

MINUTES  
**HOUSE TRANSPORTATION & DEFENSE COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Tuesday, March 04, 2014

**TIME:** 1:30 PM or Upon Adjournment

**PLACE:** Room EW40

**MEMBERS:** Chairman Palmer, Vice Chairman Shepherd, Representative(s) Wood(35), Wills, Bateman, Henderson, Denney, Gestrin, Gibbs, Hixon, Kauffman, Packer, Youngblood, McDonald, Ringo, King, Gannon

**ABSENT/  
EXCUSED:** None

**GUESTS:** Kate Eldridge, HDR; Jerry Deckard, Capitol West; Mike Kane, AAA; Dave Carlson, AAA; Brook Green, CTAI

**Chairman Palmer** called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m.

**S 1284aa:** **Sen. Davis** stated he would like **Holly Sutherland**, a third year law student to present the committee with **S 1284aa**. Sen. Davis explained the research was performed by Ms. Sutherland relating to the 85th Percentile Rule in traffic engineering and Utah's pilot program on portions of I84. He explained that this legislation puts the decision making into the hands of the experts: Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) and its Board.

**Holly Sutherland** added the legislation provides the ITD Board the discretion to raise the speed rate after studies have been performed by ITD. She stated the 85th Percentile Rule suggests that the public will travel at a speed that is comfortable to the driver and the flow of traffic. In answer to committee questions, gas consumption had no conclusive evidence at higher speeds contributing to higher gas consumption. This could be that new cars and trucks are more fuel efficient than in 1972 when the gas shortage required speed limits to be decreased on public roads. She stated the studies showed accidents decrease because the vehicles were moving at a safer and more uniform speed. The Utah pilot program recommendations have been in statute for one year and shows no increase in accidents. A Texas study has been in affect longer than a year and it concluded that drivers will travel at the speed they are most comfortable driving.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Gibbs** made a motion to send **S 1284aa** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

**Mike Kane** of AAA requested the committee add one more year to the effective date of the bill to work out concerns and questions AAA has regarding the legislation. In answer to the committee's question, he confirmed that AAA was involved in some discussions relating to the creation of this legislation.

**Sen. Davis** concluded this legislation takes politics out of speed limit control. The ITD Board will consult with the public and private stakeholders as per statute. In answer to the committees question regarding increased speeds and safety for the trucking industry, the Senator stated the trucking industry does not oppose this legislation. Committee concerns were expressed regarding the stopping distance, extra wear and tear on the roadways, and increased accidents with increased speeds.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:** Chairman Palmer requested a roll call vote on **S 1284aa**. Motion carried by a vote of **12 AYE** and **5 NAY**. Voting in favor of the motion: **Rep. Palmer, Shepherd, Wood(35), Wills, Bateman, Henderson, Denney, Gestrin, Gibbs, Hixon, Youngblood, McDonald**. Voting in opposition to the motion: **Reps. Kauffman, Packer, Ringo, King, and Gannon**. **Rep. Gibbs** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

**S 1286:** **Sen. Johnson** stated **S 1286** relates to weights for refuse and sanitation trucks. He explained that due to the varying solid waste materials collected, the long distances traveled in the rural areas, and weather conditions the original weight of the truck may fluctuate. He continued to say that the wet loads can cause an otherwise properly loaded vehicle to exceed an axle or gross vehicle weight limit unintentionally. **Sen. Johnson** concluded this legislation remedies that unintentional situation.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Wood(35)** made a motion to send **S 1286** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote**. **Rep. Ringo** requested that she be recorded as voting **NAY**. **Rep. Wood(35)** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

**Heather Wheeler** of Community Transportation Association of Idaho and **Gary Segers** of Idaho Pedestrian & Bicycle Alliance presented "Transit and Active Transportation in Idaho." Ms. Wheeler stated transit, biking, and walking are a critical piece of Idaho's transportation system, and are often the only means of transportation for many Idahoans.

**Gary Segers** referred to the term "active transportation" defined as any form of human power. Sidewalks, bike lanes, and multi-use pathways are affordable solutions to help reduce wear and tear on our roadways, while contributing to the health and economic vitality of Idaho communities. Tourist world wide are coming to Idaho for biking opportunity such as Idaho's Route of the Hiawatha and the Trail of the Coeur d'Alene's bike paths, he commented.

**Ms. Wheeler** explained that most of the funds available for transit, bike, and pedestrian projects in Idaho come from the federal government and the federal sources are facing an extreme shortfall. In 2013, 23 bike and pedestrian projects were selected and awarded funding out of 68 eligible applications for Idaho. The rural areas are clamoring for funding assistance to build networks of sidewalks, bike lanes, and multi-use pathways to connect to neighboring communities.

**Mr. Segers** commented that Idaho cannot afford to NOT include transit, biking, and walking as a transportation method of getting people where they need to be. A transportation system is not just about moving motor vehicles, it is about moving people from home to school, church, medical appointments, work or shopping, he said. **Mr. Segers** concluded with active transportation is a low-cost solution to address Idaho's transportation infrastructure needs.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Hixon** made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 26, 2014, meeting. **Motion carried by voice vote**.

**ADJOURN:** There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3:02 p.m.

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Representative Palmer  
Chair

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Linda Mott  
Secretary