

MINUTES
HOUSE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, March 05, 2024

TIME: 9:00 A.M.

PLACE: Room EW40

MEMBERS: Chairman Crane(13), Vice Chairman Young, Representatives Palmer (Johnson), Barbieri, Holtzclaw, Scott, Andrus, Skaug, Alfieri, Allgood, Crane (Crane) (12), Gannon, Achilles

**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 AM.

H 665: **Rep. Ehlers** presented **H 665** explaining this legislation asks for a report of tax dollars and state investments going towards foreign adversaries to be provided at the end of the fiscal year which will then be presented to the legislature. In response to committee questions, Rep. Ehlers clarified the report would be detailed by fund.

MOTION: **Rep. Gannon** made a motion to send **H 665** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. Ehlers** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

H 666: **Rep. Skaug** presented **H 666** explaining this legislation would prohibit any providers of abortion from publishing sex education curricula in Idaho.

David Ripley, Idaho Chooses Life, continued the presentation stating this builds upon the foundations laid by the No Public Funds for Abortion Act. He said abortion providers have a political and social agenda and this would prevent them from forming relationships with children. In response to committee questions, Mr. Ripley outlined this is different than other organizations providing information in schools since abortion is a crime in Idaho. He gave examples of organizations which could qualify such as Planned Parenthood and the Northwest Abortion Fund and stated hospitals would not qualify as they provide legitimate healthcare.

Mistie Tollman, Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates Idaho, testified **in opposition** to **H 666** stating this would limit young people's access to comprehensive sex education and could include hospitals. She asked that the committee make it easier not harder for students to get the sex education they need. In response to other testimony, Ms. Tollman clarified Planned Parenthood does not promote abortion but rather assists with age appropriate, consent centered, pregnancy prevention based sex ed.

Steve Bender testified **in support** of **H 666** highlighting this legislation prohibits someone who is making money by providing abortion from providing information about abortions, therefore standing to profit and grow their business through the sharing of that information. In response to committee questions, Mr. Bender stated hospitals would not be included if they were providing legal abortions only and did not believe the legislation should be amended to state illegal providers of abortions.

Rep. Skaug closed debate explaining there are no known providers of illegal abortions in Idaho. This legislation is drafted to prevent out of state abortion providers from entering Idaho schools.

MOTION: **Rep. Crane (12)** made a motion to send **H 666** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

Rep. Young spoke in support of the motion saying this legislation does not speak to any content, just narrows who provides the content.

Rep. Gannon spoke in opposition to the motion stating hospitals need to be exempted from this legislation.

VOTE ON MOTION: **Motion carried by voice vote. Reps. Gannon and Achilles** requested to be recorded as voting **NAY. Rep. Skaug** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

H 645: **Rep. Sauter** presented **H 645** explaining this legislation is in response to the West Bonner School District recall and addresses the boards inability to function during that time. Firstly, this legislation defines a quorum after a recall election as a majority of the seated members. Second, it states a vacancy exists once the school board has a proper meeting and declares a vacancy following the county clerks' certified election results. Lastly, it provides trustees subject to recall cannot make new contractual agreements or funding decisions between the date of the election and its certification. In response to committee questions Rep. Sauter clarified the language 'time of the special recall election' was provided by attorneys and refers to the day of the election. He highlighted the restriction language regarding the time between election and certification is clear, and limited to contractual obligation and spending of funds and if the recall election was unsuccessful the person would immediately resume their full duties. He further outlined the process following a recall election stating the county clerk counts all votes in the elections and the county commissioner certifies the election results.

MOTION: **Rep. Allgood** made a motion to send **H 645** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation

ROLL CALL VOTE ON MOTION: **Motion carried by a vote of 10 AYE and 3 NAY.** Voting in support of the motion: **Reps. Crane (13), Young, Johnson, Barbieri, Holtzclaw, Skaug, Allgood, Crane (12), Gannon, and Achilles.** Voting in opposition to the motion: **Reps. Scott, Andrus, and Alfieri.** **Rep. Sauter** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

H 416: **Rep. Scott** presented **H 416** this legislation prohibits public officials, employees, and subdivisions of government from using taxpayer dollars for organization membership fees with listed exceptions, in an effort to reduce General Fund spending. She stated some agencies want to make ensure language is included to exempt professional development which would need to come in an amendment.

