

MINUTES
HOUSE AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, February 20, 2025

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

PLACE: Room EW42

MEMBERS: Chairman Andrus, Vice Chairman Raymond, Representatives Cannon, McCann, Ehlers, Garner, Nelsen, Pickett, Sauter, Miller, Beiswenger, Dygert, Leavitt, Mendive, Shirts, Mathias, Achilles

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Pickett

GUESTS: The sign-in sheet will be retained in the committee secretary's office; following the end of session the sign-in sheet will be filed with the minutes in the Legislative Library.

Chairman Andrus called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m.

MOTION: **Rep. Shirts** made a motion to approve the minutes of February 18, 2025. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

H 173: **Rep. Dygert** presented **H 173**, which changes the make up of the Alfalfa and Clover Seed Commission. The proposed commission will be made up of five alfalfa seed and clover grower members, one member from the University of Idaho College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, and one alfalfa and clover dealer member.

Rick Waitley, Idaho Alfalfa/ Clover Growers Seed Commission, and **Paul Rasgorshek**, Rasgorshek Farms, ID Alfalfa & Clover Seed Growers Association, spoke in support of **H 173**.

MOTION: **Rep. Miller** made a motion to send **H 173** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. Dygert** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

Roger Batt, Legislative Educator for the Idaho Grape and Wine Commission (IWC), spoke about the history of wine in Idaho and the challenges facing the industry. Key issues include farmland loss, the importance of a new position at the University of Idaho, Parma, water supply concerns, and labor shortages.

Moya Dolsby, Executive Director, IWC, discussed the commission's funding structure and current marketing grants for media missions, advertising, and Winter Wine Weekends.

Melanie Krause, Founder and Winemaker of Cinder Wines, discussed the wine-making process, including the time from harvest to bottle, cost per bottle, and winery challenges.

Jay Hawkins, Commissioner, IWC Board of Directors explained the economics of grape growing, water requirements, grape value, varieties grown in Idaho, and vineyard challenges affecting the industry's growth.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Representative Andrus
Chair

Jayne Feik
Secretary