

MINUTES
HOUSE AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, February 10, 2016

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

PLACE: Room EW42

MEMBERS: Chairman Andrus, Vice Chairman Boyle, Representatives McMillan, Batt, Bell, Dayley, Miller, Romrell, VanOrden, Burtenshaw, Kerby, Troy, Pence, Erpelding

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

GUESTS:

Chairman Andrus called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.

MOTION: **Rep. Pence** made a motion to approve the minutes of February 2, 2016, February 4, 2016, and February 8, 2016. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

RS 24397: **Rep. Dayley** stated this is a simple proposed change to **S 1073** from last year to include privately funded research facilities in the definition of "research facility".

MOTION: **Rep. Erpelding** made a motion to introduce **RS 24397**. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Reps. Romrell** and **Burtenshaw** requested to be recorded as voting **NAY**.

RS 24396C1: **Rep. Moyle** explained this proposed legislation is to update Title 25, Chapter 28, Idaho Code, relating to dogs which injure humans. The legislation provides statewide minimum standards and definitions while allowing for the counties to be restrictive. A new category of "at risk" dogs is added, and the existing term "vicious" is replaced by dangerous dog.

Rep. Moyle said the changes to the statute give the courts more discretion in the management of dangerous dogs and the ability to differentiate less severe behavior from more dangerous behavior. Local Cities have the discretion to go further with the law as long as it is not specific to breed. He explained under certain circumstances, aggressive acts are justifiable, and the dog and its owner are exempt from prosecution.

MOTION: **Rep. Romrell** made a motion to introduce **RS 24396C1**. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Frank Muir, President CEO, Idaho Potato Commission, reported to the committee the annual financial report of the Idaho Potato Commission. This year after all expenses the budget had \$265,000 to go back into reserve revenue for next year. He said they do not like to have a large build up in the reserve as these are considered "working" dollars and need to be used promoting Idaho potatoes.

In response to committee questions, **Mr. Muir** explained the potato truck started out as a one year marketing experiment. It has now been in existence for 5 years. Each year it is brought back by popular demand. He stated people respond positively to the commercials and connect the truck with Idaho potatoes.

In response to a committee question concerning the return on investment of grower dollars on assessment, **Mr. Muir** said this is a frustration of the Commission. One thing he can do is to make sure prices reported to the USDA market news are accurate prices. He said there has been some indication these are not reported correctly. He explained studies have shown consumers are willing to pay higher prices for Idaho potatoes and there is no reason Idaho potatoes should be sold at less than cost of production.

Mr. Muir responding to committee questions concerning Pale Cyst Nematode (PCN), stated originally the growers affected by PCN were given two choices; pull acres out of production for 30 years or try and eradicate the PCN. The decision was made to eradicate. He stated of the 26 fields infested, 16 of them are now free of PCN. This year the first field of potatoes was grown in a previously infested field. The eradication program by all indications is working, making the US the first country in the world to have eradicated PCN.

Mr. Muir also addressed the impact of Methyl Bromide which has come to light. This is a new issue that the Commission is very much engaged in, to fix and address.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:21 p.m.

Representative Andrus
Chair

Joan Majors
Secretary