

MINUTES  
**HOUSE HEALTH & WELFARE COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Wednesday, February 28, 2024

**TIME:** 9:00 A.M.

**PLACE:** Room EW20

**MEMBERS:** Chairman Vander Woude, Vice Chairman Erickson, Representatives Blanksma, Kingsley, Mitchell, Dixon(24), Gallagher, Healey, Redman, Wheeler, Chew (Hansen), Rubel, Roberts

**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 Vander Woude** called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Dixon(24)** made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 14 and 26, 2024, meetings. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

**S 1272:** **Sen. Julie Van Orden**, District 30, presented **S 1272** for safe haven baby boxes. Blackfoot will have the first box installed in the spring. These newborn safety devices are voluntary, staffed at all times, have exterior access, and provide interior access to allow safe retrieval of the infant within the building. The device must be part of the building, temperature controlled, equipped with an alarm system, and have conspicuous, visible interior access.

**Hailey Daley**, Grove Creek Medical Center, testified **in support** of **S 1272**. This anonymous last resort option for the birth parents has proven highly effective in preventing abandoned baby deaths in other states. Including education on the legal options for birth parents will also make a difference.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Mitchell** made a motion to send **S 1272** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

**Grace Howat**, Policy Assistant, Idaho Family Policy Center, testified **in support** of **S 1272**. It is tragic when a mother decides to abandon her baby. This legislation assures communities can install the safe haven boxes and protect these innocent lives.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** **Chairman Vander Woude** called for a vote on the motion to send **S 1272** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. Erickson** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

**RS 31418:** **Rep. Tony Wisniewski**, District 5, presented **RS 31418**. This proposed legislation is a revamp of **H 308** from 2023 for medical freedom of conscience.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Redman** made a motion to introduce **RS 31418**.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:** **Rep. Gallagher** requested a roll call vote on **RS 31418**. **Motion carried by a vote of 10 AYE, 2 NAY and 1 Absent/Excused.** **Voting in favor** of the motion: **Reps. Erickson, Kingsley, Mitchell, Dixon(24), Gallagher, Healey, Redman, Wheeler, Rubel, and Vander Woude.** **Voting in opposition** to the motion: **Reps. Hansen and Roberts.** **Rep. Blanksma was absent/excused.**

**H 597:** **Rep. Jacyn Gallagher**, District 9, presented **H 597** to improve high school, college, and trade school immunization requirements to exempt students who are eighteen years of age or older.

Answering questions, **Rep. Gallagher** anticipates complete cooperation to follow the code change. Private schools, although businesses, are included in other educational regulations. This provides clarification for issues such as meningitis vaccination requirements.

**Grace Howat**, Idaho Family Policy Center, testified **in support** of **H 597**. This legislation prevents coercion of individuals continuing their education by protecting religious liberty and medical freedom.

**Sara Clendenon**, Health Freedom Idaho, testified **in support** of **H 597**, which addresses a gap in the exemption laws.

**Miste Karlfeldt**, Health Freedom Idaho, testified **in support** of **H 597**. The private schools should support Idaho's educational exemption statutes.

**Amy McMahon**, Self, testified **in support** of **H 597**. Considered adults, these students should have the ability to make their own choices.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Redman** made a motion to send **H 597** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Reps. Roberts, Rubel, Hansen, Wheeler, and Dixon(24)** requested they be recorded as voting **NAY.** **Rep. Gallagher** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

**H 615:** **Rep. Redman**, District 3, presented **H 615** which removes access to non-emergency public benefits for illegal individuals. It does not prohibit access to emergency medical care or any state action necessary for protecting life and public safety.

**Rep. Josh Tanner**, District 14, further presented **H 615**. The existing Department of Health and Welfare (DHW) eligibility for family and children services includes non-citizen eligibility based on Code Federal Regulations (CFR). This legislation includes more stringent requirements than those provided in the CFR.

In answer to questions, **Sen. Phil Hart**, an additional cosponsor, said the DHW expects no change to their current practice with the passage of this legislation.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Gallagher** made a motion to send **H 615** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

**Julianne Donnelly Tzul**, ACLU of Idaho, testified **in opposition** to **H 615**. Medicaid preventative care insures children are alive and healthy. It is also essential for mothers carrying future U.S. citizens.

**Kole Kracaw**, Self, testified **in opposition** to **H 615**. The systematic alien verification (SAV) used for the lawful presence verification can take up to three months, delaying services.

**Estefania Mondragon**, Executive Director, Ponder of Idaho, testified **in opposition** to **H 615**. The Latino community is concerned this legislation will increase the existing fear which deters all immigrants from programs, including natal care.

**Dexton Lake**, Idaho Farm Bureau Federation, testified **in support** of **H 615**, stating this legislation is in line with the Farm Bureau's policy.

**Criseida G. Cuevas Cuevas**, Self, testified **in opposition** to **H 615**. He shared why older family members seek only emergency care. This is an issue impacting Idaho's public health risk.

**SUBSTITUTE MOTION:** **Rep. Dixon(24)** made a substitute motion to **HOLD H 615** in committee.

In closing remarks **Sen. Hart** and **Rep. Redman** reiterated this legislation pertains to illegal persons seeking benefits, not the children who are U.S. citizens at birth.

**VOTE ON  
SUBSTITUTE  
MOTION:**

**Chairman Vander Woude** called for a vote on the substitute motion to **HOLD H 615** in committee. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

**ADJOURN:**

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 10:43 a.m.

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Representative Vander Woude  
Chair

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Irene Moore  
Secretary