

MINUTES
HOUSE AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, January 24, 2019
TIME: 1:30 P.M.
PLACE: Room EW42
MEMBERS: Chairman Boyle, Vice Chairman Troy, Representatives Dayley, Kerby, Stevenson, Zito, Andrus, Giddings, Goesling, Marshall, Nichols, Raymond, Erpelding, Toone, Abernathy
**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None
GUESTS: Samantha Parrott, University of Idaho; Jen Root, University of Idaho; Douglas R Jones, IWE; Carly Schoephflin, U of I Colleg of Ag; Matthew Jensen; Barbara Petty, U of I CALS

Chairman Boyle called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m.

Brent Olmstead, University of Idaho, introduced the speakers for the meeting, **Professor Garth Taylor, Dean Michael Parrella, and Professor Greg Moller.**

Dr. Garth Taylor, University of Idaho, discussed how many counties within the state are dependent on agriculture reminding the committee that Idaho has the fourth largest agriculture economy of the states in the nation. He said one out of every other job in the Magic Valley is created by agri business. He stated the cash receipts remain mainly unchanged from 2017 numbers. Beef, milk and livestock equal half of the states cash receipts. He explained since 1997 to now, Idaho Agriculture has grown 47% compared with the national growth of 22% in the same time frame. He said the bulk of that growth has come from dairy which has increased 151%. He stated Idaho farmers use very few dollars from government payments, therefore are not heavily affected by the drop in government money available. Idaho agriculture exports in their fourth year of growth are dairy and potatoes which were sent to Idaho's biggest export markets in Mexico and Canada. He also shared with the committee that the Idaho net farm income is down 27% from 2017; Idaho is down to the same level as the United States overall. Farm GDP is 60% higher than Idaho GDP. He explained the recessions in GDP historical data. Since 2007 there have been seven recessions in agriculture but he said he does not foresee one in the near future.

In response to committee questions, **Dr. Taylor** explained there is not a lot of selling farmland farmer to farmer but rather a surge of real estate investors buying up large portions of land then turning around and leasing it back to the farmer keeping the land in production. He also stated when it comes to hemp as a crop in Idaho, he is in support of anything that brings more diversity to Idaho in the growing arena.

Dean Michael Parrella, University of Idaho, reported within the next three years, 25% of the faculty at U of I will retire. He said recruiting the best young, early career faculty becomes a priority. They plan to partner with legislators and industry stakeholders in developing the most modern research centers possible to help attract new faculty. He explained the Center for Agriculture, Food, and the Environment (CAFE) program's growth, and the Idaho Agricultural Experiment Station's upgrades starting with the Parma research and extension center. He explained the priorities of the immediate needs for the university at this time.

In response to committee questions, **Dean Parrella** explained the university has a partnership with WIMU to train Idaho's future veterinarians, stating there is always a need for more. He also explained the Parma research and extension center expects their work will serve more than just Parma.

Professor Greg Moller, University of Idaho, gave a presentation on the work of the University and their team "The Clean Water Machine" in the George Barley Clean Water Science Prize competition that was open to worldwide entries. The goal of the competition is to help solve the algae crisis facing the world's fresh water supplies affected by agricultural runoff. The team is now in the final four of the competition from an original one-hundred-and-seventeen teams that entered. He shared that they have university branded products in use as far away as South Korea and across the United States that are the results of their research.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 2:46 p.m.

Representative Boyle
Chair

Ivi Taylor
Secretary