

March 15, 1982

LB 591, 714, 870
LB 875, 889, 948

PRESIDENT: The motion carries and LB 875 is advanced to E & R initial. Yes, you may read some matters in, Mr. Clerk, go ahead.

CLERK: Mr. President, your committee on Public Works whose chairman is Senator Kremer instructs me to report LB 889 advance to General with committee amendments attached. Senator Pirsch would like to print amendments to LB 948, Senator Goodrich to print amendments to LB 591 and, Mr. President, Senator Beyer would move that the Legislature reconsider its vote on the indefinite postponement of LB 870. That will be laid over. (See pages 1164-1165 of the Legislative Journal.)

PRESIDENT: The next bill then is LB 714, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr. President, LB 714 offered by Senators DeCamp and Fenger. (Read title.) It was first read on January 8 of this year, referred to Public Health and Welfare for hearing. The bill was advanced to General File, Mr. President. There are Public Health and Welfare Committee amendments pending.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Fenger for purposes of taking the committee amendments. Senator Fenger.

SENATOR FENGER: Thank you, Mr. President, fellow members, the committee amendment, that is the white copy in your bill book to LB 714 become the bill. In public hearing at the Health and Welfare Committee we heard some bizarre stories that concerned many of the children in our state. This bill is not submitted as a cure-all to the problem because frankly I lacked the necessary legal experience. I couldn't even estimate how far it will go toward solving the problem that it addresses. I would remind you there has been seven separate studies done regarding foster care and foster children the past seven years and it is obvious to me the studies alone haven't solved anything. An accurate figure is not available of the foster children of the state but the best estimate of use under the total foster care program number five thousand with eighteen hundred and fifty of them placed there as wards of the Department of Welfare. State funds involved in this area alone last year was \$13,600,000 not including administrative costs of the staff. I cite those figures to you only to show the magnitude of the problem. 714, as amended, provides for the establishment of a State Foster Care Review Board consisting of seven members, one member at large, two members from each of the three congressional districts. They are serving three year terms on a staggered basis. Appointments made by the Governor and the board is such it would be autonomous.