

MINUTES  
**HOUSE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Monday, January 19, 2015  
**TIME:** 9:00 A.M.  
**PLACE:** Room EW40  
**MEMBERS:** Chairman Loertscher, Vice Chairman Batt, Representatives Andrus, Luker, Crane, Palmer, Sims, Barbieri, Holtzclaw, McMillan, Bateman, Cheatham, Nielsen, Smith, Jordan, McCrostie, Wintrow

**ABSENT/  
EXCUSED:** Representative Nielsen

**GUESTS:** Frank Lundburg, self; John Cossel, Jr., self; Ruth Affleck, self; Ilah Hickman, self; Loren DeMond, self; Judy DeMond, self; Michelle Paxton, self; Taylor Lyle, self; Charlee Lyle, self; Jonathan Oppenheimer, self; Beth Oppenheimer, self; Lori Hickman, self; Rosemary DeMond, self; Jace DeMond, self; Zeke DeMond, self; Maia Green, self.

**Vice Chairman Batt** called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**Chairman Loertscher** introduced **Aubra Curtis**, the page assigned to the House State Affairs Committee.

**Vice Chairman Batt** advised the committee that letters from the public will be passed out to the committee **in support** of **H001** (see attachment 1).

**H 001:** **Rep. McDonald** presented **H 001**, legislation to designate the Idaho Giant Salamander as the Idaho State Amphibian.

**Ilah Hickman**, representing herself, presented information on the Idaho Giant Salamander. She stated the salamander is very unique to Idaho and represents Idaho's distinctive climate. She also stated that the salamander is not endangered or rare but it is almost exclusive to Idaho.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Bateman** made a motion to send **H 001** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

**Frank Lundburg**, representing himself, spoke **in support** of **H 001**. He stated he is a wildlife and public policy consultant and that symbols are important to our state because they promote and enhance understanding of the qualities that are unique to Idaho. He stated the Idaho Giant Salamander is the largest salamander in Idaho and is the perfect candidate for the state amphibian.

In response to committee questions, **Mr. Lundberg** stated that by designating the Idaho Giant Salamander as the state amphibian, it will promote education and help everyone understand the salamander better.

**John Cossel Jr.**, representing himself, spoke **in support** of **H 001**. He stated that he is a herpetologist and has been an educator for 25 years. He said having state symbols helps students learn and provides real context to the students when teaching. He said that designating the Idaho Giant Salamander as the state amphibian would give the people of Idaho a sense of pride.

In response to committee questions, **Mr. Cossell** stated the equipment used to research the Idaho Giant Salamander is an electrofisher, used by fisherman. He stated the device puts a voltage in the stream so the salamanders will come out from under the rocks so they can be studied.

**Ruth Affleck**, representing herself, spoke **in support** of **H 001**. She stated that she is a fourth grade teacher and she currently teaches the state symbols to her class. She also stated there are many educational benefits of teaching the state symbols including the students great interest in learning the unique aspects of Idaho.

In response to committee questions, **Ms. Affleck** stated that designating a state amphibian also opens other avenues for education in the areas of Math and English, not only Science.

In closing, **Rep. McDonald** stated the designation of the state amphibian would not cause any problems with legal requirements or imposing an increased level of protection for the salamander or its habitat under either federal or state laws.

**In support** of the motion, **Rep. Bateman** stated the bill would encourage children to learn about nature. **Rep. Luker** stated he would **support** the motion and was excited about the bill and that the Idaho Giant Salamander is almost exclusive to Idaho. **Rep. McCrostie** also stated he would **support** the motion and that the bill promotes science education as well as civl education to the citizens of Idaho.

**In opposition** to the motion, **Rep. Andrus** stated that as a youth, salamanders plagued the swimming places where he went in Utah.

**VOTE ON  
MOTION:**

**Vice Chairman Batt** called for a vote on the motion to send **H 001** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. Division vote was requested. **By a show of hands, the motion failed by a vote of 9 NAY, 6 AYE.**

**ADJOURN:**

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

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Representative Batt  
Vice Chair

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Kasey Winder  
Secretary