

MINUTES
SENATE HEALTH & WELFARE COMMITTEE

DATE: Monday, March 30, 2015

TIME: 2:00 P.M.

PLACE: Room WW54

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Heider, Vice Chairman Martin, Senators Lodge, Nuxoll, Hagedorn, Tippets, Lee, Schmidt and Jordan

ABSENT/ EXCUSED: None

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 of the Senate Health and Welfare Committee (Committee) to order at 3:02 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: **Senator Nuxoll** moved to approve the Minutes of January 27, 2015. **Senator Martin** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: **Senator Schmidt** moved to approve the Minutes of February 18, 2015. **Senator Jordan** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

HCR 19 **Darby Weston**, Ada County Paramedics, presented **HCR 19** which is a resolution to direct the Department of Health and Welfare's Bureau of Emergency Medical Services and Preparedness (EMS) to convene a working group to review the Office of Performance Evaluations' (OPE) recommendations for improvement of the emergency medical services system and draft legislation for consideration in the 2016 Legislature.

Mr. Weston explained that the outdated statutes no longer adequately serve Idaho's needs. In 2010, at the direction of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee, the OPE issued the "Governance of EMS Agencies in Idaho" report, which identified seven characteristics of a well-functioning EMS system and gaps that exist between those characteristics and the current state of EMS in Idaho.

The 2013 follow-up report from OPE noted the collaborative efforts taking place in several Idaho counties to develop EMS systems; however, there has been no legislation offered to: (1) assure statewide EMS coverage, (2) create the structure for local governance and medical directorates, and (3) increase the role of the Bureau of Emergency Medical Services and Preparedness. He said this legislation proposes to address these issues.

Senator Tippets asked if the EMS could convene a task force for this purpose without this resolution and, if so, what is the actual intent of the resolution.

Mr. Weston replied that the resolution allows the EMS access to the Office of Legislative Services to receive further resources to move forward and also provides a timeline to craft a solution that will be brought back to the Legislature in 2016.

TESTIMONY: **Shawn Rayne**, Deputy Director of Operations, Ada County Paramedics Association, testified in support of **HCR 19**. He said this resolution will allow the Paramedics Association to serve all people with a higher standard, and the improved system will also save the EMS resources.

Chairman Heider asked who would be included in the working group and how many people would be involved. **Mr. Rayne** said the task force would include stakeholder engagement from all areas of the State, including the most rural. He was not yet sure how many individuals would comprise the task force.

Senator Schmidt asked what would happen if there is no legislative action. **Mr. Rayne** replied that without legislative guidelines there would be nothing to hold the system together.

Senator Martin asked if there would be a fiscal impact down the road. **Mr. Rayne** said significant savings would be realized by working with the system.

MOTION:

Senator Martin moved to send **HCR 19** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Nuxoll** seconded the motion.

Senators Hagedorn and **Lodge** expressed doubts about the need for the resolution. **Representative Malek** took the podium to clarify their questions. He said there was concern about whether current Idaho Code supports the many differences specific to every area. He explained the purpose of the task force is to make sure best practices are behind the system and there is good law at the localities.

**ROLL CALL
VOTE:**

Chairman Heider called for a roll call vote. **Senators Jordan, Schmidt, Lee, Tippetts, Nuxoll, Vice Chairman Martin,** and **Chairman Heider** voted aye. **Senators Lodge** and **Hagedorn** voted nay. The motion carried. Senator Martin will carry the bill on the floor.

H 298

Jeff Morrell, Chief Executive Officer, Intermountain Hospital, presented **H 298**, the purpose of which is to create a reimbursement methodology for services provided to an adolescent by a private, freestanding mental health facility. He said the current methodology is based on antiquated cost reporting that is currently followed by only four other states. He said the cost reporting does not reflect how freestanding psychiatric facilities that operate at highly efficient levels maintain a program based on limited funding resources.

Mr. Morrell explained that Intermountain Hospital currently has 30 adolescent beds which serves a large part of southern Idaho. He said this legislation would enable the hospital to open 15 additional beds for adolescent mental health treatment on an inpatient basis. **Mr. Morrell** said there were 495 deflections, or the inability to treat appropriately referred adolescent patients, in 2014 and there have been 120 deflections to date in 2015.

Mr. Morrell said St. Luke's Hospital is unable to provide adequate mental health care because its focus is mostly on medical and surgical patients. He noted that St. Luke's physicians agree that mental health patients are more appropriately treated in a mental health facility where they are in a safer environment. He said approval of this legislation will open beds not only for Medicaid patients but will provide services for all patients including those commercially insured, indigent or charity.

Mr. Morrell explained these mental health adolescents are largely suicidal patients who require specialized treatment in a safely monitored environment.

TESTIMONY:

Toni Lawson, Vice President of Governmental Relations, Idaho Hospital Association, testified in support of **H 298**. She said the resources available to these adolescents are extremely limited and emphasized the importance of increasing the number of beds to serve this very vulnerable segment of Idaho's population.

Lisa Hettinger, Division Administrator for the Medicaid Division of the Department of Health and Welfare (Department), said the legislation is important to ensure that a viable payment methodology is established. In answer to earlier questions from the Committee, she clarified the various reimbursement methodologies for different hospital facilities. **Senator Tippetts** asked if the Department supports this legislation. **Ms. Hettinger** said the Department is neutral; however, it does not oppose the legislation and sees the need.

MOTION: **Senator Martin** moved to send **H 298** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Hagedorn** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**. Senator Schmidt will carry the bill on the floor.

H 24 **Lee Flynn**, AARP Idaho and the Idaho Caregiver Alliance, presented **HCR 24**, which is a replacement for **SCR 123** passed by this Committee earlier in March. **Ms. Flinn** explained that the House of Representatives had requested two changes to the legislation: (1) References in the fiscal note were removed as to legislative participation. As such, no fiscal impact is reflected. The Idaho Caregiver Alliance will invite Legislators to participate and is prepared to reimburse those Legislators for their expense; and (2) Relating to the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), the wording was changed to clarify that the task force will provide information to SHIP leaders, and the task force is not directing SHIP in any way.

MOTION: **Senator Tippetts** moved to send **H 24** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Martin** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**. Senator Lee will carry the bill on the floor.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business, **Chairman Heider** adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m.

Senator Heider
Chair

Erin Denker
Secretary

Jeanne' Clayton
Assistant Secretary