

MINUTES
HOUSE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Monday, March 24, 2025

TIME: 9:00 A.M.

PLACE: Room EW40

MEMBERS: Chairman Crane(13), Vice Chairman Scott, Representatives Palmer, Barbieri, Holtzclaw, Skaug, Alfieri, Crane(12), Boyle, Dygert, Hostetler, Mickelsen, Pohanka, Achilles, Green (Lesmeister)

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Representative(s) Holtzclaw

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 Crane (13) called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

MOTION: **Rep. Dygert** made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2025 and March 21, 2025, meeting. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

RS 32721: **Rep. Mickelsen** presented **RS 32721** which protects local property taxpayers from special taxing districts taking advantage of statutes that allow for pay and benefits for individuals serving on boards. School boards, community college boards, and many other boards serve communities with no compensation. The purpose of this bill will be to bring consistency to special taxing districts.

MOTION: **Rep. Achilles** made a motion to introduce **RS 32721** and recommend it be sent directly to the Second Reading Calendar.

**SUBSTITUTE
MOTION:** **Rep. Scott** made to substitute motion to introduce **RS 32721**. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

H 399: **Secretary of State, Phil McGrane** presented **H 399**. This legislation updates and reorganizes the campaign finance laws to increase transparency, simplify reporting, and improve enforcement to better align with increased spending and modern practices in political campaigns. The legislation reorganizes the campaign finances laws by moving the provisions from Title 67, Chapter 66, State Government and State Affairs, to Title 74, Chapter 3, Transparent and Ethical Government. This new chapter separates the reporting requirements and responsibilities into five parts. It also separates the reporting requirements for campaign finance from the reporting requirements for lobbying. Additionally, the legislation makes several changes designed to increase the frequency of reporting, adjust the campaign finance limitations, and improve enforcement by creating an improved fine structure.

Committee members asked about out of state packs and independent expenditures, out of state bad behaviors, fines, and cease and desist letters, unlawful enforcement process, fraudulent email's, small group citizens communication ease and complications, spending money requirements, and gatherings for advocacy or education.

MOTION: **Rep. Mickelsen** made a motion to **HOLD H 399** in committee.

Committee members expressed concerns around \$25,000 donations, adjudicated process, limited packs over party numbers, statewide legislated raises, how was \$25,000 determined, fund raising spending limits.

VOTE ON MOTION:

Motion carried by voice vote.

RS 32713C1:

Secretary of State, Phil McGrane presented **RS 32713C1**. This legislation updates and reorganizes the campaign finance laws to increase transparency, simplify reporting, and improve enforcement to better align with increased spending and modern practices in political campaigns. The legislation reorganizes the campaign finances laws by moving the provisions from Title 67, Chapter 66, State Government and State Affairs, to Title 74, Chapter 3, Transparent and Ethical Government. This new chapter separates the reporting requirements and responsibilities into five parts. It also separates the reporting requirements for campaign finance from the reporting requirements for lobbying. Additionally, the legislation makes several changes designed to increase the frequency of reporting, adjust the campaign finance limitations, and improve enforcement by creating an improved fine structure.

Committee members asked questions around contested race averages verses uncontested race averages and lowering \$25,000 to \$10,000 dollars.

Speaker of the House, Mike Moyle spoke about out of state packs spending any amount of money against candidates, voters not aware of campaign spending, and donation importance in spending against attacks.

MOTION:

Rep. Alfieri made a motion to introduce **RS 32713C1** and recommend it be sent directly to the Second Reading Calendar.

Committee members made comments regarding uncertain time and numbers but the test is in the market, addressed issues of sunshine systems, free speech, privacy, enforcement process, and possible split into different bills.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION:

Rep. Hostetler made a substitute motion to return **RS 32713C1** to sponsor.

Committee members commented on unlimited race expenditures, being able to defend candidates, and 'all' candidates in a specific race application.

AMENDED SUBSTITUTE MOTION:

Rep. Achilles made an amended substitute motion to introduce **RS 32713C1** with the following changes: Page 13, Line 9 striking the words twenty five and replacing it with ten and striking the numeric value \$25,000 and replacing it with \$10,000.

Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. Scott, Barbieri, and Palmer requested to be recorded as voting **NAY**.

RS 32734:

Rep. Moyle presented **RS 32734** which states Idahoan's who vote by absentee ballot must sign the affidavit on the outside of the return envelope, exposing the voter's signature to anyone who sees the mail. The county clerk then accepts the ballot if the signature appears to match the signature in the voter registration record. This legislation provides both for improved election integrity and personal information security in the absentee balloting process. It does this by adding the requirement that the voter also write their driver's license or state photo ID number, and the last four digits of their social security number, and requiring the Secretary of State to design a system by which this personally identifiable information is not visible on the outside of the return envelope. The solution will likely be either a large-flap two-envelope system or a three-envelope system.

A committee member had concerns around additional steps for the county clerk and the opening the envelope with additional personal information inside.

MOTION:

Rep. Alfieri made a motion to introduce **RS 32734** and recommend it be sent directly to the Second Reading Calendar.

A committee member had concerns regarding social security numbers being collected by the clerk.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION:

Rep. Barbieri made a substitute motion to introduce **RS 32734**.

Committee members had questions around the number of envelopes, security issues of stolen information, absentee failed and fraudulent voting numbers, false negatives, the impact of suppression of votes, clarity on ones entire correct name on drivers licenses, and the need for more data and information.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST:

Rep. Barbieri made a unanimous consent request to withdraw the substitute motion to introduce **RS 32734**. **Rep. Mickelsen** objected to the unanimous consent request.

VOTE ON SUBSTITUTE MOTION:

Substitute motion carried by voice vote.

H 98:

Rep. Skaug presented **H 98**. This legislation updates these laws by separating lobbying reporting from campaign finance reporting and increases the frequency of reporting by registered lobbyists during and outside legislative sessions. In addition, this legislation updates the definition of lobbying to indicate clearly that both direct and indirect efforts to influence policy making are considered lobbying. The legislation reorganizes the lobbying laws by moving the lobbying provisions within Title 67, Chapter 66, State Government and State Affairs, to Title 74, Chapter 7, Transparent and Ethical Government.

Committee members had questions around lobbyist fees, advocating lobbying exemptions, definition of indirect lobbying and enforcement, university lobbying reports and recording, and lobbying codes.

Jonathan Oppenheimer, Gov. Relations Director of the Idaho Conservation League, spoke **in support** of **H 398**.

Jonathan Oppenheimer pointed out a correction on Page 11, Line 16. A provision to allow a correction with the clerk will be requested on the floor.

A committee member had a question around executive lobbyist and how they fit in this legislation.

MOTION:

Rep. Barbieri made a motion to send **H 98** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote**. **Rep. Hostetler** and **Rep. Scott** requested to be recorded as voting **NAY**. **Rep. Skaug** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 10:22 AM.

Representative Crane (13)
Chair

Liaza Richardson
Secretary