

Testimony of Jason Kreizenbeck
Lobby Idaho, LLC
On House Bill 108
On behalf of our client the Yoga Alliance
Senate Education Committee
March 7, 2017

- Mister Chairman and members of the Senate Education Committee, for the record, my name is Jason Kreizenbeck and I am a contract lobbyist with the firm Lobby Idaho, LLC in Boise, here today to present House Bill 108 on behalf of our client the Yoga Alliance.
- Yoga Alliance is the largest membership organization representing yoga teachers and schools in the United States and around the world. Yoga Alliance was founded in 2011 by its sister organization, Yoga Alliance Registry, a non-membership, non-governmental public charity that sets **voluntary** standards for Yoga Teacher Training programs, or "YTTs."
- With me today is Debbi Murphy, a Yoga Alliance member and practitioner in Idaho who runs two yoga studios in Idaho, one in Boise and one in McCall.
- HB 108 amends Section 33-2403, Idaho Code, to add an exemption for the practice and instruction of yoga from the registration requirements of proprietary schools under the Idaho State Board of Education.
- In Idaho and across the country, the vast majority of individuals who lead yoga classes are **not** full-time instructors and do **not** earn a living from teaching.
- As a practice, Yoga studios in Idaho and practitioners host advanced yoga training classes that the yoga community often refers to as "yoga teacher training programs" or "YTTs." The name "teacher training," however, is a misnomer because most participants attend only to deepen their personal practice or practice yoga in a group setting.
- Further, ***completion of a YTT program is not a prerequisite to teach yoga and yoga instruction is not a licensed profession in Idaho.***
- Despite this reality, the State Board of Education ("Board") has begun to actively regulate YTTs under the state's proprietary schools statute, a law that is intended for institutions providing vocational, technical, or professional training. As a result, YTTs, which are primarily women-owned, small businesses, are subject to burdensome requirements and must pay expensive fees.

- Many members of the yoga community and concerned Idaho residents oppose these regulations because they are unnecessary and ultimately harmful.
- Until recent months, the Board has only regulated schools that provide tangible vocational, technical, or professional training or serve as an occupational prerequisite. Importantly, the Board has not sought to regulate martial arts, dance, arts, or sports classes.
- Similar to advanced martial arts or dance classes, YTTs are not designed to prepare individuals to enter the workforce. As such, YTT programs are best classified as primarily ***avocational activities, not vocational schools***.
- HB 108 will add yoga to the list of individuals and entities that are specifically exempt from the registration requirements for proprietary schools in section 33-2403 of Idaho Code.
- Section 2 of HB 108 includes an emergency clause so that this proposed exemption, if adopted, would take effect immediately. We felt an emergency clause was important to provide needed clarity to Idaho practitioners, as the State Board of Education staff has been working on this since the fall of 2016 and has contacted various yoga studios in Idaho requesting them to submit the required paperwork and fees.
- Our fiscal impact statement contends that that this proposal will have no impact to the state General Fund, any dedicated funds or to local units of government. It has no fiscal impact because it specifically exempts the practice and instruction of yoga from the registration provisions required for Proprietary Schools and does not create any new requirements or workload for the Idaho State Board of Education's staff or to local units of government.
- HB 108 received no opposition when it was considered in committee and on the floor of the House, and I would respectfully request that the committee support this proposal and send it to the House floor with a "Do Pass" Recommendation.
- I would be happy to answer any of your questions.