

MINUTES
HOUSE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, March 10, 2016

TIME: 9:30 A.M.

PLACE: Room EW40

MEMBERS: Chairman Loertscher, Vice Chairman Batt, Representatives Andrus, Luker, Crane, Palmer, Sims, Barbieri, Holtzclaw, McMillan, Bateman, Cheatham, Nielsen, Smith, Jordan (Memcott), McCrostie, Wintrow

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

GUESTS: Kate Haas, Idaho Brewers United; Kelli Brassfield, IAC; Phil McGrane, Ada County; Dennis Stevenson, Rules Coordinator; Keith Reynolds, Administrative Rules; Jeff Thompson, House; Bob Nonini, Senate.

Chairman Loertscher called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m.

S 1274: **Senator Winder** presented **S 1274**, a bill that increases the current 6 days to 11 days to allow for adequate mailing time for absentee ballots. He stated recently the U.S. Post Office has restructured its postal services in areas such as Pocatello and will also be changing in Boise in the coming years. He stated these changes have slowed down the mail and do not allow for voters in certain areas in the state ample time for the county clerk's to mail the ballots to the voter, for the voter to vote, and for the voter to mail back to the elections office in time to be counted. He stated the 6 days currently allowed in insufficient.

MOTION: **Rep. Smith** made a motion to send **S 1274** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote. Chairman Loertscher** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

S 1275: **Senator Winder** presented **S 1275**, a bill that modifies the requirement for counties electing to conduct early voting. He stated the current statute is limited to counties that count ballots at a central location. He stated the change would also allow counties that use modern polling based counters to also participate in early voting. The legislation also cleans up a reference to the official ballot stamp to reflect the current legislation for official election ballot identification. He stated the new machines use a software program to count the ballots.

In response to committee questions, **Phil McGrane**, Chief Clerk, Ada County Clerk's Office, stated the machine takes a digital image of the ballot and afterwards the clerk goes through and verifies the machine is accurate. He stated the volunteers working the polls don't have access to the machines, they are brought back to the clerk's office and held there. He stated Ada County has 155 machines used for early voting and they used 145 of them in the last voting session.

MOTION: **Rep. Holtzclaw** made a motion to send **S 1275** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

Rep. Crane spoke **in opposition** to the motion and stated he believes the legislation brings us closer to online voting which he disagrees with and is concerned with the higher risk of mistakes.

Rep. McCrostie spoke **in support** of the motion and stated the legislation will help the counties, especially the larger ones, with counting the ballots.

- VOTE ON MOTION:** **Chairman Loertscher** called for a vote on the motion to send **S 1275** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote. Reps. Crane, McMillan, Bateman, Sims and Nielsen** requested to be recorded as voting **NAY**. **Chairman Loertscher** will sponsor the bill on the floor.
- SCR 148:** **Senator Nonini** presented **SCR 148**, a concurrent resolution that recognizes the contributions and accomplishments of Hecla Mining Company and its employees, as well as to congratulate Hecla Mining Company on its 125th anniversary.
- MOTION:** **Rep. McMillan** made a motion to send **SCR 148** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.
- Rep. Jordan** spoke in opposition to the motion and stated the Hecla Mining Company has caused a lot of damage to Indian land.
- VOTE ON MOTION:** **Chairman Loertscher** called for a vote on the motion. **Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. Jordan** requested she be recorded as voting **NAY**. **Rep. Malek** will sponsor the bill on the floor.
- SCR 149:** **Rep. Thompson** presented **SCR 149**, a concurrent resolution that establishes the State of Idaho's commitment to request a federal grant to construct and fund a second veteran's cemetery in Eastern Idaho. He stated the commitment is necessary for the Idaho Division of Veterans Services to proceed with the application for a federal grant to provide 100 percent of the allowable construction cost. He stated the State of Idaho would need to appropriate 10 percent of the architectural and engineering costs for the cemetery, which will be reimbursed to the State following the grant award. He also stated the preliminary estimate will be \$13.2 million in 2016 and the federal Department of Veterans Affairs will provide 100 percent of allowable cost, approximately \$11.2 million. Idaho's 10 percent reimburseable match will be approximately \$1.12 million and non-allowable/reimburseable cost is estimated to be \$2.0 million.
- In response to committee questions, **Rep. Thompson** stated the monies that Idaho would need to appropriate prior to the grant would come out of the General Fund appropriated to the Idaho Veterans Services.
- MOTION:** **Rep. Bateman** made a motion to send **SCR 149** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. Palmer** requested to be recorded as voting **NAY**. **Rep. Thompson** will sponsor the bill on the floor.
- RS 24664:** **Rep. Dixon** presented **RS 24664**, proposed legislation that permits breweries to allow minors in tasting rooms. He stated current code allows minors to enter winery tasting rooms but does not account for breweries.
- MOTION:** **Rep. McCrostie** made a motion to introduce **RS 24664**. **Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. Andrus** requested to be recorded as voting **NAY**.
- Chairman Loertscher** turned the gavel over to **Vice Chairman Batt**.
- RS 24698:** **Chairman Loertscher** presented **RS 24698**, proposed joint resolution that amends Section III of the Idaho State Constitution which allows the legislature to approve or reject administrative rules.
- MOTION:** **Rep. Palmer** made a motion to introduce **RS 24698** and recommend it be sent directly to the Second Reading Calendar. **Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. McCrostie** requested to be recorded as voting **NAY**. **Chairman Loertscher** will sponsor the bill on the floor.
- Vice Chairman Batt** turned the gavel back over to **Chairman Loertscher**.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 10:18 a.m.

Representative Loertscher
Chair

Kasey Winder
Secretary