RHLGP and work with eligible borrowers as applications are submitted.

Sincerely,
LARRY NINES
Executive Director
Wisconsin Health & Educational
Facilities Authority

Referred to committee on Health.

State of Wisconsin
Department of Health and Social Services
Madison

August 3, 1994

To the Honorable the Assembly:

As required in Section 227.485(9) and 814.245(10) of the Wis. Stats., I am submitting the report concerning decisions and resulting payments of Attorney fees and related legal costs. Attorney fees and other legal costs are to be paid whenever the opposing party to an agency's Chapter 227 hearing prevails and it's determined the agency's position was not substantially justified. Payments for SFY 1994 are shown on the attached schedule.

In addition, the Department is required to report any awards granted to the Department regarding frivolous motions brought against this Department. If the hearing examiner determines that the motion of the opposing party in any Chapter 227 contested case is frivolous, the examiner may award the state agency all reasonable costs in responding to the motion. In SFY 1994, no motions of opposing parties were found to be frivolous. Consequently, the Department has no awards to report.

Sincerely,
GERALD WHITBURN
Secretary, DHSS

Referred to the committee on Children and Human Services.

State of Wisconsin
Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations
Madison

August 12, 1994

To the Honorable the Legislature:

Pursuant to the requirements of 1993 Wisconsin Act 16, Section 9130 (4x), I am transmitting a report relating to the conversion of the Wisconsin Fund from a grant program to a loan program.

The report provides information on the current grant program and discusses loan programs in general. Additionally, the report; (1) identifies possible advantages and disadvantages of converting the program; (2) provides a suggested timeline to allow for smooth transition of the program should the Legislature choose to convert the program next session; (3) identifies policy issues which would need to be addressed to determine the scope of program conversion costs and benefits and; (4) recommends that if the program is converted it should be transferred to an agency with the authority and expertise to administer loan programs.

Please contact me directly if you have any questions pertaining to the report.

Respectfully Submitted,
CAROL SKORNICKA
Secretary, DILHR

Referred to committee on Environmental Resources.

COMMUNICATIONS

State of Wisconsin
Legislative Audit Bureau
Madison

August 11, 1994

To the Honorable the Legislature:

We have completed an evaluation of the new technology available to assist in transition of circuit court proceedings, as requested by 1993 Wisconsin Act 16. At present, all circuit court proceedings are recorded by court reporters, who, upon request and for a fee, produce a written transcript.

Court reporters could be replaced by audio recording equipment in at least eight courtrooms where few transcripts are requested. Providing audio systems in every county as backup when court reporters are absent could also improve efficiency. After an initial cost of up to \$498,000, audio recording could save at least \$206,800 annually. However, when it is likely that a transcript will be requested, the savings in using audio equipment are reduced by the cost of personnel needed to track the proceeding and handle equipment malfunctions.

Advances in computer-aided transcription techniques have reduced by half the time a court reporter needs to

produce an official transcript from shorthand notes. While all court reporters should be required to use this technology to speed the litigation process, such a requirement calls into question the current compensation structure for court reporters.

Although they have been state employees since 1978, court reporters continue to supply all the equipment they use and to pay for training to update their skills. In return, they retain the statutorily prescribed fees charged for transcripts in addition to their regular salaries, which averaged \$33,660 in 1993. These fees, which totaled \$1.7 million in 1993, are intended to compensate for the cost of equipment and training as well as the extra hour reporters work to record lengthy proceedings and

produce transcripts on a timely basis. Since computer-aided transcription has reduced the time required, we believe the state should begin to pay for reporters' equipment, training and overtime and then retain the transcript fees to pay for these and other court costs.

We appreciate the courtesy and cooperation extended to us by staff in the Director of State Courts' office and other officials associated with the circuit courts. The Director of State Courts' response is the appendix.

Respectfully submitted,
DALE CATTANACH
State Auditor