

MINUTES  
**SENATE AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Thursday, February 28, 2019

**TIME:** 8:00 A.M.

**PLACE:** Room WW53

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Guthrie, Vice Chairman Den Hartog, Senators Patrick, Harris, Mortimer, Lent, Bayer, Jordan, and Nelson

**ABSENT/  
EXCUSED:** None

**NOTE:** The sign-in sheet, testimonies and other related materials will be retained with the minutes in the committee's office until the end of the session and will then be located on file with the minutes in the Legislative Services Library.

**CONVENED:** **Chairman Guthrie** called the meeting of the Agricultural Affairs Committee (Committee) to order at 8:00 a.m.

**PRESENTATION: Leadership Idaho Agriculture (LIA), Class 39. Rick Waitley**, Executive Director for Agriculture in the Classroom, briefly explained the history and purpose of LIA, stating that LIA is recognized as a premier leadership development program in the State of Idaho. LIA is the only leadership organization in Idaho that works to directly cultivate leaders in agriculture - the state's biggest and most influential industry. **Mr. Waitley** explained that since 1985, LIA has been offering a concentrated, hands-on learning experience to enhance and build leadership qualities, while developing advocates for agriculture and rural communities who will serve as a voice for the industry for generations to come. **Mr. Waitley** then had members of the LIA Class 39 stand and introduce themselves from the audience.

**DISCUSSION: Senator Mortimer** asked Mr. Waitley for a brief overview of LIA and some of the requirements for the class. **Mr. Waitley** answered that applications for the course are due by August 1st, applicants must write a 50-word essay, and they must have two letters of recommendation. Tuition for the program is \$2,500 plus travel expenses. **Mr. Waitley** also explained that the program is involved for 17 days, beginning in November and ending in February. The course helps them develop skills such as public speaking, meeting the media, dressing for success, and becoming more familiar with public policy.

**Senator Mortimer** asked Mr. Waitley if the course is accredited and whether or not it can apply towards a master's degree or bachelor's degree. **Mr. Waitley** answered that it is not accredited.

**PRESENTATION: Idaho Barley Commission (IBC). Laura Wilder**, IBC, explained that the IBC was established in 1988 and it serves to enhance the profitability of Idaho barley growers through research, market development, promotion, information, and education. The IBC is made up of three grower commissioners and one industry representative selected by the grower commissioners. **Ms. Wilder** briefly explained the 2018 Idaho barley crop production with 530,000 acres of harvested barley, and \$245 million in revenue, which was up three percent from the previous year. Idaho barley was 35 percent of total United States barley production in 2018. **Ms. Wilder** also talked about the IBC's budgets from fiscal years (FY) 2016 to 2019 (estimated) and briefly detailed the expenditures from FY 2018. **Ms. Wilder** further explained some of the IBC research highlights, market development activities and plans for the coming years, and some of the collaboration with other companies that help with marketing. There is also a growing export market, especially with Japan, which has quadrupled in the past two years. **Ms. Wilder** explained how

the U.S. beer demand has dramatically decreased in recent years. The IBC has partnerships with the Idaho Grain Producers Association (IGPA), which is solely dedicated to protecting Idaho's wheat and barley growers by representing their interests at the state and national level on farm policy issues. IGPA also provides information to growers to keep them aware of issues affecting their farms. **Ms. Wilder** further explained some of the challenges facing Idaho barley crops. Some of the challenges included fusarium head blight (Scab), other diseases, drought and heat stress, and quality requirements. **Ms. Wilder** concluded by talking about some of the challenges in 2019, which included declining beer sales and lack of international trade agreements.

**DISCUSSION:** **Senator Harris** asked Ms. Wilder why other countries are able to export their wheat more easily than the United States. **Ms. Wilder** answered that other countries can export their wheat at lower costs, which makes those countries more attractive to buy from.

**ADJOURNED:** There being no further business, **Chairman Guthrie** adjourned the meeting at 8:54 a.m.

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Senator Guthrie  
Chair

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Jacob Garner  
Secretary