

MINUTES
SENATE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, January 31, 2024

TIME: 8:00 A.M.

PLACE: Room WW55

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Guthrie, Vice Chairman Bernt, Senators Winder, Anthon, Harris, Lee, Toews, Wintrow, and Ruchti

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

NOTE: The sign-in sheet, testimonies and other related materials will be retained with the minutes in the committee's office until the end of the session and will then be located on file with the minutes in the Legislative Services Library.

CONVENED: **Chairman Guthrie** called the meeting of the Senate State Affairs Committee (Committee) to order at 8:00 a.m.

WELCOME: **Chairman Guthrie** welcomed all to the Committee meeting.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Senator Wintrow** moved to approve the Minutes of January 26, 2024. **Senator Bernt** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

PASSED THE GAVEL: Chairman Guthrie passed the gavel to Vice Chairman Bernt.

RS 31101 **Relating to State Employee Telework.** **Senator Guthrie** stated **RS 31101** established a telework policy for state employees. This policy modified an earlier proposal in two key ways. He remarked that **RS 31101** limited the number of employees who worked from home to 15 percent of the total workforce on any given day. The earlier proposal limited working from home to 25 percent per employee. Secondly, **RS 31101** eliminated language related to salary increases beginning on July 1, and related to how salary savings were utilized.

MOTION: **Senator Winder** moved to send **RS 31101** to print. **Senator Lee** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

PASSED THE GAVEL: Vice Chairman Bernt passed the gavel back to the Chairman.

RS 31091 **Relating to City Elections.** **Senator Wintrow** stated that **RS 31091** required cities with a population of 100,000 or more to hold an election for an unopposed office even in cases where only one person filed a declaration of intent for candidacy for mayor or city council. In prior elections, ballots were not printed in order to save resources. She remarked that after recent redistricting, citizens wanted to know which candidates were on their ballot. In large cities with other issues and candidates on the ballot, putting an unopposed candidate on the ballot did not add significantly to the cost of the election.

MOTION: **Senator Harris** moved to send **RS 31091** to print. **Senator Lee** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

RS 31100C1

Relating to Marriage. Senator Herndon stated that **RS 31100C1** eliminated the marriage license from Idaho Code but made no change to the eligibility or process of marriage. If two people wanted to marry, they paid fees and received a certificate from the county clerk. The officiant returned the certificate to the county clerk after the ceremony, at which point it was filed with the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare and served as proof of marriage. There was a certificate, but no license. In **S 1025**, which failed in 2023, the concern was that the burden of fee collection was placed on the officiant. He remarked that **RS 31100C1** removed the marriage license, but retained the current process.

DISCUSSION:

Senator Winder questioned why the change was necessary if the process was the same. **Senator Herndon** replied that a license implied that a citizen needed a grant of permission from the government. He stated that there were other groups and processes that did not require licensure. Marriage licenses had not always been required in Idaho. **RS 31100C1** removed the requirement that the state grant permission to marry. **Senator Winder** inquired how a certificate differed from a license, and asked what Senator Herndon was trying to accomplish. **Senator Herndon** stated that this removed the state as a grantor of permission, and resulted in a change in the perception of government's role in marriage. He stated that **RS 31100C1** also cleaned up old language in Idaho Code.

MOTION:

Senator Toews moved to send **RS 31100C1** to print. The motion died for lack of a second.

S 1250

LIQUOR - Amends existing law to revise provisions regarding licenses for waterfront resorts. **Brody Aston**, Public Affairs Associate, Westerberg and Associates, stated **S 1250** proposed economic development along a stretch of the Boise River that allowed businesses to be eligible for a riverfront liquor license. It enabled stream flow adjustment along the river impacted by seasonal irrigation and encouraged commercial development along the river in Boise and Garden City. **Mr. Aston** remarked that the development licenses were nontransferable and would not impact the quota system. Mr. Aston referenced 2 handouts. One contained the average stream flow requirements, and the other contained a greenbelt map. Copies of Mr. Aston's handouts are appended.

DISCUSSION:

Senator Wintrow asked to hear points of stakeholder agreement and opposition. She also inquired what benefits **S 1250** would provide. **Mr. Aston** stated that he worked with local developers and mayors. He remarked that the Mayor of Garden City would testify to those benefits. **Chairman Guthrie** noted that there was one person registered to testify in person and invited him to the podium.

TESTIMONY:

John Evans, Mayor of Garden City, stated he could address Senator Wintrow's question. He remarked that the Greenbelt along the river was a catalyst for urban development, especially regarding sit-down restaurants. Garden City encompassed 5 miles of riverfront. Approximately half of Garden City's revenue came from property taxes. He commented that high value commercial property taxes helped offset the cost of providing services to the residents. This fostered economic development. He supported **S 1250**.

DISCUSSION: **Senator Lee** thanked the Mayor for his leadership and asked how he addressed the question of which businesses in his community were granted liquor licenses and which were not? Why were riverfront business given preference? **Mayor Evans** responded that opportunity played into it. River frontage was limited. He remarked that demand drove the decisions. There was no impact on bars. **Senator Guthrie** inquired if there was anyone else online or in person who wanted to testify. There were none. **Senator Anthon** commented that a problem with Idaho liquor laws was that those situated on riverfront property were granted licenses while others were not.

MOTION: **Senator Harris** moved to send **S 1250** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Wintrow** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**. **Senator Lee** requested to be recorded as voting nay.

WELCOME: **Senator Harris, Senator Lee, Senator Anthon, and Senator Guthrie** recognized members of their local governments and county commissions who were present in the meeting and thanked them for their service.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Guthrie** adjourned the meeting at 8:28 a.m.

Senator Guthrie
Chair

Peggy Caraway
Secretary