

MINUTES  
**SENATE HEALTH & WELFARE COMMITTEE**

- DATE:** Monday, February 24, 2020
- TIME:** 3:00 P.M.
- PLACE:** Room WW54
- MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Martin, Vice Chair Souza, Senators Heider, Lee, Harris, Burtenshaw, Bayer, Jordan, and Nelson
- 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 Martin** called the meeting of the Senate Health and Welfare Committee (Committee) to order at 3:00 p.m. He asked for unanimous consent to change the order of the agenda, hearing **H 385** first, then **S 1348**, followed by the presentation. There was no objection from the Committee.
- H 385** **Kris Ellis**, representing the Idaho Health Care Association, presented **H 385**. This legislation updates and clarifies the requirements to become a certified medication assistant. This is not a new certification, but a revamping of an existing statute that was eliminated this year. Additional training is provided for current certified nurse aides to be certified to administer medications which will help the workforce shortage in long-term care facilities.
- DISCUSSION:** **Senator Bayer** inquired about the certification process. **Ms. Ellis** responded by saying a person needed to first be a certified nurse aide, then obtain additional training to administer medications, and then would become a certified medication assistant.
- MOTION:** **Senator Bayer** moved to send **H 385** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Heider** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- S 1348** **Senator Lee** stated that **S 1348** is a result of recommendations from the Governor's Opioid and Substance Use Disorder Advisory Group. The prescription drug monitoring program (PDMP) now requires prescribers to check the system prior to writing a prescription for opioids or benzodiazepines, with certain exemptions. Previously, data showed the prescribers only checked the system 32 percent of the time. Regular checks of the PDMP can help curb prescription misuse.
- DISCUSSION:** **Vice Chair Souza** said she wanted to thank Senator Lee for her work on this bill. She stated that she had previously been on the opioid task force and this bill has no negative consequences, just strong encouragement to check the system. **Senator Nelson** inquired if there were barriers in the system and if that was why the prescribers were not using it. **Senator Lee** replied that if improvement was needed, they have the resources to do it. **Senator Jordan** asked if the regulatory boards have the ability to look at all their members to see if they are accessing the system, and noted this could become a board issue if abuse was showing up for a particular physician. In response to the question, **Senator Lee** stated that discipline can be imposed. **Senator Bayer** wanted to know what contributed to the effective date of October, rather than July. **Senator Lee** replied that if there were barriers, it would give people more time to comply.

**MOTION:** **Senator Harris** moved to send **S 1348** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Jordan** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**. Senator Lee will be the floor sponsor.

**PRESENTATION:** **Roy Eiguren**, a Boise Attorney representing the US Ecology Corporation, introduced Simon Bell, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer; Andrew Marshall, Executive Vice President of Regulatory Compliance and Safety; and Terry Geis, Vice President of the Western Region Operations. He stated that they will provide a legislative update for the US Ecology Corporation with Mr. Marshall giving an overview, Mr. Geis reporting on the Grand View site, and Mr. Bell sharing the news about the growth of the company that they have achieved this past year. **Mr. Eiguren** said the reason for the presentation is that the environmental rules that govern the operation of the company are reviewed and approved by this Committee. He noted that representatives from the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) are here and can answer any questions that the Committee might have.

**Mr. Marshall** provided background information on the Company, relayed its mission, and discussed its various facilities. He expanded on hazardous waste and recycling services. See attachment 1.

**Mr. Geis** provided details of the Grand View facility. He discussed revenue generated for the state, and described the community outreach programs it is involved in.

**Mr. Geis** said the company has several challenges facing them. They are:

- industry competitiveness;
- declining federal government revenues;
- geographical disadvantages;
- transportation costs; and
- diversified federal government services business.

**DISCUSSION:** **Vice Chair Souza** inquired if there were injuries in the explosion that happened in 2018 at the Grand View site. **Mr. Geis** responded by saying there was one fatality and two employees with significant injuries. There were 21 people working at the site that day and some of them suffered other injuries. Corrective action has been taken and lessons learned to prevent similar incidents in the future. The facilities and operations are coming back online and most structures have been repaired or replaced; however, the business is still impacted. **Senator Harris** asked if the cause of the explosion was known. **Mr. Geis** replied that the explosion was caused by a generation of heat through a chemical reaction that was actually categorized as a steam explosion.

**Mr. Geis** said with regard to the fire at the facility this past December 2019, it occurred on a Saturday afternoon and was discovered by a security guard. The fire started in an area where household hazardous waste had been placed. The fire spread to other combustible materials including aerosol cans, fire extinguishers, batteries, and cleaning products. The fire was extinguished through a combination of clay and water. **Mr. Geis** said that corrective actions have been taken to prevent potential fires from similar types of waste of happening again.

**Mr. Bell** stated that with the lessons learned, the company is increasing, improving, and expanding their technical resources.

**Mr. Bell** then reported on the growth of the company, doubling in size by merging with NRC Group. This merger has turned US Ecology into one of the largest hazardous waste companies in North America. It furthers their vision of becoming a premier provider of comprehensive environmental services. **Mr. Bell** said the company has balanced its portfolio with both the collection network and the disposal facilities that support the collection network. NRC is one of the largest emergency response companies in North America. There was a derailment at Bonners Ferry with locomotives and rail cars in the river, as well as a fuel spill. **Mr. Bell** said the teams were excited to go deep into the emergency response business, plus it is just a great thing to do. **Senator Harris** asked how the locomotives were retrieved from the river and the response was by giant cranes.

**ADJOURNED:** There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Martin** adjourned the meeting at 3:52 p.m.

---

Senator Martin  
Chair

---

Margo Miller  
Secretary

---

Juanita Budell  
Assistant Secretary