



BRAD LITTLE
GOVERNOR

April 5, 2023

The Honorable Scott Bedke
President of the Senate
Idaho State Senate
Hand Delivered

Dear Mr. President,

I hereby advise you that I have signed on April 5, 2023, and transmitted to the Office of the Secretary of State, with my approval, the following Senate Bill, to wit:

Senate Bill 1203

within the time prescribed by law, the same having arrived in the Office of the Governor at the hour of 1:50 p.m. on March 30, 2023.

Maintaining the public's trust in government is imperative. To do so, government must follow the law, act with transparency, and allow our legal processes to run to completion. Upon internal disagreement or allegations of impropriety, we must not prejudge or impose corrective action without a full and final picture.

Section 1 of this bill forces a reduction of \$14,394,000 from the Department of Health and Welfare, purportedly to recoup funds meant to benefit children that some in the Legislature have already judged were "ineligible payments made by the Department of Health and Welfare to ineligible community partner providers."

The order and meaning of words in appropriation language matter, not one's subjective intent. Therefore, it is critical that language meant to place restrictions on appropriations are clear and unambiguous. When mistakes are made, we fix them. However, here, the legislative audit process has only just begun, and Idaho's courts have not concluded there was misfeasance. Further, the Legislative Council may exercise its statutory authority to order an audit and request an investigation if it so chooses.

My signature on this bill shall not be construed as an agreement or a finding that there was any wrongdoing or that ineligible payments were made to ineligible partner providers. I will wait until the process is completed and then support necessary action to correct any mistakes. Until then, people expect we not cast aspersions on others or rush to a conclusion. Our credibility depends on it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brad Little".

Brad Little
Governor of Idaho