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Idaho State Senate

BRENT HILL
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

July 6, 2020

Senator Dean Mortimer
7403 South 1st East
Idaho Falls, ID 83404

Dear Chairman Mortimer:

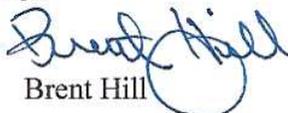
Due to the unprecedented circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic, challenges have emerged regarding a number of public policies. It is evident that our existing statutes never anticipated a crisis of this type and magnitude. To address these challenges, Speaker Bedke and I are establishing a number of interim working groups to study our existing policies, seek public input, and determine whether statutory changes or additions should be considered by the Legislature in the future. Each working group should prepare a report for the 2021 Legislature that will include proposed legislative options for the Legislature to evaluate and possibly recommendations from the working group.

It is my pleasure to appoint you, as the chair of the Senate Education Committee, as co-chair of an "Education Working Group" that will consist of the members of the standing Senate and House Education committees. The working group will meet as needed to complete its assignment. Meetings may be held in person or remotely, at the co-chairs' discretion. If in-person meetings are held, arrangements need to be made for working group members to participate and vote remotely. All working group members may vote on actions proposed by the working group, but any motions must be passed by a majority of the Senate Education Committee as well as a majority of the House Education Committee.

The major issue to be considered by the working group deals with statutory changes that may be advisable to better assist public school districts in providing educational services in the event of economic holdbacks and/or budget reductions, particularly in times of emergency, such as the current pandemic we are facing. The working group should consider the health and safety of the public, the educational needs of the students, flexibility to adjust to budget changes, and the Legislature's role in the process. The working group should also evaluate whether or not a Special Session of the Legislature is needed to consider the working group's recommendations.

Thank you for your willingness to dedicate your time and abilities to making this working group a success. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me. I am always happy to visit with you.

Sincerely,


Brent Hill

cc: Speaker Scott Bedke
Legislative Services Office
Senator Steven Thayn
Senator Lori Den Hartog
Senator Carl Crabtree
Senator Jim Woodward
Senator Dave Lent
Senator Cherie Buckner-Webb
Senator Janie Ward-Engelking
Senate Majority and Minority Leadership