

MINUTES  
**SENATE COMMERCE & HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Tuesday, January 20, 2026

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

**PLACE:** Room WW54

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Foreman, Vice Chairman Lenney, Senators Lakey, Guthrie, Nichols, Bernt, Ward-Engelking, and Ruchti

**ABSENT/ EXCUSED:** Senator Zito

**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 Foreman** called the meeting of the Senate Commerce and Human Resources Committee (Committee) to order at 1:30 p.m.

**MINUTES APPROVAL:** **Vice Chairman Lenney** moved to approve the Minutes of January 15, 2026. **Senator Bernt** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

**GUBERNATORIAL REAPPOINTMENT:** **Committee Consideration of the Gubernatorial Reappointment of Hyatt Erstad of Boise, Idaho, to the Idaho Health Insurance Exchange Board (IHIEB), to serve a term commencing April 10, 2025 and expiring April 10, 2029. Mr. Erstad** gave a brief overview of his background. He stated he was a fifth-generation Idahoan, had been licensed since 1973, began his insurance career in 1979, and had chaired Idaho's High-Risk Pool Board.

He explained that his service on the IHIEB fell into his "charity work" and that he wanted to give back to an industry that had been good to him.

**DISCUSSION:** Committee members praised Mr. Erstad's diligence, expertise, and respectful collaboration on the High-Risk Pool Board. **Chairman Foreman** indicated the vote on his reappointment would occur at the next meeting.

**GUBERNATORIAL REAPPOINTMENT:** **Committee Consideration of the Gubernatorial Reappointment of Janice Fulkerson of Meridian, Idaho, to the Idaho Health Insurance Exchange Board (IHIEB), to serve a term commencing April 10, 2025 and expiring April 10, 2029. Ms. Fulkerson** gave a brief overview of her background. She referenced roughly 30 years of experience, and was recognized as the citizens' advocate on the High-Risk Pool Board.

**DISCUSSION:** Multiple Senators endorsed Ms. Fulkerson, describing her as highly prepared, a strong leader, and very effective at representing citizen interests. **Ms. Fulkerson** credited the success of Your Health Idaho (YHI) to a combination of leadership (including Pat Kelly and his team), transparency, culture, carriers, brokers, and community partners, and asserted that YHI was the most successful exchange in the nation.

**Chairman Foreman** indicated the vote on her reappointment would occur at the next meeting.

**GUBERNATORIAL  
APPOINTMENT:**

**Committee Consideration of the Gubernatorial Appointment of Cynthia Fairfax of Boise, Idaho, to the Idaho Health Insurance Exchange Board, commencing April 10, 2025 and expiring April 10, 2029.** Ms. Fairfax gave a brief overview of her background. Ms. Fairfax stated she was recently retired as a urologist, had served on the IHIEB for the previous four years, and came from a healthcare (provider-side) background.

**DISCUSSION:**

In response to a question from **Senator Nichols** about making insurance more affordable, she said YHI's value was in helping people who had difficulty obtaining coverage by guiding them to assistance and to plans appropriate and cost-effective to their needs, provided that suitable products and access were maintained.

**Chairman Foreman** indicated the vote on her reappointment would occur at the next meeting.

**ADJOURNED:**

There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Foreman** adjourned the meeting at 1:42 p.m.

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Senator Foreman  
Chair

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Linda Kambeitz  
Secretary