

MARCH 15, 2019

S 1159

COPIES OF SOME WRITTEN TESTIMONIES

ATTACHMENT 2

Twyla Melton

From: Mark Altekruise <markaltekruise@me.com>
Sent: Friday, March 15, 2019 7:17 AM
To: Twyla Melton
Subject: March 15 Hearing on SB1159
Attachments: SB1159 Testimony.pdf; ATT00001.htm

Dear Secretary Melton,

I am unable to attend today's hearing on SB1159. I would like to submit my testimony in writing and I am requesting that this testimony be entered into the record in my absence.

Good Morning

Madam Chairman, members of the Committee and all in attendance:

My name is Mark Altekruise and I am a resident of the city of Boise.

Today we have heard and will continue to hear many voices citing laws, statistics and varying opinions on SB1159.

Instead, I would like to offer a different thought on the matter.

In post WWI, the voice of Bulgarian poet Geo Milev was forever silenced. He was murdered by the regime that took control of the duly elected democratic government during the 1923 September Uprising. Milev was only 40 years old.

Why do I bring his name up? Because there is a significant quote of his that befits today's hearing.

Milev wrote, "Art can only blossom when it is planted in freedom. If you censor the writer, you would be killing art itself."

Anyone identifying themselves as an American will agree that this quote speaks directly to the 1st Amendment in our Bill of Rights.

However, I would like to offer an interpretation of Milev's quote by replacing the words "Art" and "writer" with the words "America" and "citizen."

The quote now reads, "America can only blossom when it is planted in freedom. If you censor the citizen, you would be killing America itself."

This is the aim of SB1159. To quell our combined voice, to prevent us from bringing forth initiatives for our health, and welfare. Because of this I stand in full opposition to SB1159.

Do not allow this bill to come to a vote. Silence it forever.

To bring this bill to reality is to silence the voice of the people. Remember, we put you in those seats to represent us, not to muzzle our voice nor diminish our rights as citizens.

Thank you for your time



IDAHO FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

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March 15, 2019

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate State Affairs Committee:

On behalf of the more than 80,000 Idaho families who are members of the Idaho Farm Bureau Federation, I am writing to ask for your **support of S1159**.

Under current Idaho initiative law, all signatures could be gathered in only four counties in Idaho to qualify for the ballot. There are 18 legislative districts contained within Ada, Canyon, Kootenai and ½ of Bonneville Counties. This means that the input of the citizens in the remaining 40 Idaho counties could potentially be completely ignored. S1159 is a common-sense approach to ensuring that the views of Idaho citizens from across the state are considered prior to qualifying for the ballot.

26 other states don't even allow initiatives in their states. Of the remaining 24 states, 14 require a higher percentage of voters to sign petitions than Idaho, while 7 states require 10% or more. Furthermore, several other states also require the signatures to come from most, if not all of the legislative districts within their state. S1159 is not radical or unusual at all to ensure this level of participation across the state; but is consistent with a number of other state's initiative processes.

S1159 would simply strengthen the initiative process and ensure there is more citizen involvement and broad support for an initiative from across the state prior to a measure qualifying for the ballot.

S1159 also wisely requires petitions to include a fiscal note alerting voters what the proposal will cost; and a proposed funding source so voters know if taxes will be raised, or if other programs will be cut.

If you have any questions about this issue, please contact Russ Hendricks at 208-342-2688.

We appreciate your careful consideration of this issue and ask for your **support of S1159**.

Sincerely,

Bryan Searle, President
Idaho Farm Bureau Federation