

Resolve S1067 (child support)

By Rep. Robert Anderst, R-Nampa

The risks associated with abandoning S1067 (the child support bill) are serious and need to be resolved sooner rather than later. The only beneficiaries of this bill not passing are those parents that don't voluntarily pay their child support. It has been reported that as much as 85% of annual payments to children in Idaho are involuntary payments. I'm not suggesting that those taking the lead in opposition to this bill want to protect dead beat parents but they have to understand that the result of abandoning this bill is just that. Without access to the federal portals, parents and children who rely on this information sharing for processing and enforcement are shut out.

As a sovereign state within the United States of America we often work on an interstate and international basis to find ways of dealing with cross-jurisdictional concerns. Child support enforcement is one of those issues. Without interstate and international agreements any non-custodial parent who leaves the state in which a court order has been issued becomes difficult if not impossible to find and the order becomes difficult if not impossible to enforce. These agreements are negotiated in order to protect each jurisdiction as much as possible, while creating a system that can work for everyone. I understand the desire to protect Idaho sovereignty and I share it but in this case the practical effect of this "my way or the highway" approach to a truly cross-jurisdictional issue can be chaos.

The legislators who have chosen to go out on this limb risk losing the entire system. Therefore they have a responsibility to specifically identify what they will do by mid June to protect Idaho kids in every state and country where we currently collect and enforce payments.

I am most concerned about losing access to the tools which are essential for process and enforcement. We don't have the ability or authority to realistically recreate these tools and no other states will want to make special arrangements to help Idaho kids.

We should be protecting Idaho kids not placing them at risk. We should fight for the continued enforcement of Idaho laws in other jurisdictions. This is a system that has been working for almost 50 years. Congress passed this language unanimously, and so did the Idaho Senate. If changes need to be made I'm open but this has to be resolved soon.

It would be irresponsible to throw this functioning system into chaos unnecessarily. The risk is too great.

Representative Robert Anderst

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