

MINUTES
HOUSE AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, February 02, 2021

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

PLACE: Room EW42

MEMBERS: Chairman Kauffman, Vice Chairman Andrus, Representatives Boyle, Kerby, Giddings, Marshall, Nichols, Hanks, Cannon, Moon, von Ehlinger, Toone, Ruchti, Mathias

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

GUESTS: Garth Taylor, U of ID; Greg Alward, U of ID

Chairman Kauffman called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

MOTION: **Rep. Mathias** made a motion to approve the minutes of Thursday, January 28, 2021 meeting. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Dr. R. Garth Taylor, U of I Agricultural Economist, addressed the committee concerning the financial condition of Idaho Agriculture during this Covid 19 year. He explained in the early months of the shut down, it tore the food chain apart as grocery demand skyrocketed, restaurants shut their doors and distribution became exponentially more complex, resulting in the most dramatic shift in history. Even through all the challenges of 2020, he reported Idaho farm cash receipts were up 6%. He said Agriculture accounts for over a quarter of Idaho exports and in 2020, Agriculture set a near record high, exporting dairy, potatoes and wheat mainly to Canada and Mexico.

Dr. Taylor addressed committee questions concerning government payments. He said in 2020, the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program payments were approximately \$490 million. He explained direct payments are forecasted to be 39% of total US net farm income in 2020. In contrast, government payments contributed 18% to Idaho's net farm income, up from 6% in 2019. He said Idaho received 1.4% of total 2020 payments to US agriculture.

DOCKET NO. 60-0501-2000F: **Teri Murrison**, Administrator, said there is just one rule chapter which is an existing rule that was previously approved and codified under the rules of the Idaho State Soil and Water Conservation Commission prior to expiring last year. The rule sets forth procedures and requirements for establishing, implementing, and administering a loan from the state's Resource Conservation and Rangeland Development Program (RCRDP) fund and provides for the allocation of state funds appropriated for distribution to conservation districts. She said it applies to the Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission, RCRDP applicants, and Conservation Districts. The rule doesn't impose a fee or charge, or increase a fee or charge, beyond what was previously approved and codified in the prior rules. She explained it states, "the applicant is required to cover all costs incurred for loan closure, title insurance, and recording fees." She said it is also not anticipated to have any fiscal impact on the state general fund. She said their approach to the omnibus was in line with the Red Tape Reduction Act from **Governor Little** and their rules were reviewed to identify, eliminate, and consolidate those that were obsolete, outdated, or unnecessary.

MOTION: **Rep. Toone** made a motion to approve **Docket No. 60-0501-2000F. Motion carried by voice vote.**

H 50: **Rep. von Ehlinger** said in being consistent with the Governor's Red Tape Reduction Act, this bill seeks to eliminate inactive provisions of law. The IFQAI originally was established as an "independent public body corporate and politic" to oversee the management of the Idaho Food Quality Assurance Laboratory. He explained the laboratory previously was housed within the University of Idaho and at the request of industry and the university, ISDA took over management of the laboratory. He stated the IFQAI had transferred its powers and duties to the ISDA for years through memoranda of understanding (MOUs). The IFQAI has not managed the day-to-day activities of the laboratory for more than a decade. The IFQAI has been functioning as an advisory committee, and this bill would codify what has been established through MOUs. He said if this bill were to become law, the ISDA will organize and host an Idaho Food Quality Assurance Laboratory advisory committee. The Idaho Food Quality Assurance Laboratory offers formal, third-party food quality and environmental testing to Idaho producers, government agencies, agricultural groups, processors, and consumers. He said this bill would not change the services, including voluntary industry testing, provided by the laboratory. Under the Idaho Public Records Act, all records of laboratory test results provided by or retained by the laboratory are confidential and exempt from disclosure and this bill would not affect those exemptions.

Reps. Toone and **Boyle** invoked Rule 80 stating a possible conflict of interest but they would be voting on the legislation.

MOTION: **Rep. Moon** made a motion to send **H 50** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. von Ehlinger** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:44 p.m.

Representative Kauffman
Chair

Joan Majors
Secretary