

MINUTES
HOUSE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, February 04, 2026

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

PLACE: Room EW05

MEMBERS: Chairman Ehardt, Vice Chairman Cornilles, Representatives Erickson, Skaug, Weber, Alfieri, Cheatum, Hawkins, Price, Cayler, Rasor, Wheeler, Hostetler, Marmon, Berch, Church

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

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.

Vice Chairman Cornilles called the meeting to order at 1:31 PM

RS 33199: **Rep. Ehardt** presented **RS 33199**, which address public records requests. In situations where public agencies disagree as to what to provide in a public records request, the current way to resolve the issue is for the requester to file a lawsuit. She stated the proposed legislation will provide clarifying language and the option of a small-claims type mandamus proceeding.

MOTION: **Rep. Erickson** made a motion to introduce **RS 33199** with the following changes: Page 2, Lines 1 to replace "the issuance of a judicial decision in an initial public records complaint" with "or the issuance of a judicial decision in an initial public records complaint that was filed pursuant to subsection (1) of this section." **Motion carried by voice vote.**

RS 33179: **Rep. Ehardt** presented **RS 33179**, which addresses annexation and property rights. When there's forced annexation, the property owner may be required to pay the cost of connecting with the city septic services, which can result in great financial burden. If a property is forcibly annexed, the proposed legislation would prevent cities from requiring the property owner to pay to connect to city utility services.

MOTION: **Rep. Price** made a motion to introduce **RS 33179** with the following changes: Page 3, Line 13 to add "or replace" between the words "maintain" and "existing." **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Vice Chairman Cornilles turned the gavel over to **Chairman Ehardt**.

H 554: **Rep. Beiswenger** presented **H 554**, which would require mosquito abatement districts to annually receive permission from property owners in order to spray on private property. Idaho statute allows property owners within a mosquito abatement district to request not to have their property sprayed by submitting a plan to the county commissioners on how the property owner will abate their property. He stated these plans are not often approved, which has resulted in property owners having their property sprayed against their will. Rep. Beiswenger yielded his time to **Wendy Roxas**, representing self.

Wendy Roxas discussed her experience trying to not have her property sprayed by the Gem County Mosquito Abatement District. She stated the chemicals used by the district were indiscriminate in what they affect, and the only properties allowed to not be aerial sprayed were certified organic farms. She stated mosquito abatement districts operate with little oversight, and the district refused to exclude her property from being sprayed despite implementing her own mosquito abatement efforts. She stated since combating the spread of West Nile Disease is the main reason for the chemical sprays used by mosquito abatement districts, property owners should have informed consent.

When answering questions, **Rep. Beiswenger** clarified **H 554** would require counties to maintain records of property owners who requested not to be sprayed, and would be required to not request to spray the property unless there is a new owner. He stated he understood the concern for effectively combating West Nile Disease, and the legislation seeks to protect the rights of property owners who are being sprayed against their will, as well as address the means in which counties try to abate mosquitoes.

Sara Westbrook, representing Idaho Association of Counties; **Scott Robinson**, representing the Canyon County Mosquito Abatement District; **Jim Lunders**, representing the Canyon County Mosquito Abatement District; **Douglas Shinn**, representing self; **Adam Schroeder**, representing Ada County Board of Commissioners; **Jeff Hough**, representing Bannock County Commission; and **Jared Arnold**, representing Madison County Public Works; testified **in opposition** to **H 554**. They stated mosquitoes are a health issue, effective abatement helps combat the spread of diseases such as West Nile Virus, and mosquito abatement districts use affective means to management mosquitoes at all life stages with minimum harm towards the surrounding environment. The legislation's language would greatly limit the abilities of mosquito abatement districts to effectively abate on both public property and private property of owners who opt in. Mr. Robinson and Mr. Lunders discussed how the Canyon County Mosquito Abatement District worked with property owners who request to not be sprayed, how information is shared with the public, and how abatement is administered. Mr. Schroeder discussed how much of the mosquito abatement used is naturally based.

Jeni Keating, representing self; **Jane Honett**, representing self; **Sara Allstot**, representing self; **Ty Tomlin**, representing self; **Ronda Tomlin**, representing self; **Dana Clemeaux**, representing self; **Reace Madariaga**, representing self; **Raine Saunders**, representing self; and **John Sharkey**, representing self; testified **in support** of **H 554**. They stated mosquito abatement districts use chemicals which harm the environment and property owners, violate property rights of those who do not want their properties sprayed, and violates privacy with the use of drones and aerial devices for moderating and abating mosquitoes. They stated how difficult it can be to receive approval to not have their properties sprayed, and how the use of chemicals prevent them from safely growing their own food. Ms. Keating and Ms. Allstot, discussed how mosquito abatement leaves chemicals on the environment which negatively affects their health and how there are other options to abate mosquitoes without the use of chemicals.

When giving closing statements, **Rep. Beiswenger** stated counties operate mosquito abatement districts differently from each other in how they allow property owners to choose not to be sprayed. He stated people have the right not to have their property sprayed against their will, and the testimony given showed the legislation requires more input and collaboration with stakeholders. In order to better address the concerns of property owners and mosquito abatement districts, he requested the committee consider holding **H 554**.

Rep. Cheatum stated a large concern for **H 554** is how it would affect combating West Nile Virus, as well as other diseases transmitted by mosquitoes.

MOTION: **Rep. Skaug** made a motion to **HOLD H 554** in committee.

Reps. Hostetler, Cayler, Price, Wheeler, Berch, and Marmon spoke in support of the motion. Reps. Hostetler, Cayler, Price, and Wheeler agreed with what the legislation is trying to address, and stated more work needs to be done for **H 554** to better address the concerns of stakeholders. Reps. Berch and Marmon spoke on the need to be cautious of undermining the ability of mosquito abatement districts to combat diseases spread by mosquitoes, such as the West Nile Virus.

VOTE ON MOTION: **Chairman Ehardt** called a vote on the motion to **HOLD H 554** in committee. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Chairman Ehardt put the committee at ease at 3:45 PM

Chairman Ehardt turned the gavel over to **Vice Chairman Cornilles**. Vice Chairman Cornilles resumed the meeting at 3:50 PM.

H 555: **Rep. Weber** presented **H 555**, which consolidates Idaho statute regarding solid waste management. He stated he serves with the Eastern Idaho Waste District. He stated this makes the statute more concise by giving full regulatory authority of solid waste with the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality. This will bring improved efficiency and enforcement, and will improve the permitting process. The legislation will also implement a self-funded fee structure with the solid waste districts and facilities. Rep. Weber yielded his time to **Nate Frasco**, representing the Idaho Solid Waste Association and Southern Idaho Solid Waste.

Nate Frasco discussed the creation of **H 555**, which reduces a layer of government and ensures Idaho maintains its primacy over federal regulations. He stated the legislation will provide proper regulatory oversight which solid waste professionals need and want.

MOTION: **Rep. Wheeler** made a motion to send **H 555** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. Weber** will sponsor the bill to the floor.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 3:56 PM.

Representative Ehardt
Chair

Elijah Phipps
Secretary