

MINUTES
HOUSE JUDICIARY, RULES & ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Monday, February 07, 2022

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

PLACE: Room EW42

MEMBERS: Chairman Chaney, Vice Chairman Hartgen, Representatives Kerby, Amador, Ehardt, Scott, Marshall, Troy, Young, Nate, Cannon, Erickson, Skaug, Gannon, McCrostie, Ruchti, Nash

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Rep. Amador, Ehardt, Scott

GUESTS: The sign-in sheet will be retained in the committee secretary's office; following the end of the session the sign-in sheet will be filed with the minutes in the Legislative Library.

Chairman Chaney called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m.

RS 29366: **Rep. Hartgen** presented **RS 29366**. This legislation updates the name of the Misdemeanor Probation Advisory Committee to the Misdemeanor Probation Training Council. The name reflects the current bylaws.

MOTION: **Rep. Kerby** made a motion to introduce **RS 29366**. **Motion carried by voice vote.**
Juneal Kerrick, Senior District Judge, introduced herself and the magistrate judges who will comprise the magistrate judge presentations.

Judge Matthew Bever, Canyon County Magistrate, spoke about remote access to justice in 2020 due to COVID. He described how it became evident that expecting everyone to "appear" in person was not reasonable and it was not possible to shut down the court. This made it necessary to find new ways to continue to serve the public. He explained how remote participation in place of in person appearances has been effective in many ways, and overall it's been a positive change in access to justice.

Judge Stacey DePew, Jerome County Magistrate, spoke about language access to the courts. She explained how more frequently individuals are coming in front of the court that do not have English skills. She noted that many statutes require the courts to provide interpreters even though it is expensive. She described how court interpreters go through additional training to become a court certified interpreter. There is much effort going into ensuring that individuals understand what is going on. 8427 hearings required an interpreter in 2021 and while Spanish is the most common, over the past year 43 different languages have been requested. Each district is experiencing an increasing need for interpreters. Swahili and American Sign Language interpreters are frequently requested and it is difficult to locate interpreters.

Judge Annie McDevitt, Ada County Magistrate, spoke about court innovations in Ada County and explained that with the population increase in Ada County, timely cases are becoming more challenging. Warrants Court is designed to quickly get defendants back into court; however they are more frequently frightening, time consuming, costly, and involve possible loss of jobs for defendants. She talked about how zoom meetings are helping to reduce the number of outstanding warrants. She noted that using Zoom has had overwhelming success in resolving high conflict custody cases through interdisciplinary settlement conferences.

H 536: **Rep. Hartgen** presented **H 536** and explained it pertains to divorce actions in court and makes technical corrections to code.

MOTION: **Rep. McCrostie** made a motion to send **H 536** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

H 537: **Rep. Hartgen** presented **H 537** and explained that this proposed legislation pertains to administrative judges and allows them to delegate certain duties to the magistrate judges.

MOTION: **Rep. McCrostie** made a motion to send **H 537** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST: **Chairman Chaney** made a unanimous consent request to move **H 542** above **H 538** on the agenda. There being no objection, the request was granted.

H 542: **Rep. Hartgen** presented **H 542** and explained that this proposed legislation pertains to court fees and allows an extension on monthly deposit deadlines.

Kristina Glascock appeared by remote testimony and spoke **in support** of **H 542**.

MOTION: **Rep. Troy** made a motion to send **H 542** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

H 538: **Rep. Skaug** presented **H 538** and explained that this proposed legislation pertains to certain court reports currently submitted in triplicate and obsolete now.

MOTION: **Rep. Troy** made a motion to send **H 538** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee the meeting adjourned at 2:21 p.m.

Representative Chaney
Chair

Andrea Blades
Secretary