

IDAHO KIDS DESERVES ACCESS TO CHILD SUPPORT

By Rep. John McCrostie, D-Boise

It's not right for Idaho children and families to lose their protections just to pacify nine far right committee members.

The ham-handed Gang of Nine punished Idaho children and co-parents by stifling debate on an update to Idaho's existing Uniform Interstate Family Support Act that provides adequate and appropriate modifications to international standards for Child Support Enforcement (CSE). Unfortunately, the Gang of Nine's actions remove securities for Idaho's kids.

While the committee did not end CSE in Idaho, the ability to enforce existing laws is severely hampered when Idaho loses access to federal systems. Lack of compliance actually makes Idaho a safe haven for deadbeat parents.

SB1067 is straightforward. Acceptance of child support guideline changes does not subject Idaho to international laws; it brightens the path for existing agreements among the fifty states and certain international countries with which the U.S. holds standing treaties.

When someone in Idaho has a foreign CSE order, SB1067 clarifies the existing avenue to recognize that order. It protects Idahoans, most notably, by allowing Idaho to refuse to recognize a foreign CSE order if "[r]ecognition and enforcement of the order is manifestly incompatible with public policy," including if the foreign court failed to provide due process under Idaho and U.S. law. Idaho cannot get stuck enforcing an incompatible foreign CSE order. It just can't.

Sharia law was mentioned repeatedly during the three hour hearing. To falsely blame the media for accurately reporting public testimony and private emails is disingenuous at best.

Furthermore, the Gang of Nine appears to want veto U.S. participation in the 2007 Hague Convention on the International Recovery of Child Support. And they chose not to alleviate their fears with further research.

Article VI of the U.S. Constitution, aka the Supremacy Clause, states that the U.S. Constitution is the "supreme law of the land." Under centuries old case law, the U.S. Supreme Court has final say on state court and federal law matters, including international treaties entered into by the U.S. Global law cannot supersede U.S. law. Ever.

SB1067 was poorly vetted because no discussion occurred among committee members. Extreme right-winged committee members resisted open dialogue without accepting or presenting an alternative.

The consequences of the Gang of Nine will remove \$16 million in federal support of child support workers and \$30 million in temporary assistance for needy families. And over \$200,000,000 in private child support payments is jeopardized without a data management system. The Gang of Nine irresponsibly chose to play "Chicken" with the well-being of Idaho's youth.

We cannot afford ideological thoughtlessness. It impacts our entire state and makes us the laughing stock of America. Rather, we must endeavor together to find collaborative solutions that benefit all of Idaho citizens. With more dialogue and less ideologue, we can and will do better for the kids, families, and citizens of Idaho.

Rep. John McCrostie (D) represents District 16 in the Idaho House of Representatives.