Jason Spellman, Legal Counsel to the Administrative Office of the Courts, testified in opposition to **H 416** as written giving the example of a membership organization which allows for the certification of interpreters in courts which would be far more expensive to develop independently from the organization.

MOTION: **Rep. Skaug** made a motion to send **H 416** to General Orders. **Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. Scott** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

H 652: **Rep. Petzke** presented **H 652** explaining this legislation would change the ballot initiative process to require signatures to be submitted monthly, not all at the end of the collection period, and creates a review period of two months following the collection period in which people can remove their signatures if they would like. In response to committee questions, Rep. Petzke explained this does not make the ballot initiative process more restrictive as many things in government must be submitted monthly. He also stated this legislation is modeled after similar legislation in Utah under which they have had multiple successful ballot initiative petitions.

Kendal Shaber, League of Women Voters of Idaho, testified in opposition to **H 652** stating already very few initiatives make the ballot, and this adds a burden to rural volunteers. In response to committee questions, Ms. Shaber affirmed the process is sufficiently stringent as is.

Georgia Boatman testified in opposition to **H 652** stating this legislation takes the power away from the citizens of Idaho to propose laws independent of the legislature and gives an advantage to professional signature collectors over volunteers.

Tracey Olson testified in opposition to **H 652** highlighting concerns about the provision to remove signatures from a petition without identity verification with no provision for reinstating signatures which could be wrongfully removed. In response to committee questions, Ms. Olson explained signatures on a petition are all verified by the Secretary of State and collectors sign an affidavit stating they witnessed the signature.

Norma Staaf, Heather Stout, and Karen Hansen testified in opposition to **H 562** stating concerns the review period is ripe for bad actors, this legislation creates unnecessary hoops to jump through, and affirming the current process is already clear and carefully controlled.

Julie Celeberti testified in opposition to **H 652** stating the collecting and validating of signatures is already secure and this legislation creates no fraud safeguards. In response to committee questions, Ms. Celeberti explained the county clerk verifies all signatures on a petition are registered voters, after the collector attests they have witnessed each signature.

Steve Bender testified in support of **H 652** explaining this legislation does not shorten the time for collecting signatures, it lengthens the time for verifying them and lowers the administrative work load by making it ongoing.

Rep. Petzke closed debate stating the process for removing signatures is already in existing code, this legislation just creates a designated window of time for that to happen. He also clarified this legislation will not effect any current initiatives, but rather establishes a better system going forward. In response to committee questions, Rep. Petzke explained this legislation is not in response to complaints about the current system, but rather to make it more transparent.

MOTION:

Rep. Gannon made a motion to **HOLD H 652** in committee.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION:

Rep. Andrus made a substitute motion to send **H 652** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

Rep. Achilles spoke in opposition to the substitute motion citing four issues he has with the legislation including the review period breaking current statute, the potential impact this could have on overseas voters, the increase of work for clerks, and no process for how the review period will be conducted.

VOTE ON SUBSTITUTE MOTION:

Substitute motion carried by voice vote. Reps. Gannon and Achilles requested to be recorded as voting **NAY. Reps. Petzke and Vander Woude** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

RS 31535C2:

Rep. Alfieri presented **RS 31535C2** explaining this is the same Traditional Family Values Month legislation this committee has seen before with all references to the **Reverend Paul Sullins** removed per the request of the committee.

MOTION:

Rep. Andrus made a motion to introduce **RS 31535C2**.

Rep. Achilles spoke in opposition to the motion expressing concern the draft language is undermining certain family structures by promoting a family structure based on only one viewpoint and stated he would prefer to support a resolution making all families stronger.

**VOTE ON
MOTION:**

Motion carried by voice vote. Reps. Achilles and Gannon requested to be recorded as voting **NAY**.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 10:36 AM.

Representative Crane (13)
Chair

Kennedy Jones
Secretary