

MINUTES  
**SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

- DATE:** Wednesday, March 21, 2012
- TIME:** 1:00 P.M.
- PLACE:** Room WW02 - AUDITORIUM
- MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Hammond, Senators Keough, Winder, Rice, and Bilyeu
- ABSENT/ EXCUSED:** Vice Chairman Brackett, Senators Corder, Bair, and Werk
- 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.
- CONVENE:** **Chairman Hammond** called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and asked the secretary to take a silent roll. With a quorum present, he asked **Senator Winder** to present H414.
- H414:** **Senator Winder** said that this bill deals with the moving of funds from the Idaho Department of Agriculture to the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) for the purpose of updating the rail plan. This is an effort to bring the planning process up-to-date. We have a tremendous transition of main-line and short-line railroads that are local in nature and service regional lines in rural communities. There is a requirement to have a rail plan in place; the last one was done in 1996. It would allocate up to \$75,000 to help with the rail plan that would serve the State. The Senator deferred the rest of his presentation time to John Watts.
- John Watts is a partner at Veritas Advisors and represents WATCO Railroad, a short-line railroad company that is interested in railroad policy in Idaho. Mr. Watts explained the various primary and short-line railroads around the State and which lines affected the regions that the Committee members represent. Short-line railroads gather up products from various points around the State and transport them to the main hub of the primary lines. The point of this bill is that in the original act there was a call for a freight, truck, and rail plan. It has never been funded. This bill is hoping to change that. The Idaho Department of Agriculture has some funding and they would like the 16 year old plan updated. Maureen Gresham of ITD will help coordinate that effort. The bill transfers funds from the Idaho Department of Agriculture, not to exceed \$75,000, and moves them over to ITD to accomplish the update, refresh it periodically, and not let it fall behind in the future. Shippers need predictability in how they're going to move their products whether by truck or train or a combination of both. That is why they need insight into where the State is going with policies in years to come. It will help the main-lines and the short-lines in their planning processes. Mr. Watts encouraged a do-pass recommendation and stood for questions.
- QUESTIONS:** **Senator Bilyeu** asked who would be writing and doing research for this study. Mr. Watts said that Maureen Gresham of ITD would be coordinating the project. **Chairman Hammond** reminded the Committee that Ms. Gresham had presented ITD's freight study to the Committee recently. Mr. Watts indicated that Laura Johnson with the Idaho Department of Agriculture would be helping with the distribution of funds.

**MOTION:** **Senator Winder** moved to send H414 to the Senate floor with a do-pass recommendation. **Senator Bilyeu** seconded the motion. With no discussion, the motion passed by a unanimous voice vote. **Senator Winder** will carry the bill on the Senate floor.

**HCR49:** **Chairman Hammond** asked Helo Hancock, Legislative Director of the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, to take the podium to present HCR49.

Mr. Hancock said this resolution was drafted to honor and recognize Mildred Bailey. Ms. Bailey was a very famous jazz and big band era singer in the 1930's and 1940's. She was also a member of the Coeur d'Alene Tribe. Julia Keefe, a rising jazz singer and member of the Nez Perce Tribe, has dedicated her singing career to recognizing and trying to bestow proper credit to Mildred Bailey for her contribution to the jazz community. Ms. Keefe brought Ms. Bailey's contribution to the attention of the Coeur d'Alene Tribe and several legislators who were so impressed that they wanted to help with the recognition. One goal is to have Ms. Bailey recognized in the Jazz Hall of Fame in New York City.

Ms. Bailey was born in Tekoa, Washington, just off the Reservation line, but grew up on a family farm in Desmet, Idaho. Her family moved to Spokane when she was 13. Her mother, a very accomplished pianist, taught Ms. Bailey and her brother, Al, piano. They became close friends with a neighborhood kid named Harry Crosby, who went by Bing; they became lifelong friends. Ms. Bailey moved to Los Angeles in the early 1920's and became an instant success. She convinced her brother and Bing Crosby to move to Los Angeles where she got them their first jobs. Mr. Crosby credits Ms. Bailey for getting him a start in show business. Throughout her career, Ms. Bailey was able to conceal her Native American heritage. She was able to break the race barrier by performing with both white and black bands. She paved the way for future female singers. The Committee had no questions for Mr. Hancock.

**MOTION:** **Senator Keough** moved to send HCR49 to the Senate floor with a do-pass recommendation. **Senator Rice** seconded the motion. With no discussion, the motion passed by a unanimous voice vote. **Chairman Hammond** will carry the resolution on the Senate floor.

**COMMENTS:** **Senator Bilyeu** stated that she would like to hear some of Ms. Bailey's music. On his iPad, **Senator Winder** was able to find Ms. Bailey's famous rendition of "Thanks for the Memories," Bob Hope's theme song, and played it for the Committee.

**MINUTES:** **Senator Keough** moved that the Committee approve the minutes of the February 16, 2012 meeting of the Senate Transportation Committee. **Senator Bilyeu** seconded the motion. With no discussion, the motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

**Chairman Hammond** explained to the Committee that with the end of the session drawing near, Committee meeting minutes not already approved will be approved either via a hearing, buck slip, or at the will of the Chair. There were no questions or discussion.

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PRESENTATION:**

**Chairman Hammond** asked **Ben Stringham**, the Committee's Senate Page for the second half of this legislative session, to come to the podium. The Chairman commented on what a "class act" Mr. Stringham was, and how he had enjoyed visiting with him and appreciated his help with the Committee. He asked Mr. Stringham to share what he had learned and his thoughts on being a Senate Page.

Mr. Stringham began by stating he had learned a lot during his short time in the legislature. He came in not knowing what to think about the Senate or government in general. He quickly saw not his preconceived perception of a dusty room with people figuring out what to do, but he found a group of fine people that he has come to understand and appreciate. He enjoyed serving with the Senate Transportation Committee. He thanked each member of the Committee with a unique story of something they did that left behind a learning moment for him. At the end of his remarks he quoted from the renowned Mildred Bailey with a "Thanks for the memories!" He received a round of applause from the Committee.

**Chairman Hammond** presented Mr. Stringham with a letter of thanks from the Committee, a letter of recommendation from the Chairman, and gifts to remind him of his time as a Senate Page for the Senate Transportation Committee.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Chairman Hammond** reminded the Committee that there would be a meeting of the Committee the following day to hear H628aa. He would not be in Committee as he had a commitment in Coeur d'Alene he could not miss. **Vice Chairman Brackett** would, therefore, chair tomorrow's meeting. With no further business before the Committee, **Chairman Hammond** adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m.

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Senator Hammond  
Chairman

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Gaye Bennett  
Secretary