

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, March 14, 2017

TIME: 2:00 P.M.

PLACE: Room WW55

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

ABSENT/ EXCUSED: None

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 Senate Education Committee (Committee) meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

HCR 25 **A Concurrent Resolution Recognizing March 3, 2017 as National Speech and Debate Education Day. Representative Wendy Horman**, District 30 presented **HCR 25**, which empowers youth with the essential communication skills to become engaged citizens, skilled professionals and honorable leaders. Speech and debate education enables students to find their own voices, to find the power and confidence within themselves to think and analyze critically and to use words wisely to build, mend, defend and elevate. **Representative Horman** said the legislation is a project of students from District 30 and is similar to resolutions being brought forward in every state.

MOTION: **Vice Chairman Thayn** moved to send **HCR 25** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Ward-Engelking** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

HCR 14 **A Concurrent Resolution Amending Idaho Code Section 33-1602, Subsection 7 to Require Graduating Seniors in Idaho Public and Charter Schools to Pass a Civics Test. Representative Bryan Zollinger**, District 33, presented background information on the proposed legislation, which was presented initially by former Representative Lynden Bateman in 2016, but was not brought up for a vote. The Idaho State Board of Education would adopt a rule that required at least 25 questions or 20 percent of the civics test be specific to Idaho State government and history. **Representative Zollinger** said the rule would offer broad flexibility relative to the type of testing and grade level in which testing was given.

Vice Chairman Thayn expressed his appreciation for Representative Bateman's passion for Idaho history but said that given recent civic test changes, he was not amenable to making additional changes at this time.

Senator Ward-Engelking commented that Idaho history is currently taught only in the 4th grade and felt testing in the upper grades could be difficult, especially for students new to Idaho or new to the United States. She also questioned the additional classroom time and possible conflicting standards. **Representative Zollinger** reiterated the bill provides flexibility and ease of testing.

TESTIMONIES: The following people spoke in opposition to **HCR 14**:

Chris Taylor, K-12 Curriculum Administrator, Boise School District (see Attachment 1);

Lori Gash, Social Studies Curriculum Coordinator, West Ada School District (see Attachment 2);

Dani Backer, Social Studies Consulting Teacher, Boise School District (see Attachment 3);

Dave Harrison, Assessment Coordinator, West Ada School District (see Attachment 4);

Korrin Rue, Teacher, Boise School District;

Sarah Bofukya Bode, a student from the Boise School District and an immigrant from Congo;

Lily Gregory, a student from the Boise School District;

Kyle McMorrow, American Government Teacher, Boise High School, Boise School District (see Attachment 5).

Their testimony discussed issues regarding the following: negative impact on new students and the financial impact on districts; negative impact on new students and the financial impact on districts; additional testing is not tied to standards; limited instructional time; costs; and the added burden on teachers.

Representative Zollinger concluded his presentation by thanking those testifying and restating his arguments in support of **HCR 14**.

MOTION: **Senator Buckner-Webb** moved to hold **HCR 14** in Committee. **Senator Den Hartog** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

PRESENTATION: Public Charter School Commission Update. **Tamara Baysinger**, Executive Director, Public Charter School Commission (Commission) referred to the Committee's handouts outlining the Commission's 2016 Annual Report and the Charter Renewal Process (see Attachments 6 and 7). **Ms. Baysinger** focused her presentation on Charter Renewal, describing the process through which an authorizer evaluates the performance outcomes of a public charter school and the steps involved in completing the requisite five-year cycle.

Vice Chairman Thayn asked if the Commission sponsors the annual renewals or if all charter schools sponsor the renewals. **Ms. Baysinger** said renewals apply to all public charter schools; the Commission looks only at schools it has authorized.

Senator Nonini asked for clarification on the wording "kinds of students served by the schools." **Ms. Baysinger** said that different schools attract different students, depending on location and other demographics. **Senator Nonini** also wondered if parents are considered. **Ms. Baysinger** replied the Commission looks at outcomes, not parents as such. **Senator Nonini** asked how outside experts are chosen. **Ms. Baysinger** explained that outside experts are chosen by matching their particular expertise with a school's curriculum.

Senator Den Hartog asked if the Commission has input on the development of a new school's mission statements and performance measures. **Ms. Baysinger** said the school's goals are their own, but the Commission may offer guidance. **Senator Den Hartog** asked why schools waive renewal hearings. **Ms. Baysinger** did not have an answer.

Chairman Mortimer thanked Ms. Baysinger for her presentation and for encouraging the Committee to review the Commission's website for more details.

H 242

Relating to Schools: Waive the Minimum Number of Instructional Hours for a School District Following a Disaster Declaration. **Blake Youde**, Chief Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer, State Board of Education (Board) presented the rationale for **H 242**. An amendment to Idaho Code § 33-512 would create subparagraph H, allowing the Board to grant waivers on the minimum number of hours of instructional school districts when district-wide closures are necessary due to natural occurrences.

Mr. Youde noted this provision is consistent with existing statutory authority in waiving minimum requirements under extraordinary situations.

MOTION:

Senator Den Hartog moved to send **H 242** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Crabtree** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**. **Senator Anthon** will carry the bill on the floor.

ADJOURNED:

There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 4:05 p.m..

Senator Dean M. Mortimer
Chair

LeAnn Mohr
Secretary

Jeanne' Clayton
Assistant Secretary