

MINUTES  
**SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Thursday, March 02, 2023

**TIME:** 1:30 P.M.

**PLACE:** Room WW53

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Okuniewicz, Vice Chairman Den Hartog, Senators Winder, Hart, Carlson, Toews, Trakel, Rabe, and Just

**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 Okuniewicz** called the meeting of the Senate Transportation Committee (Committee) to order at 1:30 p.m.

**H 132** **TRANSPORTATION - Amends existing law to establish a strategic initiatives grant program.** **Representative Palmer** explained this bill established the Strategic Initiatives Grant Program. The program would help local highway districts that were impacted by state highway and overpass projects. The fund would be allocated \$100 million this year and contained \$36 million carryover from last year, which was earmarked for the Ustick Road section on the Highway 16 expansion. **Representative Palmer** stated the money would be split 50 percent for rural projects and 50 percent for urban projects. The grant would be administered by the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD). He relayed that the program was set up to be ongoing if the funds were available.

**DISCUSSION:** **Chairman Okuniewicz** asked if this was new money or was this budgeted in the past but handled differently. **Representative Palmer** stated the funds came from state surplus. **Vice Chair Den Hartog** added that this was a proposed transfers not a set budget item and the legislation did not require a set transfer. She relayed that the Joint Finance Appropriations Committee (JFAC) was holding off on the exact amount until other budget items were taken care of so the amount could change. **Chairman Okuniewicz** asked what would happen to the money if it was not all used this year. **Representative Palmer** stated he believed the money would carry over but felt there was enough need for it to all be used this year. **Chairman Okuniewicz** asked if this allocation would continue in the future. **Representative Palmer** stated that it would depend on fund availability. **Senator Toews** asked how the allocation of the money would be determined. **Representative Palmer** stated this was new and ITD would figure out how to fairly allocate the funds and that there were six projects currently that had been identified as needing assistance.

**TESTIMONY:** **Jacob Miller**, Government Affairs Coordinator, Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS), testified in support of the bill.

**MOTION:** **Vice Chair Den Hartog** moved to send **H 132** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Carlson** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

**H 107**                    **MOTOR VEHICLES - Amends existing law to provide for the unique design elements of radio amateur license plates.** **Representative Mitchell** stated the bill allowed for the redesign of the amateur radio license plate. The new plate would make it easier to know the vehicle was equipped with a radio that could be used for communication in an emergency. There was a \$2500 cost for the re-design that would be covered by ITD.

**DISCUSSION:**        **Senator Just** asked about the clause that stated the design would be approved by the Idaho section of the American Radio Relay League. **Representative Mitchell** replied that ITD had asked for that group to approve the design. **Senator Just** asked if the cost of the plate went to ITD. **Representative Mitchell** confirmed that the plate fee went to ITD.

**TESTIMONY:**        **Mike Neelon**, Section Emergency Coordinator, Idaho Amateur Radio Emergency Service (IDARES), and Emergency Manager, Latah County testified in support of the bill.

**MOTION:**            **Senator Carlson** moved to send **H 107** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Hart** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

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

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Senator Okuniewicz  
Chair

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Lena Amoah  
Secretary