

MINUTES
SENATE HEALTH & WELFARE COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, March 01, 2022

TIME: 3:00 P.M.

PLACE: Room WW54

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Martin, Senators Heider, Lee, Harris, VanOrden (Bair), Zito, Stennett, and Wintrow

ABSENT/ EXCUSED: Vice Chairman Riggs

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 Martin** called to order the Senate Health and Welfare Committee (Committee) at 3:01 p.m.

Chairman Martin proposed a change of meeting time to 2:30 p.m. for the Wednesday meeting. The Committee did not object.

Chairman Martin explained today there were 2 bills **S 1353** and **H 601** dealing with the same subject. He stated both presentations and testimonies would be heard and then the Committee would look at motions.

S 1353

HEALTH - Adds to existing law to provide that a resident in a health care facility has the right to essential caregiver visitation. Senator Stennett introduced herself to the Committee. She relayed that **S 1353** would ensure that the patient/resident of the hospital, nursing facility, group home, or other similar health care facility had the right to accompaniment from essential caregivers of their choosing. The caregiver is subject to safety and other protocols imposed by the facility. Currently facilities had different visitation rights and authorization documentation requirements. **Senator Stennett** stated this bill would create uniformity. She also stated if the Committee feels caregiver of their choosing needs to be better defined she would be open to amendment.

DISCUSSION: **Senator Zito** asked for clarification on who the essential caregiver was. **Senator Stennett** stated this was for whomever the patient/resident wanted to be with them regardless of legal documentation.

TESTIMONY: **Jeffra Syms** introduced herself to the Committee. She relayed her story of trying to assist her mother during the pandemic and stated her support for **S 1353**.

H 601

RESIDENTIAL CARE AND ASSISTED LIVING - Amends existing law to provide that a residential care or assisted living facility resident shall be entitled to in-person visitation subject to certain precautions. Representative Julianne Young introduced herself to the Committee. She relayed this legislation addressed and assured families had in-person contact with their loved ones in residential care or assisted living facilities. These facilities were regulated by the State of Idaho. **Representative Young** pointed out the visitor would be subject to certain precautions consistent with those required to be taken by staff and other facility personnel such as a health screening and infection control procedures. They may not be precluded on the basis of a visitor's vaccination status.

- TESTIMONY:** The following testified in support of **H 601**
- David Ripley, Idaho Chooses Life
 - Linda Hines, Grace Assisted Living
 - Michael Cody Bennett, Grace Assisted Living
 - Matthew Jensen, self and District 17 GOP
 - Sean Alix, on behalf of Vicky Purdy
 - Mary Alix, self
- They provided personal stories and facility struggles during the pandemic.
- DISCUSSION:** **Senator Wintrow** clarified her understanding of the differences between the 2 bills being **S 1353** covered all health care facilities versus **H 601** covering the residential and assisted living.
- MOTION:** **Senator Heider** moved to send **S 1353** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Wintrow** seconded the motion.
- DISCUSSION:** **Senator Lee** asked about a possible amendment. **Senator Stennett** responded if caregiver needed more explanation to indicate it could be several different people maybe it needed to be changed to caregivers.
- SUBSTITUTE MOTION:** **Senator Lee** moved to send **S 1353** to the 14th Order of Business for possible amendment. **Senator Harris** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- ADJOURNED:** There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Martin** adjourned the meeting at 3:55 p.m.

Senator Martin
Chair

Lena Amoah
Secretary