

MINUTES
SENATE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, March 17, 2026

TIME: 8:00 A.M.

PLACE: Room WW55

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Guthrie, Vice Chairman Bernt, Senators Anthon, Harris, Toews, Den Hartog, Adams, and Ruchti

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Senator Shippy

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.

RS 33715 **State Elected Officers, Salaries.** **Senator Cook** explained this legislation was a response to the tight budget cycle facing Idaho and would propose salary cuts for the executive branch as a cost-saving measure. **Senator Cook** also clarified a comment he made at a previous Committee meeting regarding **SCR 125**. He said that legislation would save Idaho a total of \$170,000 and the previous number he had given, \$435,000, was an error.

MOTION: **Senator Adams** moved to send **RS 33715** to print. **Senator Bernt** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

RS 33735 **Real Property Transfer on Death.** **Senator Ruchti** explained that this legislation would allow real property to transfer automatically upon death without going through probate. He shared he did not believe this legislation would have a full hearing this year but was hopeful sending it to print would help him explore the effects of this idea.

MOTION: **Senator Adams** moved to send **RS 33735** to print. **Senator Den Hartog** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

H 575AA **STATE CONTROLLER - Amends existing law to provide that the State Controller shall publish a list of asset forfeitures and to provide that law enforcement shall report asset forfeiture information to the State Controller.** **Senator Nichols** introduced this legislation aimed to increase transparency for asset forfeitures. She explained that asset forfeitures allowed law enforcement to seize property involved in criminal activity. **Representative Heather Scott** said that asset forfeiture reports would be published on Transparent Idaho and reiterated that this would not change any asset forfeiture laws.

TESTIMONY: Former Senator **Geoff Schroeder** testified in support of **H 575aa**. **Mr. Schroeder** shared he worked on several asset forfeiture cases during his time as an attorney and believed this was good legislation that promoted transparency.

MOTION: **Senator Den Hartog** moved to send **H 575aa** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Toews** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

H 798 **STATE TREASURER - Repeals existing law to remove obsolete provisions relating to securities lending agreements.** **Senator Lakey** shared that this was a code cleanup effort that would repeal Idaho Code § 67-1210B regarding the State Treasurer and security lending agreements.

- MOTION:** **Senator Harris** moved to send **H 798** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Adams** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- H 799** **ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES - Repeals existing law to remove obsolete provisions regarding the prohibition and sale of liquors and wines.** **Senator Lakey** said this was code cleanup regarding three outdated sections of Idaho Code that dated back to the prohibition era. He believed these sections of code were no longer used or relevant.
- MOTION:** **Vice Chairman Bernt** moved to send **H 799** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Adams** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- HCR 33** **SEXTORTION - States findings of the Legislature and establishes an interim committee to study the crime of sextortion and to make recommendations to the Legislature.** **Senator Lakey** explained that this legislation requested an interim committee dedicated to the study of sextortion and its impact on the mental health of minors. He said this committee would report findings to the Legislature to assist them with effective prevention methods. **Representative Green** emphasized that sextortion crimes were a growing problem and this interim committee was a step towards addressing it properly.
- MOTION:** **Senator Den Hartog** moved to send **HCR 33** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Toews** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- H 810** **ELECTIONS - Amends existing law to provide certain physical presence requirements for state Representatives and Senators.** **Senator Harris** explained that this legislation would require legislative candidates to physically reside in their respective district for a minimum of 120 days in the year prior to filing with exceptions for active military service and religious missions. **Representative Britt Raybould** explained the reason for this was to ensure candidates lived in the communities they sought to represent in an attempt to strengthen the accountability of the Legislature.
- DISCUSSION:** **Senator Toews** proposed a situation to Representative Raybould involving someone who lived outside of their district for several months out of the year to take care of elderly family and asked if someone would be disqualified from running in that case. **Representative Raybould** said that as long as the candidate lived in their district for a minimum of 120 days total, they would not be disqualified even if they were out of district for several consecutive months. **Senator Adams** asked Representative Raybould about how redistricting would be affected by this legislation. **Representative Raybould** said that as long as a candidate maintained their declared residence candidates generally met the minimum requirement and she believed issues with potential redistricting were minimal at this point. **Senator Adams** asked Representative Raybould about the religious mission exceptions as they had been an issue in previous legislation. **Representative Raybould** believed exceptions for religious missions were important and that a candidate should not have to choose between fulfilling that duty or running for office. **Senator Adams** asked the sponsors if they were open to amending this legislation to only include the military service exception. **Representative Raybould** preferred not to and reiterated that candidates should not have to choose between running for office and fulfilling their religious calling.
- MOTION:** **Senator Adams** moved to send **H 810** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Vice Chairman Bernt** seconded the motion.
- SUBSTITUTE MOTION:** **Senator Den Hartog** moved to send **H 810** to the 14th Order of Business for possible amendment. **Senator Toews** seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: **Senator Den Hartog** expressed that she would like to see this legislation amended to remove the religious mission exception. **Senator Adams** said he did not have a problem sending this legislation to the floor with a do pass recommendation or to the 14th Order of Business. **Vice Chairman Bernt** said he would like to hear from the sponsor on their motion preference. **Senator Harris** voiced he would be okay with either decision made by the Committee.

VOICE VOTE: The substitute motion to send **H 810** to the 14th Order of Business for possible amendment carried by **voice vote**.

HCR 27 **WAKE ISLAND CIVILIANS - States findings of the Legislature and honors the sacrifice of Idaho civilians who served on Wake Island during World War II.** **Senator Den Hartog** said this resolution honored Morrison-Knudsen employees who served on Wake Island and five Idahoans who were killed during the attack on Pearl Harbor.

MOTION: **Senator Ruchti** moved to send **HCR 27** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Adams** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

H 736 **ELECTIONS - Amends existing law to revise provisions regarding the form and contents of ballots to be prepared by the Secretary of State.** **Senator Ruchti** explained that this legislation would expand ballot name rotation ensuring more elections rotate candidate names and would improve election fairness by reducing bias created by ballot design errors.

MOTION: **Senator Harris** moved to send **H 736** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Den Hartog** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

PASSED THE GAVEL: Chairman Guthrie passed the gavel to Vice Chairman Bernt.

H 793 **BEER - Amends existing law to revise a provision regarding distribution of revenue.** **Chairman Guthrie** shared that this legislation would address lost funding for alcohol regulation and redirect beer tax revenue. He said that in 2023 a law was passed that reduced revenue from alcohol license transfer fees. **Chairman Guthrie** explained this would shift 33% of certain beer taxes from the Idaho Permanent Building Fund to Idaho State Police Alcohol Beverage Control and other law enforcement programs.

MOTION: **Senator Den Hartog** moved to send **H 793** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Harris** seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: **Senator Den Hartog** voiced her appreciation for this change and believed redirecting these funds to Idaho State Police programs made sense.

VOICE VOTE: The motion to send **H 793** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation carried by **voice vote**.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Vice Chairman Bernt** adjourned the meeting at 8:43 a.m.

Senator Guthrie
Chair

Abby Rowe
Secretary