

MINUTES
HOUSE AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, February 04, 2014

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

PLACE: Room EW42

MEMBERS: Chairman Andrus, Vice Chairman Boyle, Representatives Bolz, McMillan, Batt, Bell, Agidius, Dayley, Miller, Romrell, Stevenson, VanOrden, Pence, Erpelding

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

GUESTS: Jim Lowe, Food Producers; Mackenzie Herrick, Veritas Advisors; Gretchen Hyde, Idaho Rangeland Resource Commission; John Caywood; Bob Minter, ACF&G League; John Robison, ICL; Tyler Mallard, RischPisca; Bill Barton, ISDA; Sean Ellis, Capitol Press; Jim Nunley, Idaho Wildlife Federation; Rich Garber, CALS; John Jameson, Elk Breeders; Stan Boyd, IEBA

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

MOTION: **Rep. Erpelding** made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 20, 2014 meeting with the following correction: 12,000 students statewide and not nationwide. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Chairman Andrus reminded the Committee that the last day for non-privileged committees to introduce RS's is Monday, February 10, 2014.

H 431: **Stan Boyd**, Idaho Elk Breeders Association, presented **H 431**, legislation to provide that brain tissue samples from no less than ten percent of all domestic cervidae sixteen months of age or older shall be submitted for testing of chronic wasting disease (CWD). He said the industry and ISDA have worked together to develop this as a way of allowing the program to carry itself within ISDA. He said that as required by federal law, one hundred percent of brain tissue samples will still be submitted to maintain export status and facility inspections will occur every 5 years under this bill. This legislation also raised the inventory fee from \$5 per head to \$10 per head and implements a \$10 per head export, import and with-in-the-state-of-Idaho transfer fee to help the Idaho Department of Agriculture fund their regulatory responsibilities.

In response to questions, **Dr. Bill Barton**, Idaho State Veterinarian, said the current \$5 per head fee is the only fee paid by the producers and he is not aware of any other monies put into the fund by the producers. Dr. Barton said domestic elk have been tested since 1995 and there has not been a positive CWD test. Dr. Barton clarified that brain tissues samples of no less than 10% and up to 100% could be tested under certain regulations.

John Caywood, hunter from Boise, said he was very concerned about this disease and is not in support of a decrease in testing because it be can passed onto moose and other wild game. He said despite federal testing, several states have incurred CWD and federal testing is not a fail safe.

Bob Minter, elk hunter, Ada County Fish and Game Club, said he is concerned with this bill because of the reduction in the 100% testing but is in support of the fee increase. He said the club's mission is to help preserve and protect wildlife and history shows that CWD has been found in concentrated herds in other states. He said several hunters have been concerned with the relaxed testing in the last number of years and hunters have stopped hunting in certain areas. He said he believes testing once every five years is not adequate.

John Robison, Public Lands Director, Idaho Conservation League, testified **in opposition** to the reduction in the 100% testing and recommended that the committee oppose this bill and have it be a part of the negotiated rule making.

Dr. Barton returned to answer further questions from the Committee. He said there are currently no CWD herds in Idaho nor in Utah or Montana, the two neighboring states that allow domestic cervidae.

Jim Nunley, Idaho Wildlife Federation, spoke **in opposition** of the legislation and said the Federation does not approve of the effort to relax the testing of these animals. He said it cannot be assumed that animals are disease free because healthy looking animals can be disease carries. A relax in testing is an unwise decision and may put Idaho's wildlife at risk. He suggested the Committee leave the testing at 100%.

Mr. Boyd, in closing said 100% testing is required for export from a CWD certified herd and imports have the same requirements. In answer to a Committee question, Mr. Boyd said the Elk Breeders Association is aware that a potential charge of up to \$30 a head could be realized.

MOTION: **Rep. McMillan** made a motion to send **H 431** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

Rep. Erpelding spoke **in opposition** to the motion and said he disagreed and could see a potential problem in Idaho.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION: **Rep. Erpelding** made a substitute motion to send **H 431** to General Orders with an amendment as follows: Line 22 change 10% to 70% and Line 39 change 5 years to 2 years. **Motion failed by voice vote.**

VOTE ON ORIGINAL MOTION: **Chairman Andrus** called for a vote on the original motion to send **H 431** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Reps. Pence** and **Erpelding** requested to be recorded as voting **NAY**. **Rep. McMillan** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

Chairman Andrus turned the gavel over to **Vice Chairman Boyle**.

Gretchen Hyde, Executive Director, Idaho Rangeland Resource Commission, said the IRRRC board is comprised of ranchers from all over the state. She discussed the Commission's goals in education and said Idaho is the only state in the nation providing rangeland information to fourth graders. She reviewed several of the Commission's programs and said they are helping to increase knowledge of rangeland management practices. She said the Commission's main goal last year was developing an updated web site. She explained the impact of rangeland fires over the entire state. She explained the importance of ranchers being involved with public lands and said if there is a loss of public lands then there will be a loss of agriculture lands.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3:16 p.m.

Representative Andrus
Chair

Angela Sandoval
Secretary