

MINUTES  
**HOUSE COMMERCE & HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Thursday, February 03, 2022

**TIME:** 1:30 P.M.

**PLACE:** Room EW05

**MEMBERS:** Chairman Holtzclaw, Vice Chairman Syme, Representatives Harris, Kingsley, Christensen, Wisniewski, Horman, Hanks, Weber, McCann, Chew, Necochea, Toone

**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 Holtzclaw** called the meeting to order at 1:30pm.

**RS 29325:** **Rep. Gestrin**, a member of the board of the Idaho State Insurance Fund (SIF), presented **RS 29325** which would streamline SIF and allow it to provide competitive workers' compensation. This legislation would allow SIF to transition out of state vacation and sick leave programs and adopt Paid Time Off and holidays more consistent with the private sector. Additionally, this legislation would allow SIF to digitize its financial transaction offerings through mobile service applications and online banking, without the need to go through the State Controller's Office and Treasurer's Office. An independent audit and the Department of Insurance provide oversight, making the additional steps of going through the Controller and Treasurer unnecessary.

In response to questions about transparency, **Rep. Gestrin** said SIF keeps its accounting information and payroll on Transparent Idaho to ensure transparency.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Syme** made a motion to introduce **RS 29325**. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

**DOCKET NO.  
15-0400-2100:** **Michelle Peugh**, Strategic Business Partner for Division of Human Resources, came to present **Docket No. 15-0400-2100**. The committee requested a red lined version of the rules.

**Chairman Holtzclaw** put the meeting at ease at 1:38pm.

**Chairman Holtzclaw** called the meeting back to order at 1:39pm.

Review of **Docket No. 15-0400-2100** was postponed until Monday, February 7, 2022.

**Alex Adams**, Administrator of the Division of Financial Management, explained the Governor's recommendations for the use of federally provided ARPA funding. The first recommendation which Mr. Adams presented was fifty million dollars toward workforce housing, twenty percent of which would be designated for rural areas. Traditionally this is paid for through federal credits and private financing, but there is currently a financing gap which could be closed with ARPA funding. This would allow for the development of one thousand new rental units. Secondly, it is proposed to allocate fifty million dollars toward child care expansion grants with the goal to increase childcare spots by two thousand. Thirdly, one million dollars would be allocated towards food bank support to continue to provide meals to those in need. Fourthly, workforce training programs would receive fifty million dollars. These programs would be overseen by the Workforce Development Council with the goal of preparing a workforce for in-demand professions. Finally, twenty five

million dollars would be used to expand the Idaho State Health Insurance Reserves. Due to the high number of claims because of COVID-19, additional funds are needed to cover the costs of state employees. This investment would keep the reserves at the 95th percentile and reduce reliance on the general fund.

In response to questions about how close this places the State Health Insurance Reserves to the federally allowable gap, **Mr. Adams** said this would put Idaho over that limit but it was not a hard and fast limit. However, because of the pandemic, there has been more flexibility in how much is allowed in insurance reserves and this would ensure Idaho has maximum options.

In response to how the funds for expanding childcare could be used to assist entrepreneurial moms who provide childcare from their homes, **Wendy Seacrest**, Executive Director of the Idaho Workforce Development Council, said they were considering designating a portion of the funds to small providers or putting a cap on the number of seats for which any one applicant could apply.

In response to questions about collaboration with colleges, **Ms. Seacrest** said they currently work with career technical colleges, private providers, and anyone who provides needed training.

**Chairman Holtzclaw** explained that four House Concurrent Resolutions covering these topics would be before the committee next week.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Necochea** made a motion to approve the minutes of January 31 and February 1, 2022. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

**ADJOURN:** There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 2:03pm.

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Representative Holtzclaw  
Chair

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Emily Huddleston  
Secretary