

MINUTES
HOUSE HEALTH & WELFARE COMMITTEE

DATE: Monday, February 05, 2024

TIME: 9:00 A.M.

PLACE: Room EW20

MEMBERS: Chairman Vander Woude, Vice Chairman Erickson, Representatives Blanksma, Kingsley, Mitchell, Dixon(24), Gallagher, Healey, Redman, Wheeler, Chew (Wilson), Rubel, Roberts

**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 Vander Woude called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

MOTION: **Rep. Dixon(24)** made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 25 and 29, 2024, meetings. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Chairman Vander Woude announced **RS 31126** will be held in committee pending a fiscal note correction.

H 397: **Rep. Megan Blanksma**, District 8, presented **H 397**. She shared the children only Immunization Registry Information System (IRIS) began as a voluntary opt-in program and was changed in 2010 to an opt-out program. This change made opt-in automatic, without parental permission. During COVID in 2021 adult vaccinations were automatically opted into IRIS, without notice to the recipients. This legislation returns IRIS to an opt-in system.

The intent of the change to an opt-out system was to increase and maintain the immunization rate of children. However, the 2019 to 2020 immunization rate of 86.5% for children under thirteen years of age has dropped to 80.2% in 2021-2022. The opt-out process is very complicated and less transparent.

Dr. Cristina Abuchaibe, Pediatric Cardiologist, Idaho's Children Are Primary, testified **in opposition to H 397**. IRIS helps providers assure the children get only the vaccinations necessary. This change would result in incomplete records. Choice is an integral part of the IRIS system and its data is only available to specific providers.

Answering committee questions, **Dr. Abuchaibe** said rural practices will have an associated cost to return to the opt-in system. The current system is not broken and not impacting parental decision rights. Rural areas already face financial issues which would increase further with the additional staff and programming required for the system change.

Grace Howat, Policy Assistant, Idaho Family Policy Center, testified **in support of H 397**. Parental rights and privacy need to be respected for this personal information.

Rebecca Coyle, Self, testified **in opposition to H 397**, stating concern regarding no reference to the implementation timeline and costs. There are fewer than 1,000 individuals who have opted out of IRIS. The implementation date of July 1, 2024, is unattainable and will delay ordering vaccines as well as record access.

Heather Gagliano, Self, testified **in opposition** to **H 397**, stating she has always been fully informed of her IRIS participation rights. In the schools the IRIS data prevents going through other processes to obtain the information needed for accurate care. In her opinion it is unfair to spend taxpayer dollars to change an efficient system.

In closing remarks, **Rep. Blanksma** said the opposition involves the inconvenience and cost of informing parents while providing consent forms. Most adults are unaware IRIS is recording their vaccine data because they were not given a consent form. This legislation assures everyone can direct where their medical data goes.

MOTION: **Rep. Redman** made a motion to send **H 397** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION: **Rep. Rubel** made a substitute motion to **HOLD H 397** in committee. **Motion failed by voice vote.**

VOTE ON ORIGINAL MOTION: **Chairman Vander Woude** called for a vote on the original motion to send **H 397** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote. Reps. Roberts, Rubel, and Wilson** requested they be recorded as voting **NAY. Rep. Blanksma** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

H 399: **Rep. Megan Blanksma**, District 8, presented **H 399**. Maternal mortality data is currently being collected by the DHW without a board review process. This legislation establishes the review process as a part of the Board of Medicine (BOM), who has the authority to work with the DHW and set up other boards. A legislative report is required by January 31st of each year.

Answering questions, **Rep. Blanksma** said the costs are related to meetings and would be covered by the BOM, with no federal funding required.

Dr. Stacy Seyb, Self, testified **in support** of **H 399**. Maternal mortality is not a simple statistic. The synthesizing of underlying causes will help prevent future tragedies. He suggested the legislation include immunity and confidentiality for those giving information.

Carmen Broesder, Self, testified **in opposition** to **H 399**, stating individuals who have experienced miscarriages and their providers are not included in this data.

Dr. Melissa Roop, Idaho Coalition for Safe Healthcare, testified **in support** of **H 399**. She requested the focus include under reporting as well as missclassifications and near misses.

Dr. Martha Lund, Retired Obstetrician and Gynecologist, American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, testified **in support** of **H 399** with reservations. Establishing the committee is a crucial step in addressing maternal mortality. Critical elements needed incorporate participant immunity and confidentiality to allow open, honest discussions.

Cindy Thorngren, National Association of Women, Southwest Idaho, testified **in support** of **H 399**, adding the report needs to compare with other states. There is a need to assure how the system helps moms survive their first year instead of focusing only on the infant.

Rep. Blanksma, in closing, stated the goal was to avoid the continued DHW data collection problems. Confidentiality can be addressed through agreements. Existing federal funding is unnecessary.

MOTION: **Rep. Dixon(24)** made a motion to send **H 399** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

Rep. Mitchell stated he will be voting in favor of the motion but may change his floor vote.

**VOTE ON
MOTION:**

Chairman Vander Woude called for a vote on the motion to send **H 399** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote. Reps. Kingsley and Gallagher** requested they be recorded as voting **NAY. Rep. Blanksma** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 9:53 a.m.

Representative Vander Woude
Chair

Irene Moore
Secretary