

MINUTES
HOUSE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Monday, March 12, 2012

TIME: 9:30 A.M.

PLACE: Room EW40

MEMBERS: Chairman Loertscher, Vice Chairman Crane, Representative(s) Stevenson, Black, Anderson, Andrus, Bilbao, Luker, Palmer, Simpson, Guthrie, Henderson, McGeachin, Sims, Batt, Smith(30), King, Higgins, Buckner-Webb

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Representative(s) Bilbao, McGeachin, Higgins

GUESTS: Jeff Sayer, Director, Idaho Department of Commerce; Megan Ronk, Idaho Department of Commerce; Pam Eaton, Idaho Lodging & Restaurant Association; Dr. Gloria Totoricaguena, President, Transnational Initiatives Consulting; Dr. Xabier Irujo Ametzaga, Asst. Professor, Center for Basque Studies; Roy Eiguren, Sullivan, Reberger, Eiguren; Miren Eiguren; Pete T. Cenarrusa, Former Speaker of the House; Freda Cenarrusa.

Chairman Loertscher called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

Rep. Batt made a motion to approve the minutes of February 28, 29, and March 5, 2012 as written. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

RS 21211: **Roy Eiguren**, President of the Basque Cenarrusa Foundation, stated that **RS 21211**, a proposed Joint Memorial to request peace in the Basque region does not have the language that they would like to proceed. Mr. Eiguren requested that the committee hold **RS 21211**.

Dr. Gloria Totoricaguena, President, Transnational Initiatives Consulting; and **Dr. Xabier Irujo Ametzaga**, Assistant Professor, Center for Basque Studies; presented information on the history of the Basque country. Idaho has had decades of political relations with the Basque country beginning in 1938. Idaho currently ranks fourth in the number of Basque immigrants and just recently signed an economic agreement with the Basque country. The Basque population here in Idaho is very involved in a cultural exchange with their homeland and providing humanitarian aid. A memorial will encourage the peace process in Northern Spain after four (4) decades of dictatorship that worked to eliminate the Basque language, freedom of speech and the press, as well as their schools. The Idaho Legislature has passed three memorials beginning in 1972, 2002, and most recently in 2006, requesting to end the conflict in that region and choose peace.

Pete Cenarrusa, Former Speaker of the House, spoke of his involvement with the Basque country and their history and culture.

Chairman Loertscher stated **RS 21211** will be held in committee.

H 613: **Rep. Hartgen** deferred his time for presenting **H 613**, a bill to allow members of the Idaho Travel and Convention Industry Council serve more than once.

Pam Eaton, representing the Idaho Lodging and Restaurant Association, explained that **H 613** will allow the Idaho Travel Council to remain strong into the future. The main objective of **H 613** is to add the word "consecutive". Currently, members of the travel council serve only once. The Governor is unable to reappoint those connected with the major resorts, ski areas, and tourism who have already served on the council. Ms. Eaton explained that **H 613** will also change the appointment date of the council members from July 1 to January 1. Members of the Idaho Travel Council listen to grant application requests beginning in May and then award them in July. Changing the appointment date from July 1 to January 1 will allow them to see the completion of their work on the grants. Ms. Eaton stated that there are currently two (2) members on the council whose terms are scheduled to expire on July 1, 2012, and **H 613** extends their appointment until January 1, 2013. Ms. Eaton noted that Section 67-4713 deletes language that addresses removing a member of the council "for inefficiency, neglect of duty, misconduct in office" because this is hard to prove. Members serve at the pleasure of the Governor.

Jeff Sayer, Director, Idaho Department of Commerce, spoke **in support of H 613**. Mr. Sayer noted that in developing their short list of prospective members for appointment to the Idaho Travel Council, they found outstanding prospective members who are active in this field. Under current Idaho Code, they are not eligible because they have already been a member of the council. Mr. Sayer stated **H 613** will provide flexibility to go back and tap into talent and influencers who have already served on the council.

MOTION: **Rep. Guthrie** made a motion to send **H 613** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. Hartgen** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee; the meeting was adjourned at 10:17 a.m.

Representative Loertscher
Chair

Lissa Cochrane
Secretary