

MINUTES  
**SENATE COMMERCE & HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Thursday, February 26, 2026

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

**PLACE:** Room WW54

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Foreman, Vice Chairman Lenney, Senators Lakey, Guthrie, Nichols, Bernt, Zito, Ward-Engelking, 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 Foreman** called the meeting of the Senate Commerce and Human Resources Committee (Committee) to order at 1:30 p.m.

**MINUTES APPROVAL:** **Senator Nichols** moved to approve the Minutes of February 17, 2026. **Senator Bernt** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

**MINUTES APPROVAL:** **Senator Guthrie** moved to approve the Minutes of February 19, 2026. **Senator Bernt** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

**NOTE:** **Chairman Foreman** outlined procedural rules due to time constraints, limiting public testimony to one minute per person. He noted both bills would be heard separately, a discussion by the Committee would be held, and then separate motions for each bill would be entertained.

**S 1263** **SHORT-TERM RENTALS - Amends existing law to revise provisions regarding limitations on the regulation of short-term rentals.** **Senator Harris** noted this bill aimed to balance the private property rights of owners and long-term residents with public safety and neighborhood concerns. He stated it included business license requirements only for larger operators, such as owners with four or more units or earning over \$10,000 in a jurisdiction. There was a requirement allowing cities and counties to obtain emergency contact information from short-term rental owners and operators. Safety provisions, such as smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, fire safety measures, occupancy limits tied to the building codes, and liability language were required. There was a prohibition on cities and counties imposing additional ordinances on short-term rentals beyond these provisions.

**TESTIMONY:** The following testified in support of the bill: **Jay Bradley**, Idaho Resort Cities Coalition; **Mayor Colby Nielson**, City of McCall; **Mayor August Christensen**, City of Driggs; and **Linda Fleming**, Coeur d'Alene Planning Commissioner. The main concerns expressed were public safety, enforcement of complaints, a reasonable middle ground, infrastructure, and local contacts.

The following testified in opposition to the bill: **Rusty Cuddleback**, Bear Lake County; **Spencer Bailey**, Bear Lake resident, alpaca farmer, and President of Idaho Vacation Rental Association; and **Joseph Hil**, and **Julie Hill**, Lava Hot Springs. The main concerns expressed were the threat to stability by allowing cities to treat short-term rentals differently across jurisdictions, creating uncertainty and fear about future restrictions, cutting occupancy rates, some cities had exceeded guidelines; limits of one short-term rental per parcel, requiring consent to random inspections by city-designated individuals with no notice or probable cause, and the authority for the city to impose any additional conditions deemed necessary or reasonable. An email was received from Dawn Matus, McCall, opposing both bills (Attachment 1).

**SHORT-TERM RENTALS - Amends existing law to revise provisions regarding limitations on the regulation of and limiting the tax duties of short-term rentals.** **Senator Lakey** described this bill as the product of a multi-year effort to protect short-term rental property rights. This legislation was a response to a pattern of cities targeting short-term rentals for elimination or heavy restrictions. He referenced the 2017 Short-Term Rental and Vacation Rental Act, which required short-term rentals to be treated as residential uses for zoning. **Senator Lakey** expressed the legislative intent was to promote access to short-term rentals and prevent local governments from prohibiting or specifically targeting them except where necessary for health and welfare.

**Senator Lakey** cited a Lava Hot Springs Supreme Court case where the city tried to confine a non-owner-occupied short-term rental to commercial zones and to require a business license. The Idaho Supreme Court struck down the ordinance as contrary to legislative intent to allow access to all short-term rentals, not just some.

**Senator Lakey** outlined the key provisions of this legislation. He said local governments could not prohibit any type of short-term rentals. The short-term rentals must pass health and safety ordinances, but cities and counties could not impose different or additional restrictions on short-term rentals than on other residential uses. The bill prohibited local requirements, such as mandatory owner occupancy, extra insurance requirements, special reporting or statistics unique to short-term rentals. There were caps on the number of short-term rentals in a jurisdiction. Other items prohibited were limits on days a home could be rented short-term, business licenses, permits, fees, certifications, or registrations that applied only to short-term rentals.

**Senator Lakey** noted this legislation allowed requirements for smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, fire extinguishers, and fire-escape ladders, per building code. There were maximum occupancy limits, provided they matched building code standards. An informational handout for guests should be provided, including exits, emergency equipment locations, and contact information, similar to what many hosts already provided with binders or refrigerator magnets. **Senator Lakey** yielded his time to Melissa Radford, Coeur d'Alene, a short-term rental owner.

