MINUTES

SENATE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE:	Wednesday, January 22, 2025
TIME:	8:00 A.M.
PLACE:	Room WW55
MEMBERS PRESENT:	Chairman Guthrie, Vice Chairman Bernt, Senators Anthon, Harris, Toews, Den Hartog, Adams, Shippy, and Ruchti
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 Guthrie** called the meeting of the Senate State Affairs Committee to order at 8:00 a.m.

GUBERNATORIAL APPOINTMENT VOTE: **The Gubernatorial Appointment of Lori Wolff as Administrator of the Division of Financial Management** to serve a term commencing June 5, 2024. **Senator Harris** moved to send the Gubernatorial Appointment of **Lori Wolff** as Administrator of the Division of Financial Management to the floor with the recommendation that she be confirmed by the Senate. **Vice Chairman Bernt** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

GUBERNATORIAL REAPPOINTMENT VOTE: **The Gubernatorial Reappointment of Matthew Woodington to the Idaho State Racing Commission** to serve a term commencing January 15, 2024, and expiring January 15, 2030. **Senator Den Hartog** moved to send the Gubernatorial Appointment of **Matthew Woodington** to the Idaho State Racing Commission to the floor with the recommendation that he be confirmed by the Senate. **Senator Toews** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

PRESENTATION: **Annual State of the Gunfighters Address for the Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho. Colonel Michael Alfaro**, Commander, 366th Fighter Wing (366th), provided an overview of the 366th's guiding mission, vision, and priorities, followed by multi-year projects, and concluded with the Five and Thrive effort (see Attachment 1). **Colonel Alfaro** stated that China was the greatest future power threat, with a potential collision between 2027 and 2035. The U.S. no longer had the technological overmatch enjoyed in prior years. Also, the changed security environment meant that the homeland was no longer a sanctuary. The 366th Fighter Wing was recognized as the best installation in the Air Force for the year of 2024. The 366th's design of solar portable power cells, an alternative to large generators, was a key contribution recognized. Small command centers could then move quickly to relocate the unit for increased effectiveness and safety. The award monies were invested in living accommodation improvements for the airmen. Projects underway included construction of an alternate water supply for the Mountain Home Air Force Base (MHAFB), due to depletion of the Snake River aquifer, the current water supply. As a second key project, the 366th will continue working toward Federal Aviation Administration approval of flight practice at lower elevations, down to 100 feet from 10,000 feet, in designated

areas. Looking to future missions, **Colonel Alfaro** shared the value and strategic advantage of extensive practice prior to engagement. Also, the engine used in half of the F-15E planes at MHAFB will be divested after 2027. Finally, **Colonel Alfaro** discussed Five and Thrive, that was focused on the quality of life for the airmen. He cited improvements made to the elementary school near the MHAFB and a program designed to help students cope with the unique challenges accompanying moving many times during kindergarten through twelfth grade.

DISCUSSION: **Vice Chairman Bernt** asked what happened to the old aircraft. **Colonel Alfaro** replied that the F-15E flown currently had the same exterior, but completely different avionics inside. Half of the MHAFB planes had the older engines. Units would be evaluated to identify the best to retain, and the others would go to the boneyard. He hoped no mission would be leaving MHAFB. **Senator Ruchti** inquired about the meaning of overmatch, mentioned repeatedly. **Colonel Alfaro** explained that the United States' ability to rapidly produce aircraft was less than key adversaries, such as China, which had made a very consolidated effort toward progress in this area. Additionally, the U.S. number of satellites and range of missile was inferior. The U.S. strategic advantage was in a broader network of allies and partners as well as the strength and professionalism of its military officers and personnel.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: **Unclassified Intelligence Briefing, Pursuant to Senate Rule 20(E), two-thirds vote required.**

VOICE VOTE: **Senator Den Hartog** moved to enter into an Executive Session pursuant to Senate Rule 20(E). **Senator Harris** seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously by **voice vote**.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Guthrie** adjourned the meeting at 8:45 a.m.

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Senator Guthrie
Chair

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Kathryn Wells
Secretary