

MINUTES  
**SENATE HEALTH & WELFARE COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Tuesday, February 23, 2016

**TIME:** 3:00 P.M.

**PLACE:** Room WW54

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Heider, Vice Chairman Nuxoll, Senators Lodge, Hagedorn, Martin, Lee, Harris, Schmidt and Jordan

**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 Heider** called the meeting of the Senate Health and Welfare Committee (Committee) to order at 3:03 p.m.

**PRESENTATION:** **Caregivers in Idaho. Sarah Toevs**, Director of the Center for the Study of Aging and the Idaho Caregiver Alliance (ICA), made this presentation to the Committee (see attachment 1 and attachment 2).

**Ms. Toevs** presented the findings of the Idaho Family Caregiver Task Force (Task Force). This Task Force, established in 2015, was charged with exploring the issues related to family unpaid caregivers. She recognized Marilyn Sword, Pam Catt-Oliason and the ICA supporters in attendance. **Ms. Toevs** stated that the mission of the ICA was to advance the well-being of family unpaid caregivers by promoting access to quality supports for these individuals. She reported that the ICA comprises more than 50 public and private organizations, with an additional 250 individual members. The ICA was established with a federal grant and is led by the Commission on Aging in collaboration with the Center for the Study of Aging at Boise State University. **Ms. Toevs** stated that family unpaid caregivers make it possible for those with disabilities to stay in their home and community. An estimated \$2 billion in unpaid care is provided by these individuals every year. Most caregivers, approximately 70 percent of respondents in 2013, have a paid job in addition to their care provider duties. Family unpaid caregivers save the State resources by delaying the need for institutional care. Idaho spends more than 50 percent of its Medicaid budget on long-term care. **Ms. Toevs** stated that the Task Force was created by a House concurrent resolution and she reviewed the Task Force membership. **Ms. Toevs** reviewed the findings of the Task Force and discussed the three main recommendations from the Task Force: (i) to provide family caregiver supports, (ii) to foster community awareness and engagement and (iii) to integrate family caregivers into the health care system in Idaho (see attachment 1). **Ms. Toevs** described the actions that legislators could take to support family unpaid caregivers.

**Chairman Heider** asked the Committee members if they had any questions.

**Chairman Heider** asked how Idaho's State Healthcare Innovation Plan (SHIP) compared to other states' plans. **Ms. Toevs** answered that the SHIP grant is focused on the seven regional health districts within the State. She noted that there are models and programs across the country that the Idaho SHIP could replicate. She provided the example of the respite care registry. **Chairman Heider** asked how the caregivers are organized. **Ms. Toevs** replied that currently there is no list or network of unpaid family caregivers in Idaho.

**Vice Chairman Nuxoll** asked Ms. Toevs if she was familiar with a program that pays elderly people to stay with and care for other elderly people. **Ms. Toevs** responded that this program is known as the Senior Companion Program, which matches low-income, older adults with each other for community-based supports. The reimbursement for this service is approximately \$3.00 per hour. She reported that there are a few Senior Companion Programs active in Idaho. She mused that this program could become even better if the State matched the federal money for this program, paying each caregiver in this program \$6.00 an hour.

**Senator Harris** thanks Ms. Toevs for increasing awareness and supports for family unpaid caregivers.

Referencing the Task Force report, **Chairman Heider** asked how Committee members can become caregiver champions. **Ms. Toevs** answered that Committee members could recognize those who are caregivers, pay attention to them and their needs and also talk to local constituents to find out about them.

**PRESENTATION: Report of the Collaborative Work Group on Services for Adults with Developmental Disabilities.** **Christine Pisani**, Director of the Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities (Council), made this presentation to the Committee (see attachment 3 and attachment 4).

**Ms. Pisani** informed the Committee that a developmental disability usually occurs at birth and will be life-long. She noted that developmental disabilities typically impact an individual in three life areas such as the ability to walk, speak or eat. No person with a developmental disability has the exact support needs of another person with a developmental disability. She described the broad spectrum of individuals requiring varying support needs. **Ms. Pisani** discussed the diversity of the collaborative work group members. This group seeks best outcomes and best use of resources for those they serve. She recognized the members of the work group in attendance. She explained that the vision for adults with developmental disabilities is to have the same rights, opportunities and freedoms their neighbors have by the year 2020.

**Ms. Pisani** discussed the soft direction option, including the six categories of soft direction: (i) employment support, (ii) emotional support, (iii) personal support, (iv) job support, (v) relationship support and (vi) family support. **Ms. Pisani** reviewed the findings of the work group. **Ms. Pisani** explained that the Council conducted a phone survey of more than 214 randomly selected individuals. The analysis of the phone survey will be available soon on the Council's website. It addresses the different choices and controls that participants have over aspects of their own lives. Next, **Ms. Pisani** discussed the National Core Indicator (NCI) project and the need for Idaho to become an NCI state. The purpose of the NCI project is to establish a standard set of outcome measures to track performance and contribute to data-driven decision making. She noted that, if it were to enroll as a member, Idaho will benefit from performance benchmarks, provider cost information, assistance with some waiver reporting and data to help with accountability. She reviewed the fiscal impact of enrolling as an NCI member.

**Ms. Pisani** discussed and showed the Committee a video about the person-centered planning process. She stated that this process identifies needs first and also empowers the participant to choose the life they want to live. **Ms. Pisani** concluded the presentation by reiterating the collaborative work group's commitment to work for improved support services, accountability and participant empowerment.

**Chairman Heider** asked the Committee members if they had any questions.

**Chairman Heider** asked if the Council's pay structure issues have been addressed. **Ms. Pisani** answered that the pay structure issues related to residential habilitation services. She indicated that a pay rate study is underway and should be completed by the end of May. **Chairman Heider** asked if a report would be issued after the study is completed. **Ms. Pisani** replied that it is likely a report will be released, but this would probably be a question for Lisa Hettinger, the administrator for Medicaid. **Chairman Heider** commented that the Committee wants to make sure that providers are being properly reimbursed for their services.

**Senator Hagedorn** asked about the costs to become an NCI state. **Ms. Pisani** answered that the total of \$83,000 includes \$13,000 a year in dues and \$70,000 for the resources necessary to conduct a survey of more than 400 individuals recommended every three years.

**ADJOURNED:** There being no further business, **Chairman Heider** adjourned the meeting at 3:59 p.m.

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Senator Heider  
Chair

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Karen R. Westbrook  
Secretary

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Michael Jeppson  
Assistant