

MINUTES
SENATE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, March 27, 2019
TIME: 8:00 A.M.
PLACE: Room WW55
MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairwoman Lodge, Vice Chairman Harris, Senators Hill, Winder, Vick, Souza, Stennett, and McCoy(Buckner-Webb)
ABSENT/ EXCUSED: Senator Anthon
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: **Chairwoman Lodge** called the Senate State Affairs Committee to order at 8:04 a.m.

RS 27160 **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION** authorizing the Legislative Council to appoint a committee to study the effects of Medicaid Eligibility Expansion on existing programs.

Senator Hill explained that this bill is coming forward because of savings that may come from the County Indigent Fund; the counties should help to pay for the cost of medicaid expansion. Representative Fred Wood has done a great deal of work to determine a fair and equitable way to assess the counties, collection processes, and other actions relevant to this project. There is a huge disparity among the counties relative to what they have paid out through the Indigent Fund in the past. The Idaho Association of Counties also has some ideas. It is late in the session and unknown as to what will happen with the outstanding legislation related to medicaid expansion. The Speaker of the House and Representative Wood, along with others, have agreed it would be best to put together an interim committee to study this issue. The Statement of Purpose states the committee would determine what savings, if any, would be realized by the counties through the Indigent Program, determine different and equitable ways to assess payments from the counties, and ascertain the best way to collect those payments. This committee would look at various options, report back to the Legislature and make recommendations next session.

Senator Stennett asked Senator Hill if counties weren't already required to fund all their public defense through Indigent Funds. **Senator Hill** responded no, although they can use Indigent Funds for those defense costs if needed. **Senator Stennett** asked for more detailed information on what Representative Wood has proposed. **Senator Hill** stated he has not pursued in depth, how Representative Wood made his various calculations. It is Senator Hill's belief that Representative Wood has estimated the number of medicaid eligible people in each county. Currently, the counties have not been consistent in handling the Indigent Fund funding. One of the purposes of the interim committee would be to look at all the options available. It is unknown what the end result will be. It would not be appropriate to put a bill forward with the limited knowledge that is available.

Senator Winder responded to Senator Stennett's question regarding the counties paying all the public defense costs. The Public Defense Commission (PDC) has been giving out grants from general funds to the counties. This year the

PDC gave the counties about double the previous funding and provided ways to better educate public defenders. The total amounted to approximately \$13 million this year.

MOTION:

Vice Chairman Harris moved to send **RS 27160** to print. **Senator Souza** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

**MINUTES
APPROVAL:**

Senator Hill moved to approve the minutes of February 6, 2019. **Senator Vick** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

Senator Winder moved to approve the minutes of February 15, 2019. **Senator Souza** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

Senator Hill moved to approve the minutes of March 1, 2019. **Senator Vick** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

Chairwoman Lodge presented Twyla Melton with a gift of appreciation from her and the Committee for her work during the session.

**PAGE
GRADUATION:**

Graduation of Ms. Angell Angell who served as page for the 2nd half of the 1st Regular Session of the 65th Idaho Legislature.

Chairwoman Lodge called Ms. Angell forward to present her with a letter of recommendation signed by each member of the Committee. **Chairwoman Lodge** said she will be getting a letter of recommendation to Ms. Angell as well. Ms. Angell was presented with a box made from some of the trees that have been cut down around the capitol and the covers of former code books. The gift was made by Max Black, a former member of the House of Representatives. **Chairwoman Lodge** also included a keepsake hidden within the box. She asked Ms. Angell to tell the Committee what she has learned here at the Capitol.

Ms. Angell stated that she has learned a lot, especially about the process. She observed the dedication and hard work it takes for everyone to work and get along together. She had not realized how much synergy would be exhibited by everyone. Even when there is a difference in opinions, they put that behind them, worked together, and encouraged one another. **Chairwoman Lodge** ask what Ms. Angell's plans are for the future. **Ms. Angell** said she will be starting college on April 24, 2019 at BYU Idaho for a degree in social work. Then she plans to get her certification to be a counselor.

Senator Souza thanked Ms. Angell for being here and helping the Committee. She asked if there had been any surprises. **Ms. Angell** answered that the biggest surprise was how different everyone's perspective is. She saw the legislators come into situations with an open mind and willingness to listen to every opinion and hours of testimony.

Chairwoman Lodge encouraged Ms. Angell to always remember her time here and to be sure and add this experience on her resume.

Chairwoman Lodge stated that this may be the last meeting and she thanked the Committee for their patience. She stated her appreciation for their activity on the Committee.

Senator Hill expressed the Committee's appreciation to Chairwoman Lodge.

ADJOURNED:

There being no further business, **Chairwoman Lodge** adjourned the meeting at 8:18 a.m. stating any further meetings would be at the call of the Chair.

Senator Lodge, Chair

Twyla Melton, Secretary