

MINUTES
HOUSE HEALTH & WELFARE COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, February 02, 2017

TIME: 9:00 A.M.

PLACE: Room EW20

MEMBERS: Chairman Wood, Vice Chairman Packer, Representatives Hixon, Perry, Vander Woude, Redman, Gibbs, Blanksma, Hanks, Kingsley, Zollinger, Chew, Rubel

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

GUESTS: Sarah E. Toevs, Idaho Caregiver Alliance; Francoise Cleveland, AARP Idaho; Pam Oliason, Idaho Commission on Aging; Tim Heiaze, citizen

Chairman Wood called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

MOTION: **Vice Chairman Packer** made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 24 and 25, 2017, meetings. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Sarah Toevs, Director, Center for the Study of Aging, Boise State University, Member, Leadership Team, Idaho Caregiver Alliance, presented the Idaho Life Span Family Caregiver Action Plan.

Family caregivers include parents, spouses, friends, and siblings caring for a loved one, typically on an unpaid basis. The Caregiver Alliance promotes the collaboration of family caregivers over the individual's life span. The Alliance has been in place for five years, funded by a community living resources grant allocated to Commission on Aging. In August, 2017, the funds will be gone and other revenue options will be needed to continue the Alliance's roll as a caregivers' voice.

Idaho has approximately 300,000 family caregivers, many employed. The ratio of working age adults to older adults today is three to one, as opposed to ten years ago when it was six to one. Caregivers provide complex medical and psychological care, delaying institutional care or hospital readmissions while enabling individuals and caregiver families to thrive.

Suggested caregiver supports to develop include culturally appropriate information, respite provider standards, a provider registry, standardized terminology, and central tracking system of the units provided. Existing systems from other states could be reviewed and the best option brought to Idaho.

The Alliance program tools have been expanded statewide and focus on caregiver health. Caregivers may not recognize they are caregivers until they have a "come apart." The 211 Care Line now offers a specific caregiver respite support line. Use of the Department of Health and Welfare's Idaho Living Well program provides information to caregivers.

The Caregiver Alliance continues to embed its voice in improvements in state tax policy, employer engagement, healthcare, behavioral health (BH), long-term care, and support systems. The Alliance continues to work with the State Healthcare Innovation Plan (SHIP), the Alzheimer's Planning Group, the Idaho BH Planning Council, AARP, and other groups.

Rep. Kingsley shared his own experience and said family caregivers provide the knowledge and comfort to other family members that their loved ones are properly and well cared for in a loving environment.

Responding to questions, **Ms. Toevs** stated employer aids include how to create flex schedules, consideration of family medical leave, and other opportunities to share with employers nationwide. The recognition of the value of these employees already exists. Employers need an understanding of their employee's managed responsibilities beyond employment. There is a caregiver-friendly employers awards program to recognize family-friendly work practices.

RS 25117: **Rep. Christy Perry**, District 11, presented **RS 25117**, a Concurrent Resolution highlighting the family and friends care services provided without payment to Idaho citizens. The Resolution draws attention to the number of individuals in care, the state cost savings resulting from their efforts, and demonstrates the internal efforts by the Caregiver Alliance to address the demands and medical complexity placed on those who are an integral part of the Idaho care system.

MOTION: **Rep. Redman** made a motion to introduce **RS 25117**. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 9:33 a.m.

Representative Wood
Chair

Irene Moore
Secretary