

Senate State Affairs Committee

Friday, March 22, 2024 - 8:00 A.M.

TESTIMONY ON: All Subjects

Written Testimony

Name (First & Last)	Subject	Manner Testifying	Representing Company/Organization	City	For / Against	Wish to Testify	District #
Kristi Hardy	S 1439	W	self	Kuna	Against	N	23

I would like to see part of bill 521 remain. In section 33-916, it states "school district does not require job applicants to sign written diversity statements". This piece is important and I believe it should remain.

Karen Pyron	S 1439	V	Butte County School Board	Arco	For	Y	30
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For the record my name is Karen Pyron and I am the board chair of the Butte County School Board in Arco; I also serve as the Region 7 vice-chair of ISBA, representing the school boards of South Lemhi, Salmon, Challis, Mackay, and Arco, all of us on a 4-day week and have been for over 10 years. I come before you today in support of the trailer bill 1439, repealing the 4-day week section from HB521.

I could bring before you this morning several drivers of the 4-day week, and why we have not even entertained the thought of returning to a 5-day week. For us, it's what is in the best interest of our schools and our communities. It's a cultural imperative, a standard and an expectation. Plain and simple, it's a local decision. It has been said that "You cannot touch a school without touching the culture of the surrounding town." So true, and only truly and intimately known by those of us who live in those communities, and live and breathe the 4-day week.

Currently 97 of Idaho 115 school districts (84%) embrace the 4-day week, and there are more on the bubble. To the best of my knowledge, NONE plan on returning to a 4-day week.

It is unfortunate that a platform that has been adopted by 84% of our districts in Idaho and so fully embraced by their respective communities must become a platform for agendas not even related to the purpose and intent of HB521. IT WORKS FOR US and IT WORKS FOR OUR STUDENTS. Those of us on 4-day weeks meet or exceed the same instructional hour requirement as those on the 5-day week. Minimal instructional hours is a universal state requirement. In fact, I will argue our elementary students get more hours on the 4 day week because we can operate only one bus route. Is it perfect? Do we need to address student performance and attendance? Certainly. Every district in the state stands in need of improvement; the state as a whole stands in need of improvement.

I urge you, members of the State Affairs Committee, to support this bill and repeal the 4-day week provisions. I can assure you that Section 18 in 521 in its current state, will be a negotiations nightmare and a source of contention in our community. The late timing of

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Karen Pyron	<i>cont.</i>						30

calendar discussions will bring uncomfortable consternation among all involved. I, for one, would much prefer that our trustees, our administration, and our teachers spend our time this spring and summer on issues that really matter—the needs and interests of our kids. Please give 1439 the green light.