

Attachment 6

The Honorable Dean Mortimer
Chairman Senate Education Committee

Thursday, March 02, 2017

Regarding S1103

Dear Chairman Mortimer,

We are writing to encourage your committee to advance S1103 to the full body with a "Do Pass" recommendation.

As former School Board Trustees (Coeur d'Alene SD 271) we can testify from direct experience that our current school board election dates depress voter turnout to near single digit percentages. This has the unfortunate effect of disconnecting the school board from the community it serves, making task of promoting community involvement that much harder.

For our schools to succeed, community involvement is essential.

The editorial staff of the Coeur d'Alene PRESS agrees:

"Not only would moving school board elections to even-year ballots in November save taxpayer money through election consolidation, but we believe the move would heighten the attention trustee candidates receive. Critics argue that school board candidates would be dwarfed by higher profile races, but we think the opposite would hold true. Citizens are accustomed to election cycles culminating in November. That goes back to 1845, when Congress designated the first Tuesday after the first Monday as Election Day. Like scheduled meal times, voters begin to feed at the political interest trough in late summer and through early autumn, finally casting their ballots in early November. But who has their election antennae up for a May 16 vote? Only an extremely interested few, and that's the problem." February 22, 2017

Please share this testimony with your committee.

Respectfully Submitted

Tom Hamilton – Former Trustee / Board Chair

Terri Seymour – Former Trustee

Ann Seddon – Former Trustee

Brent Regan – Former Trustee