

MINUTES  
**HOUSE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Monday, March 18, 2019

**TIME:** 9:00 A.M.

**PLACE:** Room EW40

**MEMBERS:** Chairman Harris, Vice Chairman Armstrong, Representative(s) Crane, Palmer, Barbieri, Holtzclaw, Monks, Zito, Scott, Andrus, Hartgen, Young, Smith, Gannon, Green(18)

**ABSENT/  
EXCUSED:** Representative(s) Crane, Young

**GUESTS:** Karen Echeverria, ISBA; Phil McGrane, Ada County; Chris Yamamoto, Canyon County; Jason Dixon, Steve Brown, Bannock County; Tim Hurst, Idaho Secretary of State

**Chairman Harris** called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Green(18)** made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 4, March 5, and March 6, 2019 meetings. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

**H 270:** **Rep. DeMordaunt** presented **H 270**, relating to public schools and polling places. The legislation would ensure public schools shall be made available for a polling place location. Rep. DeMordaunt explained schools are ideal locations for polling places because of their accessibility to the surrounding communities and they meet ADA requirements. She deferred some time in her opening to **Phil McGrane**, Ada County. Phil McGrane explained in more populous areas, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find voting places.

In response to committee questions, **Rep. DeMordaunt** clarified the legislation would apply to charter schools because charter schools are public schools.

In response to committee questions, **Mr. McGrane** answered the schools are not currently compensated for election costs, rather the counties fund any costs that may arise from holding elections. In regards to schools safety, county commissioners would never want to jeopardize the safety of school children and the legislation gives flexibility to the principals and superintendents to decide how to best accommodate a polling place being held in their schools.

**Chris Yamamoto**, Canyon County; **Jason Dixon**, **Steve Brown**, Bannock County; and **Tim Hurst**, Idaho Secretary of State's Office, testified **in support of H 270**.

They were of the opinion the legislation would be a policy statement, would encourage a dialogue and collaboration between the school districts and county commissioners, reaffirms the public's Constitutional right to vote, and is a workable solution to the current lack of public spaces for voting. In regards to safety, the testifiers agreed safety of school children is incredibly important and the legislation allows room for negotiation and collaboration on how best to ensure safety.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Zito** made a motion to send **H 270** the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. Rep. Zito explained **H 270** would reaffirm the public's right to vote and would serve as a great civics lesson to the young adults attending the schools.

**Rep. Armstrong** addressed the concerns about safety, citing there are multiple options school districts could utilize in order to avoid any safety issues.

**Rep. Gannon** reiterated the need for safety and that it should be a priority when considering the legislation.

**Rep Green(18)** stated her confidence in local law enforcement agencies, school districts, and the county commissioners to implement safe and effective polling places.

**VOTE ON  
MOTION:**

**Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. DeMordaunt** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

**ADJOURN:**

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 9:47 AM.

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Representative Harris  
Chair

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Julia Grief  
Secretary