

MINUTES
SENATE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Friday, January 30, 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.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Senator Adams** moved to approve the Minutes of January 21, 2026. **Senator Toews** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Senator Den Hartog** moved to approve the Minutes of January 23, 2026. **Senator Harris** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Senator Bernt** moved to approve the Minutes of January 26, 2026. **Senator Ruchti** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

RS 33059 **Political Violence.** **Senator Ruchti** noted the inspiration behind this was the resolution on political violence produced by the Idaho House of Representatives. He explained that Senate Minority and Majority leadership wanted to work on this together to produce a simple but effective stand against political violence. **Senator Ruchti** explained that the ability to criticize the government was what kept elected officials accountable to their constituents, and that political violence had no place in politics or our free society.

DISCUSSION: **Senator Bernt** expressed his gratitude for the Minority and Majority leadership for their collaboration on this issue and reiterated the importance of open and respectful discourse among political parties.

MOTION: **Senator Adams** moved to send **RS 33059** to print. **Senator Bernt** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

RS 33130 **Idaho E-Verify Act.** **Senator Harris** explained that this legislation mandates state and local governments as well as employers with over 150 employees to implement the use of federal E-verify pilot programs for the hiring of new employees.

MOTION: **Senator Bernt** moved to send **RS 33130** to print. **Senator Adams** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

RS 33020 **Law Enforcement, Facial Coverings.** **Senator Ward-Engelking** noted that this proposed legislation was similar to legislation pending in neighboring states and its purpose was to ban facial coverings worn by law enforcement. This legislation had several exceptions listed, for example, masks worn by Special Weapons and Tactics teams and masks worn for medical reasons. **Senator Ward-Engelking** urged the Committee to imagine how frightening someone armed and masked could be to the average citizen in various scenarios.

DISCUSSION: **Senator Anthon** asked Senator Ward-Engelking if she had spoken with law enforcement agencies about this proposed legislation. **Senator Ward-Engelking** explained that she had spoken with several officers that guided her in this process, but was waiting until it was printed to bring it to specific agencies for feedback. **Senator Guthrie** noted that he had spoken with Senator Ward-Engelking about her discussions with law enforcement up until this point and that feedback would be factored in when deciding whether or not to proceed.

MOTION: **Senator Adams** moved to send **RS 33020** to print. **Senator Ruchti** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Guthrie** adjourned the meeting at 8:12 a.m.

Senator Guthrie
Chair

Abby Rowe
Secretary