

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, February 28, 2017

TIME: 3:00 P.M.

PLACE: Room WW55

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Mortimer, Vice Chairman Thayn, Senators Winder, Nonini, Den Hartog, Guthrie, Crabtree, and Ward-Engelking

ABSENT/ EXCUSED: Senator Buckner-Webb

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 Mortimer called the Education Committee (Committee) to order at 3:00 p.m.

SCR 105 **Stating Findings of the Legislature and Authorizing the State Board of Education to Enter into Agreements with the Idaho State Building Authority.** **Senator Bart Davis** outlined the purpose for this concurrent resolution, which is to provide financing and construction management for the creation of two new facilities on University Boulevard in Idaho Falls.

Senator Davis described the buildings as the Cybercore Integration Center and the Collaborative Computing Center, which he said would help meet the important challenges of cyber security and nuclear energy research. The facilities will also advance cooperative educational efforts, not just for the Idaho National Laboratory (INL), but beyond the State, and will serve as models for the integration of cutting-edge research between INL and Idaho's universities and colleges.

The resolution limits the bonding to \$90 million and requires the final lease terms are reported to the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee (JFAC) and both Education Committees, separately.

TESTIMONY: **Dr. Mark Peters**, Director, Idaho National Laboratory, reviewed INL's background and current demographics and described the construction and financing provisions of the buildings, which will be on land owned by the State of Idaho (Idaho State University Foundation), and will house a next-generation supercomputer. The State would own the buildings, and INL would lease them for a period of no less than 15 years with expected extensions. **Dr. Peters** reviewed the anticipated benefits the facilities would provide including: upgrading computer technology; enhancing INL's leadership in cybersecurity, specifically in the area of critical infrastructure protection; further developing INL's cutting edge partnerships with the State's universities and colleges; and creating needed space for personnel, research, and collaboration.

Dr. Art Vailas, President, Idaho State University, testified in support of **SCR 105**, stating that the partnership between INL and the State's universities is vital and leverages opportunities for economic development.

Dr. Harold Blackman, Associate Vice President of Research, Boise State University (BSU) testified in support of **SCR 105** on behalf of BSU, stating the facilities represent an extension and further development of Idaho's most important collaborations.

Vice Chairman Thayn asked Dr. Blackman if there was a downside to the resolution. **Dr. Blackman** replied that he did not see a downside, especially in light of the benefits.

Chairman Mortimer asked if distance between the INL and Idaho's universities is a problem. **Dr. Blackman** replied that in today's era of high-speed connections, distance is not a problem.

Matt Freeman, Executive Director, State Board of Education (SBE) spoke in support of **SCR 105** and explained the context of the SBE's involvement and significant due diligence in reviewing the proposal.

Senator Guthrie wondered if the financing payoff continues beyond the 15 year amortization schedule. **Mr. Freeman** replied the maturity of bonds would extend beyond 15 years and the actual term would be 20 years. **Senator Guthrie** asked if universities that share the space would be required to share the lease costs, and **Mr. Freeman** replied they would not.

Rebecca Casper, Mayor, Idaho Falls, spoke in support of **SCR 105** and described the benefits to the Idaho Falls community, which included: economic development; higher wages; connections to the universities; and the talent pipeline (see Attachment 1).

Mark Young, representative for Region 6 Economic Development Council for Department of Commerce and former member of the Governor's Economic Advisory Council, spoke in support of **SCR 105** on the basis of the INL's significant benefits to the State's economy (see Attachment 2).

MOTION: **Senator Nonini** moved to send **SCR 105** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Guthrie** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**. Chairman Mortimer will carry on the floor.

H 105 **Relating to Teacher Preparation: Amend and Make technical Corrections.** **Blake Youde**, Chief Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer, State Board of Education, presented **H 105**, which clarifies that teacher preparation assessment may include multiple measures for demonstrating skills and knowledge and best practices for reading instruction, rather than a single assessment at the end of the course. **Mr Youde** said the proposed legislation would update the language to allow for multiple measures, in alignment with best practices, for the demonstration of these skills, rather than an assessment made up of a single measure and emphasized that multiple measure assessments have been found to be more effective.

MOTION: **Vice Chairman Thayn** moved to send **H 105** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Crabtree** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**. **Chairman Mortimer** will carry the bill on the floor.

H 107 **Relating to the Interstate Compact for Western Regional Cooperation in Higher Education: Amend and Clarify.** **Mr. Youde** explained that **H 107** is a technical correction to replace the word "territories" with the word "states."

MOTION: **Vice Chairman Thayn** moved to send **H 107** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Den-Hartog** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**. **Senator Crabtree** will carry the bill on the floor.

ADJOURN: There being no more business, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 4:26 p.m.

Senator Mortimer
Chair

LeAnn Mohr
Secretary

Jeanne Clayton
Assistant Secretary