

MINUTES
SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, January 25, 2022

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

PLACE: Room WW53

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Den Hartog, Senators Winder, Lodge, Vick, Crabtree, Nelson, and Wintrow

ABSENT/ EXCUSED: Vice Chairman Woodward, and Senator Rice

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: Chair Den Hartog convened the meeting of the Senate Transportation Committee (Committee) at 1:33 P.M.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Senator Crabtree** moved to approve the Minutes of Thursday, January 13, 2022. **Senator Wintrow** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

ADMINISTRATIVE RULES: **Chair Den Hartog** introduced Ramón Hobdey-Sánchez, Governmental Affairs Project Manager, Idaho Transportation Department (ITD), to present an overview of this year's omnibus rules.

DOCKET NO. 39-0000-2100: **Notice of Omnibus Rulemaking – Proposed Rule. Mr. Hobdey-Sánchez** gave a brief quantitative overview of the changes made under Governor Brad Little's Red Tape Reduction Initiative (RTRI). He addressed the two chapters proposed for repeal, and called out a few changes made to fee rules (Attachments 1 and 2).

DISCUSSION: **Mr. Hobdey-Sánchez** took the opportunity to emphasize the team collaboration between ITD's internal review teams and numerous specialists, government divisions, boards, and legal teams that worked together to negotiate these rules.

Senator Wintrow requested a reason for, and an explanation of, the overarching changes made in the rules language. **Mr. Hobdey-Sánchez** explained the current RTRI directive provided the focus of removing restrictive words such as 'shall, must, require,' and 'prohibit.' The Governor's Division of Financial Management provided guidance on the edits, which were determined based on academic studies regarding the removal of restrictions and regulations.

MOTION: **Senator Wintrow** moved to approve **Docket No. 39-0000-2100**. **Senator Vick** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

DOCKET NO. 39-0000-2100F: **Notice of Omnibus Rulemaking (Fee Rule) – Proposed Rule. Mr. Hobdey-Sánchez** noted his earlier presentation incorporated a summary of the fee rule changes.

MOTION: **Senator Lodge** moved to approve **Docket No. 39-0000-2100F**. **Senator Wintrow** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

PRESENTATION: **Director Brian Ness** of ITD, outgoing, introduced himself and presented on four topics. His overview covered (1) the governor's budget recommendation for fiscal year 2023, (2) the governor's leading Idaho initiative, (3) a brief report on ITD's 2021 accomplishments, and (4) what the department will focus on in the future (Attachment 3).

Chief Deputy Scott Stokes, incoming director, introduced himself and discussed opportunities at ITD looking forward over the next year or two. He expressed confidence in modernization as the key to ITD's success in customer service and delivering for Idaho citizens.

DISCUSSION: **Senator Vick** asked how timelines have changed with new construction demand and capacity. **Mr. Stokes** explained the Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicles (GARVEE) program provided its funding in several peaks, and that ITD had demonstrated their ability to advance funded projects. He stated if ITD did not invest as proposed, a reduction in contracting outputs would result. Therefore they accelerated their designs to meet the current bid project demand, future bids through December 2023, plus the 13 corridors.

Senator Vick then asked whether new roads accommodate or drive growth. **Mr. Stokes** stated he could only reference the reduction of fatalities by over 50 percent in the improved corridors, courtesy of ITD bonding and completing the GARVEE program.

Chair Den Hartog requested that Mr. Stokes briefly touch on what ITD is doing to ease the transition and impact to DMV offices in the more rural counties. **Mr. Stokes** confirmed the reduction in DMV office traffic in the smallest counties might drop to as few as one or two people per day. He stated ITD's intent is to be sympathetic to these counties and their financial strain as well as the needs of the customers being served.

Senator Winder commented on ITD's progress over the years and the transitions through several directors he witnessed. He recognized Mr. Ness' accomplishments and awards, plus the care given to the people, roads, and bridges in Idaho during his tenure. **Chair Den Hartog** remarked it was clear from the transformations made during Mr. Ness' years of service how much he valued the employees at ITD. She commented that the Committee looked forward to continued progress with incoming director Stokes.

RS 29212: **Chair Den Hartog** stated current legislative language built into H 312 included reporting requirements for local highway jurisdictions and counties on the spending of funds received under the bill. Over the years, some jurisdictions received very minimal funding, making it burdensome for local jurisdictions to report. This RS would ease that reporting burden.

MOTION: **Senator Vick** moved to send RS 29212 to print. **Senator Crabtree** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Chair Den Hartog** adjourned the meeting at 2:16 p.m.

Senator Den Hartog
Chair

Cara Beyenka
Secretary