

**MINUTES OF THE
MINORITY AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE**

Thursday, September 25, 2003 – 5:00 p.m. – Room 540 Horizonte Instruction and Training Center

Members Present:

Sen. James Evans, Chair
Rep. Chad E. Bennion
Rep. David L. Hogue
Rep. Roz McGee

Members Absent:

Rep. Eric K. Hutchings

Staff Present:

Mr. Jerry D. Howe, Policy Analyst
Ms. Esther D. Chelsea-McCarty, Associate General Counsel
Ms. Cassandra N. Bauman, Legislative Secretary

Note: A list of others present and a copy of materials can be found at <http://www.image.le.state.ut.us/imaging/history.asp> or by contacting the committee secretary at 538-1032.

1. Committee Business

Chair Evans called the meeting to order at 5:14 p.m. Rep. Hutchings was excused from the meeting.

Committee members introduced themselves and Sen. Evans explained the purpose of the subcommittee is to study the effectiveness of state agencies in delivering services to traditionally under served communities.

2. Public Comment Regarding Effectiveness of the Minority Affairs Policy of the State of Utah

Ms. Joanne R. Milner, Horizonte, distributed and presented "Access to Education: Hispanics in Utah Today and Tomorrow."

Ms. Karen Duffy, American Indian Foundation, expressed three of the most difficult problems American Indians face in Utah: (1) difficulty communicating, (2) significant death rates, and (3) sustaining Temporary Assistance for Needy Families moneys.

Mr. Forrest S. Cuch, Division of Indian Affairs, addressed questions from the subcommittee.

Ms. Nola Lodge, American Indian Foundation, expressed concern that teachers are not prepared to teach the American Indian students.

Ms. Corrie Jensen, Futures Through Training, distributed and reviewed "Utah's Farmworkers." She responded to questions.

Ms. Kyong-Hui Min, Korean Senior Citizen Group, indicated that dental costs, prescription fees, and copayments are increasingly more difficult for seniors to pay.

Mr. Krishra Chandra, India Forum of Utah, introduced his organization and explained that it is relatively new.

Mr. Tien Pham, representing the Vietnamese and Laotian communities, expressed the need for education to open opportunities for more than factory work for immigrants. He indicated that the community wants to be heard by its elected officials. He expressed the financial difficulties immigrants face when credit cards are easily obtainable when paychecks are not covering the bills. He indicated that bankruptcy later becomes a problem in this situation.

Ms. Naolapang Chideslie, representing the Thai Community, stated that nonresident college tuition fees and the inability to obtain a job to assist in paying those fees places a difficulty on the Thai citizens who come to Utah to receive advanced education.

Mr. Alfonso Brito, Consulate of Mexico, said that the wage claims process is very slow. He indicated that the Department of Labor and the Labor Commission may be understaffed. He stated that sometimes it costs more to dispute a claim than the claim is worth. He stated that companies require individuals to prove citizenship before they will pay an employee, but do not ask for that citizenship before they hire that individual to do the job.

Mr. Frank Corbon indicated that the minority communities should be united in their efforts to seek help. He stated that each minority community should attend the others festivities and become a greater voice to seek the representation that they are seeking.

MOTION: Rep. Bennion moved to open the meeting to a public forum to discuss solutions to the issues raised. The motion passed unanimously.

Committee members and the public discussed possible solutions to the issues raised.

Mr. David Luna and Ms. Bonnie Dew explained some of the current efforts being made to address the minority communities concerns.

Mr. Mosado Parmasa, Hispanic Advisory Council, stated that from the presentations it appeared that education was the largest issue and that the subcommittee may wish to start by addressing that issue.

3. Other Items / Adjourn

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 8, 2003 at 9:00 a.m.

Chair Evans adjourned the meeting at 8:05 p.m.