

MINUTES
JOINT MEETING
**HOUSE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
SENATE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

DATE: Wednesday, March 20, 2013

TIME: 8:00 A.M.

PLACE: WW02 - (Abraham Lincoln Auditorium)

MEMBERS: Chairman Loertscher, Vice Chairman Batt, Representatives Anderson(1), Andrus, Luker, Crane, Palmer, Sims, Barbieri, Holtzclaw, McMillan, Monks, Packer, Smith, Gannon, Woodings

Chairman McKenzie, Senators Davis, Fulcher, Hill, Winder, Lodge, Siddoway, Stennett, Werk

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None.

GUESTS: Don Curtis, Sr., self; Mistie Tolman, Add the Words Idaho; Chief Mike Masterson, Boise City Police Department; Jennifer Miesbach, self; Clark Krause, Boise Valley Economic Partnership.

Senator Webb-Buckner gave a short introduction relating to changes in the Idaho Human Rights Act and introduced the speakers.

Don Curtis, representing himself, stated he supports the future proposed additions to the language of the Idaho Human Rights Act. He stated he has studied Human Rights issues for years. He said he is a former executive and father of a gay/lesbian child. He said he has been involved in equal rights for the Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay and Transgender (LBGT) community for quite some time.

Mistie Tolman, representing "Add the Words Idaho," stated the future proposed additions to the language of the Idaho Human Rights Act is good for Idaho. She stated she is a mother and lesbian who has faced struggles in the workplace due to the stresses of keeping her sexual orientation a secret from her employer for fear of discrimination. She urged support of the additions to the Human Rights Act.

Chief Mike Masterson, Boise Police Department, Chief of Police, stated he is in support of the future proposed additions to the language of the Idaho Human Rights Act. He stated the police need the citizens trust and right now the LBGT community does not trust law enforcement. He said that most crimes in the LBGT community are not reported.

Jennifer Miesbach, representing herself, stated she is employed at Hewlett Packard in Boise, Idaho where she manages employees. She stated she has found that all of her employees want the same rights as others who work there. She stated she supports the additions to the Human Rights Act.

Clark Krause, Boise Valley Economic Partnership, Vice President, stated he supports the future proposed additions to the language of the Idaho Human Rights Act. He said his company is the largest sales and marketing company in Idaho. He stated that discrimination is bad for business. He said that if businesses do not accept diversity, they will lose their ability to get quality employees.

Dodds Hayden, Hayden Beverage, stated he supports the future proposed additions to the language of the Idaho Human Rights Act. He said there are 250 employees at his company and two of them are openly gay. He stated there is no difference in the quality of work from them compared to other employees.

In response to committee questions, **Mr. Curtis** stated he worked at Hewlett Packard for 28 years and retired thirteen years ago. He stated the company he worked for invited gay/lesbian employees to discuss their issues of sexual orientation and gender identity. He said his parents were school teachers who taught him about tolerance and acceptance.

In response to committee questions, **Chief Masterson** stated he has no concrete data of crime rates in the LGBT community because of the poor reporting.

Pamela Parks, Idaho Human Rights Commission, Administrator, stated her office has created an independent tracking log of reports made to the Commission. She stated that 21 people contacted the office claiming discrimination based on their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

In response to committee questions, **Monica Hopkins**, ACLU, stated the LGBT community is not asking for special rights. She stated that adding the terms "sexual orientation and gender identity" to the Idaho Human Rights Act offers them the same rights as all other citizens.

Chairman McKenzie thanked the speakers and audience for coming.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to come before the committees, the meeting adjourned at 9:06 a.m.

Representative Loertscher
Chair

Kasey Perkins
Secretary