

MINUTES
JOINT MEETING

**SENATE RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
HOUSE ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE**

DATE: Monday, April 12, 2021

TIME: 1:00 P.M.

PLACE: Lincoln Auditorium WW02

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Vick, Vice Chairman Johnson, Senators Bair, Heider, Patrick, Guthrie, Burtenshaw, Stennett, and Rabe

Chairman Ehardt, Vice Chairman Wisniewski, Representatives Vander Woude, Horman, Scott, Amador, Armstrong, Blanchard (Furniss), Hartgen, Lickley, Young, Adams, Yamamoto, Chew, Necochea, and Nash

**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 Vick** called the joint meeting of the Senate Resources and Environment Committee (Committee) and the House Environment, Energy and Technology Committee (Committee) to order at 1:02 p.m.

Chairman Vick welcomed the Committee members and the audience to the joint meeting to hear "Move Oregon's Border for a Greater Idaho," a presentation by Mike McCarter, President of Move Oregon's Border and Citizens for Greater Idaho, an Oregonian and retired from the agricultural industry; and Mark Simmons, Oregon rancher and former Speaker of the Oregon House of Representatives.

PRESENTATION: **"Move Oregon's Border for a Greater Idaho." Mr. McCarter** said the "Move Oregon's Border" movement is not about politics or political parties, but is about people who are battling to preserve their traditional values of faith, family, freedom, and independence. He added "Move Oregon's Border" is a grassroots movement with no corporate or political support, and consists only of volunteer members. **Mr. McCarter** stated it is necessary to have a governmental system in place to prevent chaos and facilitate the freedom to choose who governs through the election process. However, he questioned whether the people have the right to choose which state government represents them. (See attachment 1.)

Mr. McCarter said asking the citizens of rural Oregon before asking Oregon's or Idaho's Legislature about the process to join Idaho is the first step to change Oregon's border. **Mr. McCarter** stressed it was not a vote to secede from Oregon, nor a vote to start a new state, just the beginning process of asking Oregon to let Oregon's rural counties ask Idaho if it would allow them to become part of Idaho.

Several reasons were given for this request and they were:

- To be independent of an overreaching state government;
- To have the opportunity to raise families the way they want;
- The need for safety of law and order supporting law enforcement;
- A balanced budget and reasonable taxes; and
- To protect the environment and have a firm supply of energy sources in both States.

Mr. McCarter said there is a large cultural divide between northwest Oregon and rural Oregon, and it is getting larger.

Mr. Simmons stated the border initiative passed in his home county, Union, giving the residents hope the effort might succeed. He said the present government in power in the Legislature and governorship in the State of Oregon do not have a vision for the future that includes rural Oregon. The values and goals are very different. Because of those differences, that is the reason for seeking answers to the Oregon boundary change. **Mr. Simmons** also said the discussion of changing state boundaries are not new. For example: Virginia and West Virginia; Illinois and Indiana; North Carolina and Tennessee; Colorado and Wyoming; and New York City and New York.

Mr. Simmons reviewed some of the benefits for Idaho if Oregon's border should change:

- employment opportunities;
- increased land mass;
- water port;
- timber; and
- other natural resources.

However, he acknowledged many details need to be worked out, such as minimum-wage laws, correctional and educational institutions, roads, equipment, and buildings. **Mr. Simmons** admitted he didn't know how these issues would be resolved.

DISCUSSION:

Some of the questions asked were:

- What percentage of Oregonians agree that they want to be a part of Greater Idaho?
- How would the minimum wage law be addressed?
- How would the criminal justice system and jurisdictions be resolved?
- In which State will the tax base come from?
- How much of Oregon is national forest land, privately owned land, and Bureau of Land Management land?
- Of the nine correctional institutions in Oregon, how many would be in Greater Idaho?
- Has Oregon's governor bought into this idea?

Chairman Ehardt thanked Mr. McCarter and Mr. Simmons for their presentation and said if the gentlemen have answers later to the questions posed by the Committee members, she will distribute them. **Chairman Vick** also thanked Mr. McCarter and Mr. Simmons for taking the time to come here and explain how moving the border would help Idaho.

Mr. McCarter said he was deeply grateful for the two Chairmen's willingness to entertain a conversation about the boundary, and such a conversation lends credibility to the effort and he appreciated it very much.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Vick** adjourned the meeting at 1:55 p.m.

Senator Vick
Chair

Juanita Budell
Secretary