

MINUTES
SENATE HEALTH & WELFARE COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, February 05, 2025

TIME: 3:00 P.M.

PLACE: Room WW54

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair VanOrden, Vice Chairman Bjerke, Senators Harris, Zuiderveld, Coho (Lenney), Shippy, Blaylock, Keyser, and Wintrow

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: **Chair VanOrden** called the meeting of the Senate Health and Welfare Committee (Committee) to order at 3:12 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Senator Zuiderveld** moved to approve the Minutes of January 29, 2025. **Senator Wintrow** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

GUBERNATORIAL REAPPOINTMENT: **Committee Consideration of the Gubernatorial Reappointment of Britt Raubenheimer of Sandpoint, ID, to the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired** (Commission), term commencing July 1, 2024 and expiring July 1, 2027. **Ms. Raubenheimer** noted that twenty years ago the vision in her right eye disappeared over night. Vision in her left eye slowly disappeared over the next nine months leaving her anxious about losing employment and independence. Staff from the Commission traveled to her home and taught her to use talking computers, canes, audible cues, and a guide dog. Most importantly, the Commission taught her confidence to have a successful career.

DISCUSSION: **Senator Harris** asked about the cause of her vision loss. **Ms. Raubenheimer** replied doctors believed a build up of fluids clogged the capillaries of her optic nerves. Starved for nutrients, her vision gave out. On behalf of Senator Woodward, **Senator VanOrden** asked how much snow Schweitzer Ski Resort had accumulated and the quality of Senator Woodward's piloting. **Ms. Raubenheimer** replied they had received nearly 180 inches and she loved skiing with a guide. **Ms. Raubenheimer** continued that Senator Woodward was an excellent pilot.

S 1034 **FOSTER HOMES - Adds to existing law to establish provisions regarding foster home health and safety requirements.** **Senator Shippy** discussed this bill eliminated Sections 230, 232, and 233 from the Idaho Administrators Administrative Procedures Act. It moved foster care licensing rules into statute and removed firearm restrictions to be replaced by a gun safety training course. **Senator Shippy** proposed these changes would improve relationships and trust between the foster care providers and the Department of Health and Welfare (Department).

DISCUSSION: **Senator Wintrow** inquired about the origin of this bill and specifics of the gun safety education program. **Senator Shippy** replied constituents expressed hesitation about becoming foster parents because of gun restrictions. He mentioned that a gun education program would teach parents safety, emphasizing the trust they had with the Department. **Senator Wintrow** wondered if Senator Shippy would accept a requirement to lock firearms with ammunition. **Senator Shippy** said while he could recommend that to parents, he did not feel it was within the Department's power to place such restrictions.

Senator Blaylock clarified that the legislation consisted of previously approved rules, with the removal of the reference to weapons being stored separate from ammunition. She asked if the legislation included mandatory gun safety training for foster parents. **Senator Shippy** responded information about the training would be added to a different section of administrative rules to adopt as legislation at a later date.

Chair VanOrden noted § Title 39.7 mandated storage of hazardous materials such as medication and alcohol out of the reach of children. She suggested guns could be added to this list.

MOTION: **Senator Harris** moved to send **S 1034** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Blaylock** seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: **Senator Wintrow** shared research to demonstrate that explicit gun regulation was in the best interest of the State in order to protect foster children.

Senator Bjerke agreed with Chair VanOrden that perhaps references to gun safety could be added to § Title 39.7.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION: **Senator Wintrow** moved to send **S 1034** to the 14th Order of Business for possible amendment. The motion failed for **lack of a second**.

VOICE VOTE: The motion to send **S 1034** to print with a **do pass** recommendation carried by **voice vote**. Senator Wintrow requested to be recorded as voting Nay.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Chair VanOrden** adjourned the meeting at 3:40 p.m.

Senator VanOrden
Chair

Rebecca Kozlowski
Secretary