

MINUTES  
**HOUSE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Wednesday, March 26, 2025

**TIME:** 9:00 A.M.

**PLACE:** Room EW40

**MEMBERS:** Chairman Crane(13), Vice Chairman Scott, Representatives Palmer, Barbieri, Holtzclaw, Skaug, Alfieri, Crane(12), Boyle, Dygert, Hostetler, Mickelsen, Pohanka, Achilles, Green (Lesmeister)

**ABSENT/  
EXCUSED:** Representative(s) Holtzclaw

**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 Crane (13)** called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Dygert** made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 24, 2025, meeting. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

**RS 32754:** **Rep. Garner** presented **RS 32754** which would authorize the Legislative Council to appoint an interim committee to undertake and complete a study of new Idaho large electricity loads and rate payer protections. Such study shall include electricity generation and transmission as well as substation and distribution infrastructure, future planning, and current rate-making. The study shall also include a focus on maintaining the current standard of low cost, safe, and reliable electricity that Idaho now enjoys.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Mickelsen** made a motion to introduce **RS 32754**. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

**S 1076aa:** **Rep. Ehlers** presented **S 1076aa**. This legislature recognizes when the use of temporary rules is needed to bridge the gap until pending rules can be considered during the legislative session. This proposed legislation would place some process parameters, additional guidelines, and reporting requirements when temporary rules are employed to meet that need.

A committee member asked **Rep. Ehlers** why the duration is 90 days and not 30 or 60 days, and for the consideration to amend a lesser time.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Barbieri** made a motion to send **S 1076aa** to General Orders.

A committee member asked **Rep. Barbieri** why he chose the motion for General Orders. He replied the time may need to be shortened.

**Russ Hendricks**, Idaho Farm Bureau Federation; spoke **in support** of the bill.

**SUBSTITUTE MOTION:** **Rep. Mickelsen** made a substitute motion to send **S 1076aa** to floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

**VOTE ON SUBSTITUTE MOTION:** **Motion failed by voice vote.**

**VOTE ON ORIGINAL MOTION:** **Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. Ehlers** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

**S 1183:**

**Rep. Boyle** presented **S 1183**. This legislation creates the 'Wildfire Standard of Care Act' to create a standard of care through electric utility wildfire mitigation plans, subject to approval by the Idaho Public Utilities customers' monthly bills to crippling levels. The "Wildfire Standard of Care Act" protects customers and member-owners from the impacts of wildfire by empowering the IPUC to set clear and consistent expectation for utilities wildfire mitigation efforts, holding utilities to a robust standard of care in operations, maintenance, repair, and upgrades, and outlining liabilities for utilities that fail to meet IPUC requirements. It also motivates federal agencies to promptly authorize wildfire mitigation work.

**Will Hart**, Executive Director of Idaho Consumer Owned Utilities Association (ICUA); **Jennifer Visser**, Director of Government Affairs /Public Affairs with Idaho Power; **Thom Carter**, Vice President of Rocky Mountain Power; **Gregory Hesler**, Sr. V.P. General Council of Avista Corporation; spoke **in support** of the bill.

**Lance Giles**, Idaho Trial Lawyers Association; spoke **in opposition** of the bill.

Committee members asked **Will Hart** questions around leaving out the ability for families to sue for the wrongful death of family members, wrongful death code exemptions, how many consumer owned utilities groups plan to enter into a mitigation plan if adopted, federal government not allowing power companies to clear the lines, fire mitigation plans, no expectation to file a mitigation plan with the PUC, and consumer owned utilities oversight with the PUC.

Committee members asked **Thom Carter** questions around what is available for a family who has lost everything, options for families who lose everything caused by a PUC line, compliance legal process, rebuttal presumption, insurance in compliance with the mitigation plan, options if the bill is rejected, rate payer, if trial lawyers were at the negotiation meetings, and adding people with property to the bill.

Committee members asked additional questions of **Will Hart** around options for families if they lose everything, damages for the loss of a family member if the bill passes, reassurance compliance is being met, public process, progress report access, damages to facilities, wildfire mitigation plans, keeping rates low, continued annual inspections, and state funds to help clear lands.

**Rep. Shirts** made comments around law suits, civil actions to include wrongful deaths, no exclusion of people, economic damages, medical expenses and set up of mitigation plans.

A committee member commented on waving negligence of liabilities or waivers and property damage responsibilities.

**MOTION:**

**Rep. Dygert** made a motion to send **S 1183** to floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

A committee member had questions regarding understanding special protections, who sits on the commission board of the PUC commission, non-economic damages, and out of control rate payers.

**Rep. Boyle** commented on how many poles went down in wildfires, and a fire in 2020 that burned over 100 thousand acres at the fault of the forest service. Trying to prevent this from happening again.

**SUBSTITUTE MOTION:**

**Rep. Skaug** made a substitute motion to send **S 1183** to General Orders.

A committee member spoke to the motion around reference codes to attorneys and encouraged changes through general orders for clarity of the bill. Other committee members mentioned they are not in support of the substitute motion due to the lack of time in the legislative session and encouraged the bill to go to the floor.

**ROLL CALL  
VOTE ON  
SUBSTITUTE  
MOTION:**

Roll call vote was requested. **Substitute motion failed by a vote of 4 AYE and 10 NAY and 1 Absent/Excused. Voting in favor of the motion: Reps. Scott, Skaug, Hostetler, Lesmeister. Voting in opposition to the motion: Reps. Crane (13), Palmer, Barbieri, Alfieri, Crane (12), Boyle, Dygert, Mickelsen, Pohanka, Achilles. Rep. Holtzclaw was absent/excused.**

**ROLL CALL  
VOTE ON  
ORIGINAL  
MOTION:**

Roll call vote was requested. **Original motion carried by a vote of 11 AYE and 3 NAY and 1 Absent/Excused. Voting in favor of the motion: Reps. Crane (13), Scott, Palmer, Barbieri, Alfieri, Crane (12), Boyle, Dygert, Mickelsen, Pohanka, Achilles. Voting in opposition to the motion: Reps. Skaug, Hostetler, Lesmeister. Rep. Holtzclaw was absent/excused. Rep. Boyle will sponsor the bill on the floor.**

**ADJOURN:**

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 10:12 AM.

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Representative Crane (13)  
Chair

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Liaza Richardson  
Secretary