

MINUTES
SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

DATE: Friday, January 22, 2021

TIME: UPON ADJOURNMENT OF JFAC COMMITTEE MEETING

PLACE: Room C310

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Bair, Vice Chairman Agenbroad, Senators Crabtree, Woodward, Lent, Riggs, Cook, and Nye.

ABSENT/ EXCUSED: Senators Grow and Ward-Engelking

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 Bair** called the meeting of the Senate Finance Committee (Committee) to order at 9:20 a.m.

RS 28169 **Relating to a transfer to the Legislative Account.**

PRESENTATION: **Paul Headlee**, Division Manager of Legislative Services Office (LSO), Budget Policy, presented **RS 28169** which relates to increased funding to the Legislative Account for the Idaho Senate and House of Representatives. In Idaho Code § 67-451, the State Controller is directed to make four transfers from the General Fund into the account totalling \$6.755 million annually. A statutory change is required to increase the amount that is transferred each year, and this legislation would increase the transfers by \$1.756 million annually, making the new annual total amount \$8.511 million, a 26 percent increase.

Mr. Headlee said the fund has declined significantly over the past several years due to increased expenses stemming from interim committees, working groups and the special session last year. Previous increases were 29 percent in FY 2002 and 21 percent in FY 2009. There has been no increase in over 10 years. These funds are perpetually appropriated, do not revert back to the General Fund at the end of each fiscal year and doesn't require legislation each year. These transfers will be retroactive to January 1, 2021 with \$1.324 million transferring in FY 2021, and \$431,500 transferring in FY 2022.

DISCUSSION: The committee had questions regarding limits on expenditures, how the amount was chosen and the time-frame when this would need to be addressed again. **Mr. Headlee** stated there were no limits in statute, other than the allowable uses, so the account would be self-limiting. The Senate and House make their own decisions on use. **Chairman Bair** read from Line 23 of the bill to further explain. The Pro-Tem, who is responsible for the oversight, has been very conservative in managing the account. He stressed that the expenditures were available to all members, either in the Quarterly Report in his office or through the Transparent Idaho website. None of the funds are used for legal expenses.

Mr. Headlee stated that with this increase, there should be a sufficient balance to avoid a future deficit, and there would be no need to address this again for another six to eight years.

MOTION: **Senator Nye** moved to send **RS 28169** to print. **Senator Agenbroad** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Bair** adjourned the meeting at 9:48 a.m.

Senator Bair
Chair

Denise McNeil
Secretary