

MINUTES  
**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Monday, February 06, 2012

**TIME:** 3:00 P.M.

**PLACE:** Room WW55

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Goedde, Vice Chairman Mortimer, Senators Andreason, Pearce, Fulcher, Winder, Toryanski, Malepeai, LeFavour

**ABSENT/  
EXCUSED:**

**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.

**H 382** **Chairman Goedde** welcomed **Traci Bent**, State Board of Education, to present H 382. She stated that this bill amends Section 33-3721 of Idaho Code, to remove a reference to state appropriations. This account was created by an act, however, the account was never formally set up. No appropriations have been run through the account. Auditors suggest that either the Code be followed or be changed to align with current practice.

**MOTION:** **Vice Chairman Mortimer** moved, seconded by **Senator LeFavour**, to send H 382 to the floor with a do pass recommendation. The motion carried by **voice-vote**. **Vice-Chairman Mortimer** will carry the bill on the floor.

**H 384** **Tracie Bent** presented H 384 to the committee. She explained that this bill is related to public institutions of higher education. It amends Section 33-3717B, Idaho Code. This revises the provisions of residency requirements for tuition purposes. It states that if a veteran who is stationed out of state but retains his/her residence status in Idaho, they and their dependents would be considered residents for tuition paying purposes

**Chairman Goedde** asked is a spouse considered a dependent. **Ms. Bent** replied no, the term dependent refers to a dependent child.

**Vice Chairman Mortimer** asked **Ms. Bent** if the state institutions waive tuition for all veterans. **Ms. Bent** replied not exactly, only if they maintain their Idaho residency status.

**Senator LeFavour** stated that through the JFAC hearings she is aware there is tuition assistance with the Air National Guard. She asked how this relates to that. **Ms. Bent** stated there are a number of different educational veteran assistance programs that were added a couple of years ago. This change should have been included in the original bill.

**MOTION:** **Senator Andreason** moved, seconded by **Senator Fulcher** to send the H 384 to the floor with a do pass recommendation. Motion carried by **voice-vote**. **Senator Andreason** will carry the bill on the floor.

**INTRODUCTIONS:** **Chairman Goedde** welcomed **Dr. Robert Kustra**, President Boise State University and former House Speaker **Bruce Newcomb** Government Affairs.

**Dr Kustra** introduced his guests; **Amy Johnson**, Government Affairs, and **Emily Walton** from Declo, the Associated Student Body Secretary, BSU.

**PRESENTATION:** **Dr. Kustra** began his presentation by highlighting the Clint Eastwood commercial, Half-time In America and played off the fact that if Detroit can come back so can America. He stated that higher education in America is coming back and BSU is going to lead the way. He suggested that the committee assume that there was no recession and then he asked the hypothetical question, would higher education be under any pressure to do anything different? He stated that the recession has caused the school to operate different due to the \$20 million in lost appropriations. But if there was not a recession the answer would be "YES." Technology has exploded, students learn differently and they process information differently suggests that education must find different ways to do business. Developing countries are catching up with America even in the global recession. America is falling behind in the international competition, therefore, it is time to change the business model in higher education; serve students differently and create a better product. **Dr. Kustra** then continued to describe the innovative work of students at BSU. Supporting document related to this testimony have been archived and can be accessed in the office of the Committee Secretary (see Attachment #1 & #2).

**Chairman Goedde** thanked **Dr. Kustra** for his presentation and then asked for questions from the committee.

**Senator Andreason** asked **Dr. Kustra** to explain more regarding the school funding comparison slide. He asked why BSU is last of the four colleges in per student funding and wanted to know the criteria for those numbers. **Dr. Kustra** answered that it is historical. He continued by adding that it does not happen in one year, it is not something that is done by design, he believes that it is an accidental result of an accumulation of factors that have occurred over the years and may have had to do with the growth in enrollment. BSU's enrollment was growing more rapidly than the other schools and JFAC could not fund the workload adjustments for all institutions. In 2006 when the state fixed the discrepancy at 50 cents to the dollar, that rate was still only half of the dollar difference. Boise State agreed then not to come back to the state for the other 50 cents left on the table. The work load adjustment was not funded for the past four years.

