

MINUTES
HOUSE AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, March 04, 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:** Sauter

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 1:30 p.m.

MOTION: **Rep. Achilles** made a motion to approve the minutes of February 26, 2025.
Motion carried by voice vote.

Chanel Tewalt, Director, Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA), presented an update on cervidae (deer and elk) and avian influenza. An unknown disease emerged in Texas one year ago, prompting Idaho state officials to take action by restricting movement, despite criticism from the USDA. Idaho was the only state to act, later proving its decision correct as the disease spread through imported cattle. The state was the first to address cattle-to-cattle transmission. **Dr. Liebsle** became a key figure in managing the situation.

Dr. Scott Liebsle, Idaho State Veterinarian, reported the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in domestic poultry has persisted for three years, ranking the state fifth in the nation for affected facilities, most of which are backyard operations. The greater concern lies with backyard poultry, show birds, and pet birds rather than commercial poultry farms. Despite the differences in poultry types, response measures remain consistent. HPAI continues to be a significant issue and is not expected to subside in the near future.

HPAI H5N1 has affected all 50 states and one territory, impacting pets and milk production. Restrictions on transporting cattle in Idaho is limited to lactating cattle, all other cattle are free to be transported. Idaho currently has one dairy under quarantine. While complete disease elimination is difficult, quarantine measures will be enforced if detected.

In addition to concerns about livestock diseases, **Dr. Liebsle** said that until two months ago, no cases of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) had been identified in domestic cervidae herds in Idaho. Since then, one case has been confirmed in Jefferson County and another in Madison County. A positive case of CWD was reported in a herd transported in from an Alberta herd. There is no evidence of transmission of CWD between herds or between wildlife and domesticated cervidae. Most cases have been concentrated in Northern Idaho. Currently, there is no live test for cervidae, though efforts are underway to develop one.

MOTION: **Rep. Mendive** made a motion to reconsider the vote on **S 1026**. **Rep. Raymond** excused himself from the vote as he was absent on February 26, 2025.

**ROLL CALL
VOTE:**

Roll call vote was requested. **Motion failed by a vote of 5 AYE, and 9 NAY, 2 Absent/Excused, 1 Excused. Voting in favor of the motion: Reps. Andrus, Cannon, Ehlers, Beiswenger, and Mendive. Voting in opposition to the motion: Reps. McCann, Garner, Nelsen, Pickett, Miller, Dygert, Shirts, Mathias, and Achilles. Reps. Sauter and Leavitt were Absent/Excused. Rep. Raymond was Excused.**

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

Representative Andrus
Chair

Jayne Feik
Secretary