



ST. MICHAEL'S
EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL

518 North 8th Street • Boise, ID 83702 • (208) 342-5601

February 14, 2022

Idaho State Senate State Affairs Committee
Room WW42
Idaho State Capitol
700 W. Jefferson St
Boise, ID 83702

Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members,

As the dean and rector of St. Michael's Episcopal Cathedral, located at the corner of 8th and State Streets in Boise, I write to offer testimony on House Bill 25. The cathedral owns the only private buildings located along the roadways adjoining the Capitol building (the cathedral and the Grand Army of the Republic Hall) and stands to be substantially affected if the Director of the Department of Administration alters the status quo of State Street or 8th Street.

Points of concern include the impact on St. Michael's, and its parishioners, should the State of Idaho ever decide to limit access State Street and/or 8th Street. Navigating the state bureaucratic infrastructure, in addition to city and/or county bureaucracies, will dramatically increase the cathedral's burden in self-advocacy in seeking redress. In the event of state mandated street closures surrounding the Capitol, access to the cathedral and G.A.R. Hall will be greatly restricted. This will significantly impact the people participating in cathedral programs and others engaged in business matters with tenants of the G.A.R. Hall.

Furthermore, the additional layer of regulatory oversight will complicate State Street road projects, both planned and unplanned, including scheduled improvements that would add ADA accessible parking on State Street, just east of 8th Street. Handicapped drivers with business at the cathedral, the Capitol, or the Joe R. Williams Building would all benefit from additional handicap parking in the 700 block of State Street. It would be troubling to see that additional ADA accessible parking delayed or canceled due to unintended consequences associated with this legislation. Finally, the cathedral is planning to install an electronic sign at the corner of 8th and State Streets and it is unclear how state oversight would complicate the design and permitting process.

Under the circumstances, St. Michael's urges the committee return the bill to the full Senate with a do not pass recommendation.

Sincerely,

The Very Rev. Sean Wall
Dean

Attachment 3

Members of the Senate State Affairs Committee:



The undersigned businesses and community organizations are reaching out to you today to respectfully ask for your “no” vote on HB 25. HB 25 requires any alterations of roadways located next to the Idaho State Capitol to be approved by the Director of the Department of Administration in consultation with the Governor’s Office, legislative leadership, and members of the Idaho State Capitol Commission. We strongly believe this is an unnecessary burden for roadway projects that have already been thoroughly reviewed by multiple elected bodies and the public, and it will only result in costly delays for locally agreed upon projects that are now subject to an additional layer of political oversight.

While we understand the premise behind HB 25 is to address safety and security issues arising from events taking place near the capitol mall complex, we believe there is already adequate cooperation between the Department of Administration and the City of Boise through their special events committee approval process to sufficiently respond to event coordination concerns. Instead, we believe that the language within HB 25, specifically lines 17-20 stating “The director shall consult with the governor, the presiding officers of the legislature, and the Idaho state capitol commission prior to granting or withholding approval of an alteration of the use of the roadways exceeding seven (7) days” will be utilized to insert unnecessary state-level bureaucracy to halt long-term roadway projects that are best addressed at the local level. In addition, this will require any development of business in the surrounding area to ask for additional approval that will deter economic development

In writing this letter, we are strongly concerned that HB 25 will directly impact a significant economic development project supported by downtown businesses and local leaders to convert 5th and 6th Streets from one-way to two-way streets. Our businesses have dedicated their livelihoods to making downtown Boise the economically vibrant and attractive downtown it is today, and we see this roadway project as another opportunity to further bolster the economic development of Boise’s main street businesses. The 5th and 6th Street two-way conversion conversations first began in 2013 and we have continued to urge local leaders at the Ada County Highway District (ACHD), Capital City Development Corporation (CCDC) and the City of Boise to prioritize moving this project forward. For us, this project is a clear economic win – two-way traffic patterns enable businesses on the corridor to have visibility during both morning and afternoon traffic peaks. Conversions in other downtowns across America have also shown to increase pedestrian activity, resulting in a significant economic boost to local business, which increases sales tax revenue. HB 25 would threaten the years of planning and effort that has gone into keep this project moving, ignoring the will of local businesses who are asking for this roadway conversion.

For these reasons, we encourage you to vote "no" on HB 25, honoring processes that are already in place to address Capitol mall safety and to ensure that local roadway planning and development be kept with local leaders and stakeholders.

Sincerely,

Clay Carley
General Manager
Old Boise

Hethe Clark
Partner
Clark Wardle

Bill Connors
CEO
Boise Metro Chamber

Jeff Hess
Partner
Hawkins Home Group

Jenn Hensley
Executive Director
Downtown Boise Assoc.

Skip Oppenheimer
Chairman & CEO
Oppenheimer Companies

Sean Evans
Chairman
Idaho Chamber Alliance