

MINUTES  
**HOUSE TRANSPORTATION & DEFENSE COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Monday, January 22, 2024

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

**PLACE:** Room EW40

**MEMBERS:** Chairman Palmer, Vice Chairman Mitchell, Representatives Dixon(1), Holtzclaw, Monks, Blanksma, Manwaring, Shepherd, Crane(12), Handy, Hill, Lanting, Miller, Petzke, Yamamoto, Gannon, Burns

**ABSENT/  
EXCUSED:** None

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

**Chairman Palmer** called the meeting to order at 1:30pm.

**Chairman Palmer** asked the committee's Page, **Natalie Chrysler** to introduce herself.

**Scott Stokes**, Director, Idaho Transportation Department, presented the Department's annual report to the committee. He stated the Department owns and operates an integrated system of over 12,000 lane miles, 1,800 bridges, and partners with over 100 county Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) offices to process more than 3.6 million transactions annually. He continued, the Department actively manages the planning, design, and project delivery through the seven-year construction program, which paid out over \$730 million last year. The Department supports the state's aviation community by assisting over 60 community airports with grant opportunities and airport landings, operates and maintains 32 backcountry airstrips, provides safety and education, and leads aviation search and rescue.

**Director Stokes** explained the Department's revenue sources come from both federal and state. User fees, which are dedicated funds, are primarily from fuel tax and registration fees, and are always used for public highways and bridge projects, as well as most highway maintenance, operations and salaries. Federal funds are through multi-year federal legislation, including federal fuel and excise taxes. The Strategic Initiative funds are the Governor's Leading Idaho dollars that are transferred out of the General Fund and used for contract construction. Finally, the Transportation Expansion and Congestion Mitigation fund (TECM) is the sales tax provided to the Department, currently at \$80 million per year, which is primarily used for the state's bonding program.

**Director Stokes** discussed many of the ongoing and upcoming projects, including the modernization of the highway system interchange in Pocatello, the Clearwater Memorial Bridge in Lewiston, and the Highway 16 project in the Treasure Valley. Additionally, he highlighted the Department's local grant program, which distributes \$100 million for local transportation projects that are otherwise beyond the reach of local government finances. Fifty percent of the funds are dedicated for large urban areas, and the remaining fifty percent goes to rural areas.

Another area **Director Stokes** highlighted included the modernization of the DMV, known as Skip the Trip. Skip the Trip puts money back into the hands of Idahoans by eliminating extra fees and creating more digital options for DMV customers. In one month, Skip the Trip serviced 49% of all motor vehicle transactions and 60% of vehicle registrations. The Department anticipates the online portal will save \$5 million a year with more than 1.4 million annual transactions.

Finally, **Director Stokes** brought attention to the Governor's Idaho Works initiative, which includes funding for road and bridge maintenance, safety and capacity programs, and an increase to TECM by \$50 million. All of this support and funding helps to move projects forward bringing safety and a great return on investments for decades.

**ADJOURN:** There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 2:15pm.

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Representative Palmer  
Chair

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Tracey McDonnell  
Secretary