**TESTIMONY:**

**Ms. Radford** explained this was a robust bill. The Senate bill provided too much government overreach. She spoke in support of the bill. She stated that she and her husband had renovated an old house and kept it safe and attractive, and rented year-round. She remarked that **H 583** was the culmination of three years of work to protect short-term rental owners from discrimination and overreach. Short-term owners had previously been offered compromises, for example, three-strikes clauses and mandatory licensing, that the Senate rejected because they undermined property rights. This bill removed those provisions. Many owners had faced expensive legal fights, structural modification demands, and targeted rules solely because they operated short-term rentals. She described the situation as an existential crisis for property rights and said this bill provided needed uniform protections. (Attachment 2)

The following testified in support of the bill: **Spencer Bailey**, Cabins for Cancer; **Krista Pederson**, representing herself, and **Heather Andrews**, Americans for Prosperity. The common theme was that this bill affirmed that residential property remained residential, while preserving local authority over nuisance, safety, and infrastructure laws. Having a short-term rental allowed families to be rooted, employ locals, and balance accountability with equal treatment, which prevented creation of different classes of homeowners. This bill provided housing for families in crisis, such as those displaced by floods, fires, seeking cancer treatment, attending funerals, or caring for dying loved ones.

The following testified in opposition to the bill: **Randy Bingland**, Lava Hot Springs former City Council Member, **Fire Chief Juan Bonilla**, Valley County, and **Linda Fleming**, Hotel Safety designer. The overall concerns raised were long-standing zoning separation into business, short-term rentals, and residential areas due to high visitor volumes; concerns about not having the ability to manage the short-term rental concentration; entire residential zones could become dominated by short-term rentals, and undermining community character and safety. Other concerns were that both bills' safety standards were incomplete, especially regarding gas leak detection since carbon monoxide detectors did not detect gas leaks. Valley County had experienced mass-casualty events tied to short-term rentals and transient guests unfamiliar with building layouts, exits, and systems. Safety rules needed to be strengthened. There was a need for cities to have the tools, such as identification, tracking, smoke detectors, egress routes, and inspections to keep visitors and neighbors safe.

**DISCUSSION:** **Senator Lakey** noted there were some compromises put into this legislation, including fire codes and safety. The ability to contact owners was easy. He stated that when it came to government regulation of property owners and their rights, the State should have a light touch.

**MOTION:** **Senator Guthrie** moved to send **S 1263** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Ruchti** seconded the motion.

**SUBSTITUTE MOTION:** **Senator Lakey** moved to hold **S 1263** in Committee. **Vice Chairman Lenney** seconded the motion. **Senator Nichols** stated that she had a potential conflict of interest pursuant to Senate Rule 39 (H), but intended to vote.

**DISCUSSION:** **Senator Ward-Engelking** expressed disappointment that no true compromise had been reached after years of work. **Senator Guthrie** echoed the same sentiments. **Senator Lakey** responded there was an effort for the last couple of years to compromise and that was addressed in legislation. No agreement was reached. **Senator Nichols** expressed a concern about the \$10,000 limit and she hesitated on the licensing and mandated legislation.

**ROLL CALL VOTE ON THE SUBSTITUTE MOTION:** **Chairman Foreman** called for a roll call vote on the substitute motion to hold **S 1263** in Committee. **Senators Lakey, Nichols, Zito, Vice Chairman Lenney,** and **Chairman Foreman** voted aye. **Senators Guthrie, Bernt, Ward-Engelking,** and **Ruchti** voted nay. The motion carried.

**MOTION:** **Senator Nichols** moved to send **H 583** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Vice Chairman Lenney** seconded the motion.

**SUBSTITUTE MOTION:** **Senator Guthrie** moved to send **H 583** to the 14th Order of Business for possible amendment. **Senator Ruchti** seconded the motion.

**DISCUSSION:** **Senator Guthrie** argued cities should have limited ability to account for increased sewer and utility capacity demands from high-occupancy short-term rentals. Cities and counties should at least be allowed to require local contact information for short-term rentals, which he viewed as a modest, reasonable change.

**Senator Lakey** opposed the amendment route, stating such changes were contrary to the property-rights principles of the bill and would effectively treat short-term rentals differently from other homes. Issues like occupancy, parking, and infrastructure could already be handled via general residential codes applied equally to all homes.

**Senator Bernt** remarked he respected Senator Guthrie's amendment ideas but did not want to advance "hostile" amendments over the sponsor's objection and, therefore, would vote against sending the bill to the 14th Order.

**Senator Ward-Engelking** called the decision difficult, noting the need to balance short-term owners' rights with the rights of nearby residents. She expressed frustration that stakeholders had not produced a broader compromise acceptable to both sides.

**ROLL CALL  
VOTE ON THE  
SUBSTITUTE  
MOTION:**

**Chairman Foreman** called for a roll call vote on the substitute motion to send H 583 to the 14th Order of Business for possible amendment. **Senators Guthrie and Ruchti** voted aye. **Senators Lakey, Nichols, Bernt, Zito, Ward-Engelking, Vice Chairman Lenney,** and **Chairman Foreman** voted nay. The motion failed.

**ROLL CALL  
VOTE ON  
ORIGINAL  
MOTION:**

**Chairman Foreman** called for a roll call vote on the original motion. **Senators Lakey, Nichols, Bernt, Zito, Ward-Engelking, Ruchti, Vice Chairman Lenney** and **Chairman Foreman** voted aye. **Senator Guthrie** voted nay. The motion carried.

**ADJOURNED:**

There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Foreman** adjourned the meeting at 2:37 p.m.

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Senator Foreman  
Chair

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Linda Kambeitz  
Secretary