

MINUTES  
**HOUSE COMMERCE & HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Thursday, January 29, 2015  
**TIME:** 1:30 P.M.  
**PLACE:** Room EW05  
**MEMBERS:** Chairman Hartgen, Vice Chairman Anderson, Representatives Harris, Holtzclaw, Romrell, Chaney, Horman, Nielsen, Packer, Redman, King, Chew, Rudolph  
**ABSENT/  
EXCUSED:** Rep. Redman  
**GUESTS:** Jeff Sayer, Megan Hill, Megan Ronk, Department of Commerce; Jack Lyman, Idaho Mining Association

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

**Vice Chairman Anderson** welcomed Mayor of Blackfoot, ID, **Paul Loomis** and Mayor of Firth, ID, **Vincent Larson**.

**Rep. Channey** welcomed Mayor of Nampa, ID, **Bob Henry**.

**Jeff Sayer**, Director, Department of Commerce, gave an update on the Tax Reimbursement Incentive (TRI), Opportunity Fund, Idaho Global Entrepreneurial Mission (IGEM), Accelerate Idaho and the Department of Commerce general economic development efforts. The state reached Project 60 goal figures in 2013 and has increased in 2014. International exports was over \$5.8 billion in 2014. Lodging Tax revenue was over \$8 million in 2014. Idaho currently has the fifth highest growth rate in the nation, eighth highest in manufacturing, and the sixth lowest unemployment rate.

**Mr. Sayer** noted that the IGEM research grant is being split among Boise State University, University of Idaho and Idaho State University. Additionally, he noted the Idaho Opportunity Fund has awarded \$1.9 million dollars to private companies. Since July 1, 2014 Tax Reimbursement Incentive has approved 9 projects with a capital investment of \$317 million, totalling 1,710 jobs, total wages of \$573 million and new state income revenue of \$75 million.

**Mr. Sayer** outlined, Accelerate Idaho, which is an initiative to advance individuals earning capabilities through education and talent development, to elevate industry by paying attention to current industry needs, and to strengthen communities by preparing them for growth. The projection of new jobs needed is an additional 109,000 employees, but the working population is not an estimated population increase of 14,000 leaving a 95,000 workers shortage. Professionals in technical trades are the most in demand. States Recruiting Talent is the future of the Department of Commerce. Skill levels must be increased so new companies will want to come to Idaho and increase rates of pay.

In response to questions, **Mr. Sayer** explained, there needs to be awareness of the job opportunities are available in the current job market. There also needs to be more training and certification programs offered to fit the job market needs.

In response to questions, **Sayer** said that if there is an increased investment in the opportunity fund the returns would be greater.

In response to questions, **Mr. Sayer** stated that community colleges are working with the industry and making changes to bridge the gap in training. There is a request for \$5 million to go into workforce development.

In response to questions, **Mr. Sayer** said that skilled education for existing technical workers is good and is needed. Industry and education have to link so that developments with current employees is feasible.

In response to further questions, **Mr. Sayer** noted that industry needs to be involved in educational planning. Youth need to be aware of what industries need employees and training is available to become skilled in those areas.

In response to questions, **Mr. Sayer** said that awareness of certification training which can be followed by employment and continuing education in a good option.

In response to further questions, **Mr. Sayer** said that there are multiple industries trying to work together to get grants. The Department of Commerce is creating a list of industry wide, necessary employee skills and is creating a certification or degree program to address industry needs.

**ADJOURN:** There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:48 p.m.

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Representative Hartgen  
Chair

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Erin Hutto  
Secretary