



BRAD LITTLE
GOVERNOR

March 28, 2022

The Honorable Scott Bedke
Speaker of the House
Idaho Legislature
Boise, ID 83720

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Dear Mr. Speaker,

I hereby advise you that I have transmitted to the Office of the Secretary of State, with my approval, the following House Bills, to wit:

H 499

H 589

within the time prescribed by law, both having arrived in the Office of the Governor at the hour of 6:10 p.m. on March 24, 2022.

From time to time the Legislature sees fit to add additional classes of employees to Police Officer Member Status in PERSI, thus making these employees eligible for earlier retirement under the Rule of 80. Police Officer Member Status was initially meant for individuals who work in professions that require strength, endurance, or had the possibility of perishing in the line of duty. While I appreciate the stress and difficult nature of emergency communications officers, this addition stretches beyond the original intent of Police Officer Member Status.

Furthermore, these bills have inherent inconsistencies. House Bill 499 adds emergency communications officers employed by counties and cities and by the Idaho State Police, but neglects emergency communications officers employed by the Department of Health and Welfare. House Bill 589 adds county juvenile detention officers, misdemeanor probation officers, and adult misdemeanor probation officers, but neglects juvenile corrections direct care staff at the Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections, the equivalent of correctional officers in the adult system. In fact, as a consequence of these two bills, the state employees not covered are the only employees of either state or local government required to have POST Certification who remain ineligible for Rule of 80.

In a tight labor market, the piecemeal approach to Rule of 80 could actively harm the state's competitiveness in recruiting and retaining a qualified workforce in these important positions. I encourage the Legislature to add these state employees as soon as possible so this inconsistency does not remain in law more than a year. Notwithstanding my abiding concern about expanding Police Officer Member Status beyond its original intent, I have signed these bills.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brad Little", written in a cursive style.

Brad Little
Governor of Idaho

Cc: Secretary of State Lawrence Denney