



Brent Hill
Idaho State Senate President Pro Tempore

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Senator Brent Hill's Statement Regarding the Appointment of a Senate Committee on Ethics

Boise, Idaho — The Idaho Senate President Pro Tempore, Brent Hill, issued the following statement regarding the appointment of a Senate committee on ethics to investigate a complaint of Senator Monty Pearce:

On Thursday, March 15, at approximately 12:00 noon, Senate Minority Leader, Edgar Malepeai, presented me with a letter requesting that an ethics investigation be conducted to determine whether Senator Monty Pearce violated Senate Rules. The letter alleges ethics violations asserting non-disclosure of a conflict of interest while considering and voting on oil and gas legislation. The complaint was signed by Minority leadership, Senators Edgar Malepeai, Les Bock and Michelle Stennett.

Pursuant to Senate Rule, I have formed a committee on ethics to investigate the allegations. I have appointed Republican Senators Dean Mortimer, Bert Brackett and Jim Hammond and, with the concurrence of Minority Leader Malepeai, I have appointed Democratic Senators Elliot Werk, Diane Bilyeu and Dan Schmidt to serve on the ethics committee. The committee will be chaired by Senator Mortimer.

The committee will make a preliminary investigation of the complaint. If, after the investigation, the committee determines no violation has occurred, the complaint will be dismissed. If the committee determines probable cause exists that a violation may have occurred, Senator Pearce may request a hearing before the committee. Based on the investigation and hearings, the committee may recommend dismissal of the charges, reprimand, censure, or expulsion.

The complaint also requests that Senator Pearce be removed as the chair of the Senate Resources and Environment Committee, and that he recuse himself from voting on any matters pertaining to the oil and gas industry. Any decision regarding his chairmanship will not be made based on mere allegations. Pursuant to Senate Rules, Senator Pearce cannot be excused from voting without a two-thirds majority vote from the Senate.

It is the desire of the Idaho State Senate to deal with these allegations immediately, thoroughly and openly. I trust that the committee members will conduct the investigation and possible hearings in a just and fair manner.

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