

MINUTES  
JOINT MEETING  
**SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**  
**HOUSE TRANSPORTATION & DEFENSE COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Thursday, January 24, 2019

**TIME:** 1:30 P.M.

**PLACE:** Lincoln Auditorium (WW02)

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Brackett, Vice Chairman Crabtree, Senators Winder, Den Hartog, Lodge, Burtenshaw, Buckner-Webb, and Nelson  
Chairman Palmer, Vice Chairman Shepherd, Representatives Gestrin, Kauffman, Youngblood, Dixon, Harris, Monks, DeMordaunt, Syme, Blanksma, Addis, Ricks, Wintrow, Gannon, and Davis(Thea)

**ABSENT/ EXCUSED:** Senator Rice, Representatives Holtzclaw and Rubel

**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 Brackett** called the joint meeting of the Senate Transportation Committee and the House Transportation and Defense Committee (Committees) to order at 1:33 p.m.

**PRESENTATION:** **Chairman Brackett** invited Brian Ness, Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) Director, to present "Transportation in a Rapidly Growing State."  
**Director Ness** said there were three topics he would be addressing: 1.) the typical civil service model versus the ITD model for operating government; 2.) transportation funding; and 3.) Idaho's rapid population growth.  
According to **Director Ness**, government agencies need to serve the citizens and not themselves. ITD has focused on improving commerce and operations. It has been very successful and ITD's work is being copied by other state agencies. Specifically, ITD has: 1.) developed ways to break down bureaucracy; 2.) provided government services at a lower cost allowing ITD to respond quickly to the needs of their customers; and 3.) facilitated commerce by choosing road and bridge projects most likely to create economic opportunity and increase safety. He explained how ITD has become a model of efficiency in government service and has changed the compensation model from years of service to a performance based model. This has reduced bureaucracy and increased morale while providing a better service to the public.  
ITD has an annual funding shortfall for which the Legislature has taken three actions to provide ongoing revenue. Those actions are: 1.) in 2014, the Idaho Legislature provided \$4.7 million of the cigarette tax to use toward the annual Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicle (GARVEE) debt service; 2.) in 2015, the Legislature provided an additional \$109 million for highway maintenance by increasing fuel taxes and vehicle registrations, the first revenue increase for road and bridge maintenance in 20 years; and 3.) in 2017, the Legislature provided \$22.6 million for congestion mitigation. In addition to these ongoing funds, the Legislature provided one-time funding by allocating half of the State's General Fund surplus to transportation at the end of each of the last four years. This source of revenue is scheduled to expire in May unless the sunset clause is extended. These ongoing and one-time increases help battle Idaho's aging

infrastructure, but with 50 percent of the State's bridges aging beyond their design life of 50 years, ITD cannot replace bridges fast enough.

Finally, Idaho is one of the fastest-growing states in the union. ITD does not have the funding needed to address the increasing safety and capacity issues on Idaho's highways caused by this growth. In the last five years, Idaho's population has grown by 5.5 percent and the number of licensed drivers has grown by 7 percent, or 80,000 additional drivers. The Governor's budget recommendation for ITD provides nearly \$794 million in Fiscal Year 2020. Idaho's transportation system will require alternative forms of funding before then. Idaho is currently participating in a federally funded pilot program with Washington, Oregon, and British Columbia to see if a road-usage charge might be an option. Alternate sources of revenue may become more important to Idaho in the future as car manufacturers increase their investments in autonomous vehicles, most of which will be powered by electricity instead of petroleum products. **Director Ness** thanked the Committees and stood for questions.

**DISCUSSION:**

Committee Members discussed and asked for more clarity on issues including: funding; reduction in bureaucracy in serving the public; length of lines at the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) offices in highly populated counties; praising the ease of truck registrations; the Star Card designation for the federal REAL ID program requirements; interaction with Idaho's Department of Administration regarding technology contracts; the pilot program with Washington, Oregon, and British Columbia; ITD's headquarters in Shoshone; expansion of the interstate at Karcher Road in Nampa; and the implementation of High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes. The members asking these questions were: **Representative Kauffman, Senator Den Hartog, Senator Winder, Senator Burtenshaw, Representative Wintrow, Chairman Brackett, Representative Blanksma, Representative Syme, Representative Gestrin, Representative Gannon, and Representative Thea** (replacing Representative Davis for the day). **Director Ness** and **Mollie McCarty**, ITD Director of Governmental Affairs, adequately and satisfactorily responded to all questions.

**Chairman Brackett** thanked Director Ness and recognized Jerry Whitehead, Chairman of the Idaho Transportation Board, who was seated in the audience.

**ADJOURNED:**

With no further business before the Committees, **Chairman Brackett** adjourned the joint meeting at 2:22 p.m.

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Senator Brackett  
Chair

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Gaye Bennett  
Secretary