**Senator Fulcher** asked for an explanation of the graph slide. He asked what in general terms is BSU's tuition rate compared with the other universities in Idaho. **Dr. Kustra** replied that BSU's tuition rate is second lowest rate of all the universities. The school runs cost effective programs and the expenses are such the school operations office can control costs. BSU is working diligently to hold down tuition increases by holding down costs. A committee at BSU, made up of students, faculty, staff, and administrators have made their recommendations to be about a seven to eight percent increase in tuition. In the past two years **Dr. Kustra** has approved only a five percent increase. He suspects that the suggested increase for this year will be the same amount. To keep the costs down the university has had to restructure some programs and to eliminate programs that students no longer have enrollment interest. The graduate programs are self supporting programs.

**Vice Chairman Mortimer** asked **Dr. Kustra** if the BSU admissions office recommends College of Western Idaho to those applicants that are unable to get into BSU, due to grades. **Dr. Kustra** said those students are advised in the admissions process that there are schooling options other than BSU. **Vice Chairman Mortimer** then asked him how many of the students turned down from BSU are Idaho students? **Dr. Kustra** did not have that number. He said that a majority are probably from Idaho as the majority of BSU students are from Idaho.

**Chairman Goedde** asked **Dr. Kustra** if BSU offers any remedial classes. **Dr. Kustra** said yes that BSU does. About four years ago the university reworked the remedial classes because students were not able to pass them. He stated that the university then assessed their role in the pass/fail rate of students and has since encouraged departments to review how they teach remedial classes. The math department has successfully worked to make changes in its curriculum. All the gateway classes are being well executed.

**Senator Winder** is concerned about the debt that students were experiencing and asked **Dr. Kustra** if there are any programs being considered to help the impact of borrowing and taking on debt. **Dr. Kustra** said that the university spends time at orientation to speak with students and parents about the "real" cost of education. His goal for the next orientation is to review with incoming students and parent the financial impact of taking more than four years to graduate. Taking the minimum amount of time to complete a degree makes higher education affordable.

**Senator Malepeai** asked **Dr. Kustra** if he believed all universities should have minimum standards to get into the four year institutions. **Dr. Kustra** replied yes. The institutions are under increasing pressure from national and state boards to move more students through more efficiently. Idaho's college graduation rate is not very good. That rate is about 43 percent for the past six years. That 43 percent graduation rate is low because BSU contributes to that number. The graduation rate in 2003 was 28 percent, the retention rates were low. Both of those numbers have improved and the rates are going up. The students which lowered the level are in community colleges getting the attention they need. To improve that number, the university cannot enroll students with less than minimum standards as they slow all students' learning pace. He referred the committee to a website called [www.completecollegeamerica.com](http://www.completecollegeamerica.com) to see where Idaho measures against other states in graduation rates. **Dr. Kustra** reminded the committee with the opening of CWI, Boise State University changed the mission from a community college mission to a senior university mission.

**Senator Toryanski** asked **Dr. Kustra** to explain why the doctorate programs could not be supported with appropriation dollars. **Dr. Kustra** said it could be done but the university has chosen not to fund that program. When it comes to graduate programs, BSU has made the decision that the graduate programs they offer will be part of the Science Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) program. When it comes to funding programs the first priority is undergraduate students. While graduate programs are essential they cannot be financed with the precious appropriation dollars. Students in the graduate program are still enrolling and paying higher fees.

**Chairman Goedde** stated the committee had heard from the Office of Performance about the equity issue. The responsibility to bring equity forward is with the State Board of Education. He wanted to know what **Dr. Kustra's** outlook on any success is in getting equity in line. **Dr. Kustra** said he understood the State Board of Education is taking this under advisement. No one is disputing the issue; it is just how is the State Board going to get the schools to equal funding. This issue takes a long range plan to get the equity in line.

**Chairman Goedde** said dual credit enrollment has been characterized as one of the best ways to get a student out of high school and into a post-secondary institution. Does BSU track the percentage of students that have dual credits when entering the University? **Dr. Kustra** replied that they do but he will have to get that number to the committee.

Having no more questions **Chairman Goedde** thanked **Dr. Kustra** and adjourned at 3:58 P.M.

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Senator Goedde  
Chairman

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LeAnn South  
Secretary