

## Cheers and jeers: Somebody else's words

JEERS to Rep. Janet Trujillo, R-Idaho Falls. On the final day of the legislative session, nine Republicans on the House Judiciary Committee, including Trujillo and Rep. Ron Nate, R-Rexburg, inexplicably killed a bill that allowed Idaho to meet federal requirements for working on child support cases with foreign countries.

Tabling this bill puts in jeopardy Idaho's ability to enforce child-support payments. That could deny millions of dollars to 155,000 Idaho households.

Nate and Trujillo attempted to explain their votes in guest columns published Wednesday. Both efforts showed a total lack of understanding about what Senate Bill 1067 did, how the child support enforcement system works and the damage their irresponsible votes might cause.

Give Nate credit, however. The ideas expressed in his column came from him. Trujillo, on the other hand, cut and pasted several paragraphs from a piece written by a colleague, Rep. Lynn Luker, R-Boise, and passed them off as her own.

That's plagiarism.

Trujillo doesn't see it that way. After being informed that her column bore a striking resemblance to Luker's, Trujillo wrote in an email: "Not plagiarized when you have permission to use."

Webster's New World Dictionary defines "plagiarize" this way: "to take (ideas, writings, etc.) from (another) and pass them off as one's own."

Put Trujillo's piece side by side with Luker's. More than half of Trujillo's column came directly from his. Nowhere in her piece did Trujillo give credit to Luker. She didn't quote him. She simply used his words and allowed readers of this newspaper – her constituents – to believe she'd done the work herself.

Nine Republicans ignored facts presented by the Attorney General's Office, Department of Health and Welfare and legislative analysts, choosing to side with the John Birch Society while bowing to nonsensical fears about Idahoans being subject to foreign laws.

And Trujillo can't explain in her own words why she was willing to risk millions of dollars that help feed and clothe hundreds of thousands of Idaho children.

That's not representation.

It's misrepresentation.

CHEERS to Idaho Department of Health and Welfare Director Richard Armstrong.

From the moment the child support bill died, Armstrong made sure Idahoans knew what was at stake.

On April 10, the day of the vote, Health and Welfare issued a news release detailing the facts - that millions in federal funding could be lost, while naming the nine Republican legislators who voted down the bill.

That's gutsy stuff from an official appointed by a GOP governor.

But Armstrong wasn't finished.

"All this rhetoric and anxiety doesn't put groceries on the table," Armstrong told Idaho Reports. "It's absolutely wrong for the Legislature to get in the middle of the household budget when it's their money, it's the household's money, not the Legislature's money."

As his shop prepared to warn 155,000 Idaho households that their child support payments could be cut off, Armstrong summed this situation up succinctly: "To me, we have a human tragedy that we're faced with," he said.

JEERS to House Speaker Scott Bedke, R-Oakley. Bedke didn't look happy answering questions about the mess made by nine members of his caucus.

The truth, however, is Bedke ought to be angry with himself.

The second that members of the flat-earth caucus killed SB 1067, Bedke should have acted. He could have reassigned the bill to his committee, Ways and Means, thereby heading off the expensive and unnecessary special session Gov. C.L. "Butch" Otter will be forced to call.

Bedke seems paralyzed by the thought of angering the tea party. Perhaps he's protecting his speakership. Maybe he's got his eyes on a higher prize, a seat in Congress when Rep. Mike Simpson retires.

Bedke ought to know he'll never win over that crowd and allowing it to dictate policy leads only to disaster.

CHEERS to Rep. Mike Simpson, R-Idaho. The international child support agreement that made SB 1067 necessary passed the U.S. House on a voice vote and the U.S. Senate by unanimous consent in 2014.

That means it was supported by Idaho's entire congressional delegation.

When contacted by Idaho Reports' Melissa Davlin, Rep. Raul Labrador's spokesman, Dan Popkey, had no comment.

Sens. Jim Risch and Mike Crapo haven't been heard from, either.

Simpson, on the other hand, had this to say: "This bill passed with unanimous support in the Senate and without any objection in the House because it is imperative that we protect children from sex trafficking

and ensure that dead beat dads have no safe haven. I unequivocally stand by my support for the bill and with those in Idaho who believe the Legislature needs to fix this issue.”

This is a vital issue and Idahoans deserve to know why the delegation supported the rules and what they think of the Legislature’s action.

That means demanding the same candor shown by Simpson from Crapo, Risch and Labrador.

CHEERS to Crapo and Risch, who joined the majority in a 92-8 vote on a bill that addressed compensation for physicians under Medicare and provided a two-year extension to a program that pays schools for timber not cut.

This bill recently set off a war of words between Simpson, who voted for it, and Labrador, who did not.

Who’s the “odd man out” now, Rep. Labrador?

*-Corey Taule*