

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, February 09, 2021

TIME: 3:00 P.M.

PLACE: Room WW55

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Thayn, Vice Chairman Crabtree, Senators Den Hartog, Woodward, Lent, Johnson, Cook, Ward-Engelking, and Nelson

ABSENT/ EXCUSED: None

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 Thayn** called the meeting of the Senate Education Committee (Committee) to order at 3:00 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Vice Chairman Crabtree** moved to approve the Minutes of January 26, 2021. **Senator Den Hartog** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

Senator Woodward moved to approve the Minutes of January 27, 2021. **Senator Johnson** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

Senator Den Hartog moved to approve the Minutes of January 28, 2021. **Senator Lent** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

Senator Cook moved to approve the Minutes of February 1, 2021. **Senator Nelson** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

RS 28370 **A Concurrent Resolution; Reject the Pending Rule in IDAPA 08.02.01, Section 250., Subsections 01., 04., and 05., under Docket No. 08-0201-2001.**

MOTION: **Senator Woodward** moved to send **RS 28370** to print. **Senator Den Hartog** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

S 1045 **Relating to Education; Creates a Separate Advanced Opportunities Program for Students Who Attend Private Schools.** **Kate Haas**, on behalf of Bishop Kelly High School, discussed the proposed bill and stood for questions.

DISCUSSION: **Senator Ward-Engelking** asked for reassurance that money allocated via this bill to students in private schools, for taking dual credit classes, was not going to private schools directly since that would violate Idaho Constitution. **Ms. Haas** said the money would not go to students or schools directly, but held in an account where students could use the funds to pay for dual credit classes.

TESTIMONY: **Sarah Quilici, Mike Caldwell, Brand Novosel, Yliana Villegas, Robert Raschke, Dr. Greg Wiles, Jim Eisentrager, Kira Richell, and Marc Taylor**, testified in favor of **S 1045**. Those who testified represented school administrators, parents, and high school students. Consensus among those testifying was this bill would give students who attend private schools the same opportunity to take dual credit classes without undue financial burden, and to perhaps begin their college educations with one or two years of college already completed.

TESTIMONY: **Karen Echeverria**, testified in opposition to **S 1045**. **Ms. Echeverria** expressed concerns about the increasing line item in the State education budget, and money going to private schools in violation of the Idaho Constitution.

DISCUSSION: **Senator Woodward** asked how **Ms. Haas** arrived at the allocation amount of \$750 per student. **Ms. Haas** said the amount of money spent by public school students, to take dual credit classes, ranges between \$500-\$800. **Senator Woodward** asked how many private school students live in Idaho. **Ms. Haas** said there are about 3,900 in grades 10-12. If every one of them used the full amount allowed for dual credit the total cost would be \$1.5 million a year. **Senator Lent** asked about students who go from private high school to private college. **Ms. Haas** said money would flow from the State Department of Education directly to the institution. **Senator Den Hartog** asked for the record to reflect, prior to her vote, a possible conflict with 39 H of the Idaho Constitution.

MOTION: **Senator Den Hartog** moved to send **S 1045** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Lent** seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: **Vice Chairman Crabtree** said he wants to explore other options in funding Advanced Opportunities and is cautious in spending more money. **Senator Ward-Engelking** asked how many students the bill would cover and feels the dual credit program needs to be reviewed from this aspect. **Senator Johnson** made a disclosure that his family will benefit if this bill passes, since his grandchildren go to private schools. **Senator Lent** said he will approve this bill because it concerns Idaho students and Idaho taxpaying parents. **Senator Woodward** said he sees the need to ascertain if the continued spending on education is returning positive results, such as in the number of students actually graduating from college. **Chairman Thayn** said Idaho public school students earned 9,000 years of college credits last year. The cost to the state was \$19 million. If those same students had waited to take those credits in college, that cost would have been \$84 million. Idaho has therefore created a community college system in every high school without building any new colleges. **Senator Woodward** said he would have more interest in supporting the bill if there were a monetary cap on the Advanced Opportunities program spending.

ROLL CALL VOTE: **Chairman Thayn** called for a roll call vote on **S 1045**. **Senators Den Hartog, Lent, Johnson, Cook, Ward-Engelking,** and **Chairman Thayn** voted aye. **Senators Woodward, Nelson,** and **Vice Chairman Crabtree** voted nay. The motion carried.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Thayn** adjourned the meeting at 4:15 p.m.

Senator Thayn
Chair

Florence Lince
Secretary