

MINUTES
HOUSE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, February 26, 2026

TIME: 9:00 A.M.

PLACE: Room EW40

MEMBERS: Chairman Crane(13), Vice Chairman Scott, Representatives Palmer, Holtzclaw, Skaug, Alfieri, Crane(12), Boyle, Dygert, Mickelsen, Pohanka, Bingham, Church, Haws

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

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 A.M.

MOTION: **Rep. Dygert** made a motion to approve the minutes of Monday February 23, 2026 and Tuesday February 24, 2026. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

HJR 9: **Rep. Hawkins** presented **HJR 9**. This Constitutional Amendment strikes the current language in section 9 of Article IX which concerns the legislature's ability to compel Idaho's children to physically attend the public schools of the state. The current language grants the legislature to determine the means that are the exception to public school attendance. The Amendment also inserts language concerning the right to educate children outside of the public schools without burdensome regulation. The right recognized in this amendment concerns a right to educate – it is not a right to NOT educate.

Committee members had comments and questions regarding compulsory attendance, the right of the people, rights in educating children by 'other means', the process for the rights for people to make their own decision, and the affects of new language and regulations for schools.

Joel Fischer, Idaho Family Policy Center; **Scott Herndon**, Chair of The Idaho Republican Party Resolutions Committee; spoke **in support of HJR 9**.

Committee members had comments and questions regarding the language around the rights of people to educate their children, changed requirements for public funding, public funding allowing for government regulation for education, and transparency and accountability for public funding.

MOTION: **Rep. Scott** made a motion to send **HJR 9** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

A committee member had comments regarding the removal of language on compulsory attendance in school, infringement of children, government regulations, and litigation.

VOTE ON MOTION: **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. Haws** and **Rep. Church** requested to be recorded as voting **NAY**. **Rep. Hawkins** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

H 720: **Rep. Alfieri** presented **H 720** which revises Idaho Code 50-707A, requiring that cities with populations greater than 25,000 conduct district wide elections for its city council elections.

Committee members had comments and questions regarding district boundaries, the listing of ten cities, city responses, and a majority of student housing within a district.

MOTION: **Rep. Scott** made a motion to send **H 720** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

Committee members had comments and questions regarding redistricting fiscal expenses, City of Boise growth of 100K and the outcome affect, fiscal note and recognized expenses, and representation from different parts of the city.

Jonathan Wheatly, Association of Idaho Cities; **John McEachran**, Self; and **Lance Sayers**, Self; spoke **in opposition** to **H 720**.

Committee members asked **Jonathan Wheatly** questions in regards to speaking to the ten cities, nine cities not interviewed and options to establish districts. One other committee member had a question regarding the language in the bill stating, 'the city *shall* establish'.

Committee members asked **John McEachran** questions regarding voting for city council members and over representation in one area over another area of the city.

Rep. Alfieri spoke to the city statutes of 4-6 council members and allowing more people to run for office.

Committee members had comments and questions regarding fast growth and boundaries within districts, district voting, establishing districts, methods of implementation, and the flexibility and changing out the system to smaller communities.

VOTE ON MOTION: **Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. Alfieri** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

H 736: **Rep. Haws** presented **H 736**. This legislation amends Idaho Code section 34-903 to revise ballot rotation requirements by applying current candidate name rotation to federal, state, county, and local offices in political entities with more than 25,000 registered voters. It removes the separate voter threshold for other offices and provides a single standard administered by the Secretary of State.

MOTION: **Rep. Mickelsen** made a motion to send **H 736** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

A committee member made a comment regarding the statistics of top listing candidates.

VOTE ON MOTION: **Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. Haws** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 9:50 A.M.

Representative Crane (13)
Chair

Liaza Richardson
Secretary