

MINUTES
SENATE HEALTH & WELFARE COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, February 03, 2015

TIME: 3:00 P.M.

PLACE: Room WW54

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Heider, Senators Johnson (Lodge), Hagedorn, Tippetts, Lee, Schmidt and Lacey

ABSENT/ EXCUSED: Vice Chairman Martin and Senator Nuxoll

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.

CONVENED: **Chairman Heider** called the meeting to order at 3:07p.m.

GUBERNATORIAL APPOINTMENT HEARING: **Chairman Heider** welcomed Michael Gibson of Nampa, Idaho who was appointed to serve on the Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired Board (ICBVIB) for a term commencing July 1, 2014 and expiring July 1, 2017.

Mr. Gibson said he has spent six years on the board of the ICBVIB, which were some of his most rewarding years in public service. He said he has enjoyed being able to help blind or visually impaired Idahoans in their quest to lead independent and meaningful lives. He referred to his work at the Boise State University Disability Resource Center where he assisted college-age individuals navigate the campus. He said this experience was especially rewarding.

Mr. Gibson acknowledged and thanked Nancy Wise, Administrator, ICBVIB, who was in the audience. He said he looks forward to continuing to provide leadership and to serve the ICBVIB.

Chairman Heider asked how many blind or visually impaired individuals in Idaho utilize the ICBVIB's resources. **Mr. Gibson** said approximately 450 older individuals receive ongoing services and about 1,100 individuals have received either one-time services or are receiving ongoing services.

Senator Hagedorn asked about current roadblocks to the blind or visually impaired in higher education, especially in math and some of the sciences. **Mr. Gibson** said the issue is challenging but evolving. He said with improved computer technology, these subjects are becoming more accessible. Work is also being done to encourage publishers of higher education textbooks to provide access to the blind via audio resources.

Mr. Gibson described his experience with a rehabilitation center for the blind in Colorado and expressed admiration for the exceptional resources available in Idaho.

Chairman Heider thanked Mr. Gibson for his contributions to the ICBVIB. He welcomed Elisha Figueroa to the podium for her presentation.

PRESENTATION: **Elisha Figueroa**, Administrator, Office of Drug Policy (ODP), gave a presentation on Cannabidiol (CBD) Oil drug studies (see attachment 1). She explained the characteristics of CBD oil and its difference from THC and medical marijuana. She informed the Committee that the Epidiolex trial starting in the spring of 2015 was supported by the ODP. The results would be used to determine the efficacy of CBD oil on seizure disorders.

Ms. Figueroa stated CBD oil is currently classified as a Schedule I drug by the FDA, making it illegal by the federal government. Additionally, if Idaho were to legalize CBD oil, the traditional medical community would not be involved because it is not an FDA approved drug.

Ms. Figueroa concluded by stating the ODP is supportive of the FDA trials underway and will use the results of those trials to make decisions on its recommendation on the legalization of CBD oil.

Senator Hagedorn asked Ms. Figueroa if ODP had communicated with the Department of Commerce about promoting Idaho as one of only two states in the western U. S. that does not legalize any type of marijuana. **Ms. Figueroa** replied that such communication had not taken place.

Chairman Heider thanked Ms. Figueroa for her presentation. He said it provided useful information to the Committee.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business, **Chairman Heider** adjourned the meeting at 3:45 p.m.

Senator Heider
Chair

Erin Denker
Secretary

Jeanne' Clayton
Assistant Secretary