

MINUTES
HOUSE HEALTH & WELFARE COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, February 29, 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.

H 616: **Rep. Jordan Redman**, District 3, presented **H 616**, legislation to allow parents to access medical records for a child 14 years of age or older when it is needed for Medicaid services.

MOTION: **Rep. Healey** made a motion to send **H 616** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

Sean Nixon, Mental Health Services Provider, testified **in support** of **H 616**. This will help clear up confusion regarding confidentiality for minors.

Laura Wallis, Self, testified **in support** of **H 616**. This would align with federal documentation regulations and acknowledge the parental right to the information.

Brittany Shipley, Self, testified **in support** of **H 616** because it removes a current barrier, allowing parents to further advocate for timely and critical care for their children.

VOTE ON MOTION: **Chairman Vander Woude** called for a vote on the motion to send **H 616** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. Young** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

Chairman Vander Woude turned the gavel over to **Vice Chairman Erickson**.

RS 31536 **Rep. John Vander Woude**, District 22, presented **RS 31536** to establish a Medicaid stabilization fund to house unspent Medicaid allocations and discontinue the practice of using the extra money in other areas within the Department of Health and Welfare (DHW).

MOTION: **Rep. Blanksma** made a motion to introduce **RS 31536**. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

H 617: **Rep. John Vander Woude**, District 22, presented **H 617**, to repeal the Syringe and Needle Exchange Act. Along with the recent raid on two facilities for alleged controlled substances on the premises, the oversight and reporting have been inadequate. It is time to repeal the program and start over with the necessary, improved oversight.

MOTION: **Rep. Blanksma** made a motion to send **H 617** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

Amber LaRocco, Self, testified **in opposition** to **H 617**. Without this program individuals will not have access to vital resources.

Amy McKenzie, Self, Substance Abuse Treatment Counselor, testified **in opposition to H 617** stating the program also addresses the spread of disease through early detection testing. This marginalized community needs support networks.

Norma Jaeger, Recovery Idaho, testified **in opposition to H 617**, suggesting a word change from "may" to "shall" for promulgating rules would provide guardrails and refine its operation.

Nicklas Kleinworth, Idaho Freedom Foundation, testified **in support of H 617**. The program has lost sight of its purpose. There is no way to measure if Idaho is reducing or contributing to harm.

Titus Folks, Vice President, Idaho Family Policy Center, testified **in support of H 617**. Their statewide poll showed 65% of Idahoans oppose the centers.

Dr. Cate Heil, Idaho Society of Addiction Medicine, testified **in opposition to H 617** stating these programs provide vital care, address the risks of contracting other diseases, and offer a bridge to treatment.

Del Chapel, Self, testified **in support of H 617**, said this program enables continuation of addictions, which people do not quit until they hit rock bottom.

Julianne Donnelly Tzul, ACLU of Idaho, testified **in opposition to H 617**. Increase oversight instead of eliminating an important health program.

Ian Troesoyer, Nurse Practitioner, testified **in opposition to H 617**. These facilities reduce use and litter.

Rep. Vander Woude, in closing remarks said the needle exchange is one of several programs for individuals with addictions. This program is not working well and a closer look is needed to better provide the services.

Committee discussion included a possible increase in deaths, the original simple program being now out of control, the possible spread of undiagnosed diseases within communities, and convincing the DHW of the seriousness of this issue.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION:

Rep. Rubel made a substitute motion to send **H 617** to General Orders.

ROLL CALL VOTE ON SUBSTITUTE MOTION:

Roll call vote was requested. **Substitute motion failed by a vote of 5 AYE and 8 NAY. Voting in favor** of the substitute motion: **Reps. Erickson, Dixon(24), Hansen, Rubel, and Roberts. Voting in opposition** to the substitute motion: **Reps. Blanksma, Kingsley, Mitchell, Gallagher, Healey, Redman, Wheeler, and Vander Woude.**

ROLL CALL VOTE ON ORIGINAL MOTION:

Roll call vote was requested. **Original motion carried by a vote of 9 AYE and 4 NAY. Voting in favor** of the original motion: **Reps. Blanksma, Kingsley, Mitchell, Dixon(24), Gallagher, Healey, Redman, Wheeler, and Vander Woude. Voting in opposition** to the original motion: **Reps. Erickson, Hansen, Rubel, and Roberts. Rep. Vander Woude** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

Vice Chairman Erickson turned the gavel over to **Chairman Vander Woude**.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 10:09 a.m.

Representative Erickson
Chair

Irene Moore
Secretary