

Senator Kelly Anthon

Majority Leader



IDAHO SENATE MAJORITY STATEMENT

January 21, 2022

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BOISE, IDAHO - On January 18, 2022, Senate Majority Leadership received information that a member of the Idaho Senate was harassed by Brandon Durst after the Senate Education Committee voted not to advance a piece of legislation promoted by Durst. Following the vote, Durst confronted Senator Jim Woodward in the committee room after adjournment and threatened retribution for not voting in favor of Durst's bill. Idaho State Police intervened and Senator Woodward was able to leave and move to his Senate office. Mr. Durst then followed Senator Woodward to his office and initiated another altercation. Idaho State Police were called and again had to deal with Mr. Durst until he left the Senate's office space.

Senate Leadership has met with witnesses and the Idaho State Police to review the matter. Mr. Durst was invited to meet with leadership but did not come to the appointment. It is clear from the information gathered that Mr. Durst acted inappropriately in this situation.

Following this episode, Mr. Durst then used social media to politicize the event – publicly attacking Senator Woodward and Senator Carl Crabtree (who also voted against Durst's bill and who was witness to Mr. Durst's bad behavior).

Mr. Durst has suggested that Senator Woodward may be subject to an ethics investigation; that is not true. No complaints have been filed against Senator Woodward and no witness has come forward to corroborate the version of the story as circulated by Mr. Durst publicly. As a former legislator, Mr. Durst is well aware he has no standing to initiate an ethics complaint against a legislator.

These spurious attacks against members of the Senate, meant to coerce votes and influence elections, should be denounced by all Idahoans. This kind of behavior and harassment does not create the political environment we want in Idaho. Senators must be free to vote their conscience without threat and intimidation. Participants in the process of making law are free to express their opinions and provide input, but Mr. Durst's aggressive actions – and further public statements about senators - demonstrate egregious conduct unbecoming of anyone, especially a former legislator and current statewide political candidate. Senate leadership is currently reviewing possible sanctions against Mr. Durst.

Senator Chuck Winder, President Pro Tempore
Senator Kelly Anthon, Majority Leader
Senator Abby Lee, Assistant Majority Leader
Senator Mark Harris, Senate Majority Caucus Chairman

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