

MINUTES  
**SENATE HEALTH & WELFARE COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Tuesday, January 24, 2023

**TIME:** 3:00 P.M.

**PLACE:** Room WW54

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman VanOrden, Vice Chairman Zuiderveld, Senators Lee, Harris, Bjerke, Wintrow, and Taylor

**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 VanOrden** called the meeting of the Senate Health and Welfare Committee (Committee) to order at 3:00 p.m.

**DISCUSSION:** **Continuation of Medicaid Expansion.** **Chairman VanOrden** explained today's discussion was from the Medicaid Expansion presentation held on January 23, 2023, before both the Senate and House Health and Welfare Committees. She directed the Committee, pursuant House and Joint Rule 20 (G)(H), there would be no public testimony during the meeting. She further stated any questions the Committee had must be directed only to the Director of Health and Welfare, his staff, or another Committee member.

**Chairman VanOrden** directed the Committee's attention to a print out inside their folders. She referred them to Idaho Code § 56-267(7), that established Medicaid Expansion (Expansion). She further stated she would consult with Chairman Vander Woude from the House of Representatives to decide how they would proceed in notifying the House and the Senate of their recommendations on this matter. (see Attachment 1)

**Dave Jeppesen**, Director, Department of Health and Welfare (Department), informed the Committee that he and his staff were there to answer questions the Committee had regarding Medicaid Expansion.

**Senator Wintrow** called on Ross Edmunds, Administrator for the Division of Behavioral Health, for clarification about the serious impacts of mental and behavioral health in Idaho. She asked about the impact of mental and behavioral health services for the 20 percent that did not have an earned income, unlike the other 80 percent. **Mr. Edmunds** replied under Expansion, individuals could be offered medication and case management in crisis issues. Individuals with serious mental illness and addiction could get full access to benefits.

**Senator Lee** asked about the enrollment redetermination process looked like for the Expansion, and what kind of assistance was needed to expedite that process. **Shane Leach**, Medicaid Eligibility Division, stated there were currently 150,000 individuals the Department had not heard from during the Public Health Emergency. These individuals would be found ineligible on April 1, 2023, if they did not respond to complete the renewal process. He continued, stating the Department would send out 30,000 notices per month to these individuals over the next 6 months, beginning February 1, 2023.

**Senator Bjerke** asked out of the 150,000 individuals, how many were part of the Expansion. **Mr. Leach** replied approximately 67,000. **Senator Harris** asked about the approved waivers the Department had received from Medicaid. **Ms. Charron**, Division of Medicaid, replied only the 1115 waiver was granted.

**Senator Bjerke** inquired if the Expansion program was viable moving forward, and if it was the best thing for Idaho and Idaho citizens. **Director Jeppesen** replied the Department's role as an agency was to present facts, information, the perspective of how programs run, and to carry out the direction that the policy makers set out. He further stated it was the Department's job to make sure that Expansion was sustainable and financially viable as possible.

**Chairman VanOrden** asked what would the impacts be if Expansion were not in place. **Director Jeppesen** replied a number of things were paid for out of the State General Fund for services provided to Idaho citizens. With the Expansion, there were reductions in agency budgets, as those expenses were on the sheets. (see Attachment 2).

He further stated if Expansion were not in place, the assumption was the State would go back to paying for those services. The Catastrophic Fund and the Indigent Funds had both been closed, as they were covered under the Expansion.

**ADJOURNED:** There being no further business at this time, **Chairman VanOrden** adjourned the meeting at 3:39 p.m.

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Senator VanOrden  
Chair

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Michelle Tierney  
Secretary