

January 11, 1951

Passed on File

House File 29

By PALMER

Passed House, Date

Vote: Ayes..... Nays.....

Passed Senate, Date

Vote: Ayes..... Nays.....

Approved

A BILL FOR

AN ACT to create a legislative council for the state of Iowa, describing its membership, prescribing its powers and duties, establishing a research and bill drafting service as a part thereof, and to make an appropriation therefor.

Be It Enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Iowa:

1 Section 1. There is hereby created as a permanent agency
2 a legislative council, hereinafter referred to as the council,
3 consisting of ten (10) senators to be appointed by the
4 president of the senate and ten (10) representatives to be
5 appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives
6 before the close of the Fifty-fourth General Assembly, and
7 during each regular session thereafter. Members of each
8 political party appointed from the senate shall, so far as
9 possible, be in proportion to the number of senators from each
10 party in the senate, and members of each political party
11 appointed from the house shall, so far as possible, be in
12 proportion to the number of representatives from each party
13 in the house. The president of the senate and the speaker
14 of the house shall be ex-officio members. Vacancies in the
15 appointive membership shall be filled in the same manner as

16 the original appointment. A chairman and a vice-chairman
17 shall be selected by the members. Subcommittees may be
18 appointed from the membership by the chairman. The first
19 meeting of the council shall be called by the president of
20 the senate within ten (10) days of each adjournment of a
21 regular session of the Assembly.

1 Sec. 2. The council shall function during the interim
2 between the adjournment sine die of one regular session of
3 the general assembly and the convening of the next succeeding
4 regular legislative session. It shall be the duty of the
5 council: (a) To collect information, conduct studies and
6 prepare written reports on all matters submitted to it by
7 the general assembly. (b) Any member of the general assembly
8 shall have the right to submit written legislative proposals
9 to the council, and it shall be the duty of the council to
10 give such proposals the consideration which it deems they
11 merit. (c) To study the matter of improving legislative
12 processes and procedure. (d) To conduct studies of questions
13 of public policy, issues of statewide public interest, matters
14 relating to the general welfare of the state, and methods and
15 procedures for increasing efficiency, effecting economies,
16 and improving the administration of state government and any
17 of its political subdivisions. (e) To accumulate and compile
18 such information as the council may consider useful to the
19 members of the general assembly, and to make the same available
20 to said members. (f) To examine the effects of previously

21 enacted statutes and recommended such amendments thereto as
22 the council deems advisable. (g) To prepare a legislative
23 program as in the opinion of the council the welfare of the
24 state may require, and submit the same to the next succeeding
25 regular legislative session. The adoption of such program,
26 or any part thereof, by the general assembly shall not be
27 compulsory; neither shall any existing rights or privileges
28 of any member thereof, with respect to the introduction of
29 legislative bills or legislative matters, be restricted nor
30 denied by reason of any provision of this act.

1 Sec. 3. The council may receive messages, recommendations
2 and proposals from the governor on such matters as he may
3 submit to the council for study.

1 Sec. 4. Each officer, board, commission department
2 and agency of the state government, or any of its political
3 subdivisions, shall make studies for and furnish such
4 information to the council as it may request.

1 Sec. 5. The council may hold hearings, public or
2 private, and make such investigations, examinations and
3 studies as said council may deem necessary or helpful in
4 any matter it has before it for study or consideration.

1 Sec. 6. In the discharge of any of the duties or
2 functions of the council, the presiding officer of said
3 council may issue a subpoena on behalf of and in the name
4 of the council, requiring any person to appear before it
5 and be examined with reference to any matter within the

3 which shall be under the general charge of an officer
4 designated as the director. The director shall be selected
5 and appointed by the council to serve at the pleasure of
6 the council and at a salary to be fixed by the council. All
7 other employees below the grade of director shall also be
8 selected and their compensation fixed by the council.

1 Sec. 12. The duties and powers of the legislative
2 research service shall be the following: (a) It shall serve
3 as the research agency of the council. (b) It shall perform
4 all other duties requested by the council. (c) It shall make
5 research studies and reports requested by any member of the
6 general assembly during the interim between regular
7 legislative sessions, subject to the rules and regulations of
8 the legislative council limiting the number of such requests
9 each member may make, and provided further that such research
10 studies do not interfere with research studies requested by
11 the legislative council. (d) During any legislative session,
12 it shall, when requested by a member of the general assembly,
13 make research studies for such member. (e) It shall serve as
14 the bill drafting agency of the legislative council. During
15 a legislative session, it shall furnish bill drafting service
16 to members of the general assembly. (f) It shall make reports
17 of its activities to the legislative council, at the times
18 and in the manner and form requested by said council, or
19 prescribed in its rules and regulations.

1 Sec. 13. In any research study requiring the expert

2 services of an outside person or organization, the council
3 shall have authority to employ an outside person or
4 organization to make the research, provided the council has
5 funds available to pay the cost thereof. The council shall
6 have authority to appoint advisory committees, the members of
7 which shall serve without compensation.

1 Sec. 14. Each department, board, commission and agency
2 of the state government of Iowa shall furnish to the legislative
3 research service copies of all reports which it is required by
4 law to make, as well as all printed publication which it issues.
5 Each of said departments, boards, commissions and agencies
6 is further required to make its records available to the
7 legislative research service upon request of the director
8 thereof or upon request of the legislative council.

1 Sec. 15. There is hereby appropriated from the general
2 funds of the state the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars
3 (\$25,000) annually, or so much thereof as may be necessary
4 for carrying out the provisions of this act, to be disbursed
5 on warrants drawn by the comptroller against such fund on
6 requisitions signed by the chairman, or vice-chairman if
7 acting as chairman, of the council.

1 Sec. 16. This act being deemed of immediate importance
2 shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage
3 and publication in the Evening Democrat, a newspaper published
4 at Fort Madison, Iowa, and the Daily Gate City, a newspaper
5 published at Keokuk, Iowa.

EXPLANATION OF H. F. 29

Legislatures are always on the alert to devise methods for the improvement of legislative processes and procedure. The purpose of this bill is to create a permanent legislative council with an adequate research department to study methods for that very purpose. Also, to study plans for increasing the efficiency and reducing the cost of state government and its political subdivisions; to consider matters affecting the general welfare of the state; to examine legislative proposals submitted to it by members of the general assembly, and to furnish such members progress reports of the activities of the council; to organize an adequate research department staffed with skilled personnel, and made available to members of the general assembly; also, to furnish said members competent bill drafting service, both prior to and during sessions. Further, to prepare a legislative program to be submitted at the next regular legislative session, and to furnish each member of the general assembly a copy thereof at least twenty days prior to the convening of said session. And, finally, to provide ample funds to permit the council to function properly.