

MINUTES
SENATE COMMERCE & HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, January 24, 2023

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

PLACE: Room WW54

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Cook, Vice Chairman Lenney, Senators Lakey, Guthrie, Ricks, Foreman, Hartgen, Ward-Engelking, and Ruchti

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 Cook** called the meeting of the Senate Commerce and Human Resources Committee (Committee) to order at 1:30 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Senator Guthrie** moved to approve the Minutes of January 17, 2023. **Senator Ricks** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

GUBERNATORIAL REAPPOINTMENT VOTE: **Committee Vote on the Gubernatorial Reappointment of Lori Wolff, Administrator, Idaho Division of Human Resources (IDHR).** **Chairman Cook** asked the Committee if there were any objections to approving the Gubernatorial reappointment of Lori Wolff. There were none.

MOTION: **Senator Guthrie** moved to send the Gubernatorial reappointment of Lori Wolff to the IDHR with the recommendation she be confirmed. **Senator Hartgen** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

RS 30067 **Relating to Food.** **Senator Nichols** stated this legislation amended Idaho Code § 37-115 to prohibit certain conduct regarding food that contained a vaccine or vaccine material without notification of the presence of the vaccine or vaccine material in the food. She noted there was no impact to the General Fund or any county or governmental fund as it applied only as an amendment and did not require an outlay of public funds.

DISCUSSION: **Vice Chair Lenney** asked about the downside of this proposed legislation. **Ms. Nichols** remarked this was a newer issue and could not say if there was a downside. This legislation would provide information to the public indicating what was in a product.

Senator Lakey stated if this legislation was approved he wanted to know how often vaccines occurred and the opinion of the agricultural community about this legislation.

Senator Ricks asked for an overview of what was going to be accomplished with this proposed legislation and the end goal. **Senator Nichols** stated the proposed legislation was for the consumer in providing notification of what vaccines were contained in a product.

Senator Foreman queried if any of the vaccines were experimental and were they introduced in other states. **Senator Nichols** remarked this proposed legislation was a new precedent and cited an example regarding vaccines injected into lettuce.

Senator Guthrie stated he wanted more information because all of the livestock industry was vaccinating animals to keep them healthy. He asked if vaccine material was a component that was used to make a vaccine, and was that material included. He noted he had several concerns and questions.

MOTION:

Vice Chair Lenney moved to send **RS 30067** to print. **Senator Foreman** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

RS 29936C1

Relating to the Employment Security Law. Jani Revier, Director, Idaho Department of Labor (IDOL), stated that currently, under the Idaho Employment Security Law (Idaho Code § 72-1366), when someone quit a job, it must be for work-related reasons to be found eligible for unemployment insurance benefits. The proposed statute change allowed unemployment insurance benefits to individuals who must leave their employment due to being a victim of domestic violence or their military spouse was being transferred.

Ms. Revier pointed out the fiscal impact of this change was an estimated \$200,000 to the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund (UITF) in the first year with slight increases each year after to account for inflation factors. There was no fiscal impact to the General Fund as the changes pertained to the Unemployment Insurance Program and the associated UITF.

DISCUSSION:

Vice Chair Lenney queried how the \$200,000 was determined. **Ms. Revier** stated this estimate was based on past claimants. She noted only 10-15 people would be directly impacted.

Senator Ruchti asked how the IDOL kept track of military spouses to make sure they were in compliance. **Ms. Revier** noted this proposed legislation only changed eligibility requirements that had to be met.

Senator Foreman stated he wanted to know what domestic violence had to do with a person's employment. **Ms. Revier** noted every case was different, there were a variety of instances, and those instances were not common. Idaho was one of the states in the minority that did not recognize these two exemptions. **Senator Foreman** remarked many military move often over a 20-year career. He asked how would Ms. Revier answer the issue that the State should not have to subsidize spouses and why should this be funded. **Ms. Revier** noted this was a policy decision and many states had chosen to make those decisions.

Senator Ruchti asked if the employer was charged under the unemployment law for this type of a policy. **Ms. Revier** replied the employer was not charged and even if they were, they would be reimbursed.

MOTION:

Senator Guthrie moved to send **RS 29936C1** to print. **Senator Lakey** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

RS 29914C1

Relating to the Department of Administration (IDOA) - Red Tape Reduction Act. Steve Bailey, Deputy Director, Department of Administration, stated this proposed legislation repealed the requirement for the Office of Group Insurance (OGI) to promulgate rules for determining the eligibility of participants in the State's health insurance plan. Eligibility was already determined in contracts with health insurance providers.

Mr. Bailey noted this legislation added a member to the Group Insurance Advisory Committee (GIAC) from a school district participating in the State's group health insurance plan. School district representatives would provide a perspective on GIAC decisions impacting health insurance coverage and administration. There was no impact to the General Fund or any dedicated or

federal funds because the structure and staffing were currently in place to implement the statute.

DISCUSSION: **Senator Lakey** remarked he was in support of the proposed legislation. He noted rules had not been promulgated. **Mr. Bailey** stated the rules had not been promulgated because of a lack of need contractually. He noted the rules were somewhat vague.

MOTION: **Senator Ward-Engelking** moved to send **RS 29914C1** to print. **Senator Guthrie** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

PRESENTATION: **Your Health Idaho (YHI)**. **Pat Kelly, Executive Director, YHI**, highlighted the changes and outlined the year for YHI (Attachment 1). He gave an extensive summary of the key accomplishments, 2022 by the numbers, the year in review, open enrollment 2023, and looking ahead.

DISCUSSION: **Senator Ruchti** and **Mr. Kelly** discussed why cash reserves were important in order to be able to operate for 6 to 9 months if there was a downturn. They also discussed the idea that when new health insurance carriers came to YHI there was no fee or premium. **Mr. Kelly** remarked there were operational investments for the new carriers, but no up front expenses.

Chairman Cook and **Mr. Kelly** discussed the inception of the YHI Exchange and the \$43 million saved by Idahoans in 2022 because they were not part of the federal exchange. YHI fees were less, which made up the differential in savings. **Chairman Cook** asked Mr. Kelly what was his biggest challenge. **Mr. Kelly** noted his biggest challenge was to strive for improvement, not to become complacent, and to give brokers the tools to make them grow.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Cook** adjourned the meeting at 2:34 p.m.

Senator Cook
Chair

Linda Kambeitz
Secretary