

MINUTES
HOUSE AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

- DATE:** Tuesday, February 14, 2017
- TIME:** 1:30 P.M.
- PLACE:** Room EW42
- MEMBERS:** Chairman Boyle, Vice Chairman Dayley, Representatives Bell, Miller, VanOrden, Burtenshaw, Kerby, Troy, Stevenson, Amador, Armstrong, Hanks, Zito, Erpelding, Toone
- ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Rep. Bell
- GUESTS:** Delwyne Trefz, ISWCC; John McCreedy, Amalgamated Sugar; Douglas Jones, Trent Clark, Monsanto; Shelly Nelsen, TDSCO; Mark Daffin, Idaho Sugarbeet Growers; Norm Semanko, IWUA; Tyler Murgoitio, IWUA; Benjamin Kelly, Food Producers of Idaho; Mark Estess, Amalgamated Sugar; Mitch Coats, Food Producers of Idaho
- Chairman Boyle** called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m.
- MOTION:** **Rep. Troy** made a motion to approve the minutes of Wednesday, February 8, and Friday, February 10, 2017. **Motion carried by voice vote.**
- H 133:** **Rep. Miller** said this proposed legislation changes the financial audit requirements of the Soil and Water Conservation Commission from an annual independent financial audit to a periodic management review. In this way the Commission will be treated like other state agency. He stated this will create a significant savings to the commission.
- MOTION:** **Rep. VanOrden** made a motion to send **H 133** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. Miller** will sponsor the bill on the floor.
- Mark Estess**, Amalgamated Sugar, introduced **John McCreedy**, Amalgamated Sugar CEO, explaining he not only is a local leader but also a national leader on issues dealing with the sugar industry.
- John McCreedy**, Amalgamated Sugar CEO, said he has been the CEO and President of Amalgamated Sugar for the past 2 years but has been with the company since 2004. During that time the company has gone through a lot of changes. Amalgamated Sugar was founded in 1897, in Ogden, Utah. Today there are factories in Twin Fall, Nampa and the Mini Cassia area. Amalgamated Sugar has been a grower owned cooperative since 1997, operated by a twenty-five member board of directors that meet five times a year, similar to a democratic body. He stated Amalgamated Sugar is the 2nd largest sugar beet processor in the United States. They process about 12% of the Nation's sugar that is made in the United States. He stated there are about 750 grower members raising over 182,000 acres of sugar beets and employing approximately 1,600 people of which 1,100 are unionized. He said they are proud of their work force and try to keep them happy by providing good benefits and a healthy wage that allows them to send their children to college. He said the top four challenges they are facing are; protecting agricultural technology, understanding sugar consumption, preparing for the Federal Farm Bill negotiations and addressing the 129,000 pound truck issues.

In response to a committee question, **Shelly Nelsen**, TDSCO, said there are several inconsistency in the 129 permit process. One highway district will grant permits with very little burden where as another district will require much more information and up front work before granting permits.

Chairman Boyle turned the gavel to **Vice Chairman Dayley**.

In response to a committee question, **Mr. McCreedy** said the fact that Hawaii will no longer produce sugar cane will have very little effect on the sugar beet industry because other foreign sources will step in and fill the void.

In response to a committee question, **Mr. McCreedy** said the way they are able to fill the void in the work force, is to pay a decent, competitive wage, by recognizing talent early on, and advancing and moving employees forward as quickly as possible

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:29 p.m.

Representative Boyle
Chair

Joan Majors
Secretary