

MINUTES
SENATE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, January 21, 2026

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 (Committee) to order at 8:00 a.m.

GUBERNATORIAL APPOINTMENT: **Committee Consideration of the Gubernatorial Appointment of Leighton Linning of Ammon, Idaho to the Commission on Human Rights** to serve a term commencing on August 29, 2025 and expiring July 1, 2027. **Mr. Linning** gave a brief introduction of his background telling the Committee that he attended Brigham Young University. After graduation, Mr. Linning moved to Nashville, where he earned his JD from Nashville School of Law. **Mr. Linning** shared with the Committee that he worked closely with the Tennessee Human Rights Division during the MeToo movement before moving back to Idaho Falls to become a county prosecutor. His time there introduced him to this area of public service and motivated him to be part of the Idaho Commission on Human Rights (Commission).

DISCUSSION: **Senator Harris** noted Mr. Linning's excitement and asked him what he would like to see happen during his time with the Commission. **Mr. Linning** believed his background practicing law would be beneficial as he hoped to increase fairness and produce quick, impartial results. **Chairman Guthrie** noted Mr. Linning's relation to Representative Joshua Wheeler.

GUBERNATORIAL REAPPOINTMENT: **Committee Consideration of the Gubernatorial Reappointment of Brian Scigliano of Boise, Idaho to the Commission on Human Rights** to serve a term commencing July 1, 2025 and expiring July 1, 2028. **Mr. Scigliano** told the Committee that he had served on the Commission for 20 years and was honored to have been reappointed. He had been in Idaho for 31 years and had worked in the private sector his whole career which was why he enjoyed working with the Commission. **Mr. Scigliano** said that he found fulfillment in watching most employers continuously do right by their employees and having the ability to support those who had been mistreated.

DISCUSSION: **Chairman Guthrie** asked Mr. Scigliano what the general response time was for complaints filed. **Mr. Scigliano** explained that there had been a backlog of complaints in the past due to the death of an employee but they had caught up and moved complaints through quickly despite having had 80 cases just that month. **Senator Guthrie** asked Mr. Scigliano what he believed the Commission process was lacking. **Mr. Scigliano** believed that the current process was excellent in that they had been able to quickly process complaints. He explained that cases involving investigation occasionally take longer but overall the process was efficient. **Senator Shippy** asked Mr. Scigliano to share in his experience how many complaints had a probable cause and how many were perceived biases. **Mr. Scigliano** said that the system the Commission put in place helped to filter out claims that did not have a solid foundation and overall the percentage of probable cause claims was small. **Senator Ruchti** noted his past experience with claims similar to those brought to the Commission and asked Mr. Scigliano if he saw a lot of cases that turned out to be founded on not getting along with coworkers rather than actual violations of human rights. **Mr. Scigliano** elaborated on the intake and complaint filtering process to explain how investigations were deemed necessary. **Mr. Scigliano** shared with the Committee a time when a former complainant expressed that although no discrimination was found to have taken place in her case, she felt heard and seen by the Commission. **Senator Guthrie** made a comment about how powerful feeling heard can be to a person even if they do not receive their desired outcome.

GUBERNATORIAL REAPPOINTMENT VOTE: **Committee vote on the Gubernatorial Reappointment of Megan Ronk to the Commission on Human Rights.** **Senator Anthon** moved to send the Gubernatorial Reappointment of **Megan Ronk**, to the Commission on Human Rights, to the floor with the recommendation that she be confirmed. **Senator Den Hartog** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

GUBERNATORIAL APPOINTMENT VOTE: **Committee Vote on the Gubernatorial Appointment of Salvador Cruz to the Treasurer's Advisory Board.** **Senator Harris** moved to send the Gubernatorial Appointment of **Salvador Cruz**, to the Treasurer's Advisory Board, to the floor with the recommendation that he be confirmed. **Senator Toews** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

RS 32980 **Public Lands in Idaho.** **Senator Adams** described his proposed legislation which would amend Section 8, Article IX of the Idaho Constitution to make a distinction between State Endowment Lands granted for specific institutional purposes and public lands acquired from the federal government. **Senator Adams** explained the intent behind the change and assured the Committee that Section 8 would not lose its central ideas, instead, it would better them. He believed that this legislation was vital as public lands belonged to the people of Idaho.

DISCUSSION: **Senator Ruchti** made a comment indicating he would like to hear from stakeholders and believed that information about the fiscal cost of the State managing lands acquired from the federal government would be beneficial.

MOTION: **Senator Den Hartog** moved to send **RS 32980** to print. **Senator Harris** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Guthrie** adjourned the meeting at 8:21 a.m.

Senator Guthrie
Chair

Abby Rowe
Secretary