



MINUTES

International Relations Committee of the Legislative Council

March 19, 2009

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Helen Miller,
Chairperson

Senator Dennis H. Black

Representative Richard T. Anderson

Representative McKinley D. Bailey

Representative Paul A. Bell

Representative Lisa K. Heddens

Representative Rod A. Roberts

Representative Linda L. Upmeyer

MEETING IN BRIEF

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Organizational staffing provided
by: Joe Royce, Senior Legal
Counsel, (515) 281-3084

Minutes prepared by: Amanda
Knief, Legal Counsel, (515) 281-
6048

- I. **Procedural Business**
- II. **Policies on Gifts**
- III. **Certificates of Recognition**
- IV. **Protocols for Foreign Guests and Gifts**
- V. **Next Meeting**
- VI. **Materials Filed With the Legislative Services Agency**



International Relations Committee of the Legislative Council

I. Procedural Business

Call to Order. Chairperson Miller called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m. on March 19, 2009, in Room 102 of the Statehouse. The meeting adjourned at 1:01 p.m.

Quorum. A quorum of House Committee members only was present. The Minutes from the meeting on February 26, 2009, were received and filed.

II. Policies on Gifts

Chairperson Miller asked Committee members for comments and feedback about the proposed gift policy and the gift-giving rules and price levels distributed to the members. Committee members were given a list of all gifts available through the Legislative Information Office, arranged by price, in order to evaluate various price levels and appropriateness of the gifts.

A Committee member asked how often heads of state and government and ministers and other senior persons from foreign governments actually visit the state, which are the first two cost guideline levels. Ms. Kathy Hill, International Office Team Leader in the Department of Economic Development, told the Committee that such visits are not uncommon and shared with the Committee that later in March the crown prince and princess of Denmark will be visiting the state.

The Committee asked Ms. Hill to explain the department's guidelines on gifts for international visitors. Ms. Hill said that the department does not spend more than \$200 for any one visitor. Ms. Hill told the Committee that the department has three levels of gifts, but it does not include heads of states. Ms. Hill said she usually purchases a piece of local art that represents the state for the highest-ranking government officials and heads of state. The department's highest gift level is for an ambassador, former ambassador, consul, or consulate general. The middle gift level is for inbound delegations. The lowest gift level is for everyone else. Ms. Hill noted that if visitors do not give a gift, the department in turn does not give a gift. Also, when the Governor participates in a trade mission, a unique gift is created for the Governor to present to heads of state and special visitors during the trip.

The department tracks to whom specific gifts are given so that the gifts are not duplicated. New gifts are rotated into the inventory so that the available gifts are not always the same.

III. Certificates of Recognition

In response to a discussion at a previous meeting concerning the use of certificates from one chamber or another to honor visiting dignitaries, the Committee asked the Legislative Information Office to create a certificate of recognition that would honor foreign dignitaries on behalf of the entire General Assembly and that would be presented by at least one member of the International Relations Committee. The proposed certificate was circulated for Committee members to review.



IV. Protocols for Foreign Guests and Gifts

Chairperson Miller suggested that oversight is needed when funds available to the Committee are expended.

In particular, Chairperson Miller stated that the Committee received three receipts for gifts purchased without prior approval. Chairperson Miller stressed the importance of Committee members following the procedures in place so that the entire Committee is aware of international visitors and that presentations of gifts are perceived as presentations from the General Assembly, and that the gifts are not perceived as from an individual or from one chamber or another. Chairperson Miller reminded everyone that the expenditure is made on behalf of the entire General Assembly.

The Committee members suggested that the Governor's Office should be contacted anew to coordinate international visitors' visits to the Capitol.

The Committee members present were in consensus that if procedures are adopted assigning duties to a ranking member, that the ranking member should be a member of the chairperson's chamber. So while Chairperson Miller, a state representative, is chairperson, the ranking member who would exercise such duties should be from the House.

Legislative Services Agency staffer Joe Royce explained the proposed changes to the hosting guidelines distributed to the members. The proposed changes provide that all introductions of international visitors in both chambers should be organized through the Committee; that a minimum 48-hour notice of international visits should be provided; and that the chairperson, vice chairperson, and ranking member shall be in charge of arranging for any gift.

The Committee discussed the communication issues between the Legislative Branch and the Executive Branch and among the Committee members themselves that have caused problems in notifying Committee members or others when international visitors are present in the Capitol. Ms. Hill suggested that the Committee work to establish one point of contact for information and for gift-giving.

V. Next Meeting

The Committee will meet again on Thursday, March 26, at noon in Room 103. The Committee members plan to make decisions on substantive policy issues, including the gift policy, protocols for hosting foreign guests, and the gift approval policy and form.



VI. Materials Filed With the Legislative Services Agency

The following materials were distributed in connection with the meeting and are filed with the Legislative Services Agency. The materials may be accessed from the <Additional Information> link on the Committee's Internet website:

<http://www.legis.state.ia.us/aspx/Committees/Committee.aspx?id=47>.

1. Hosting International Visitors at the Iowa General Assembly (Rough Draft).
2. Legislative Information Office List of Gifts by Price.
3. International Relations Committee: Gift Policy (Rough Draft).
4. Minutes From the February 26, 2009, Meeting of the International Relations Committee.

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