

MINUTES
HOUSE TRANSPORTATION & DEFENSE COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, February 04, 2026

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

PLACE: Room EW40

MEMBERS: Chairman Palmer, Vice Chairman Mitchell, Representatives Holtzclaw, Monks, Shepherd, Crane(12), Handy, Hill, Petzke, Boyle, Harris, Mickelsen, Pohanka, Veile, Gannon, Green

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Representative(s) Crane(12)

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 Palmer called the meeting to order at 1:30pm.

H 533: **Rep. Weber**, District 34, stated this legislation removes the requirement for vehicles to display a registration sticker when registration is required. It clarifies a valid license plate and vehicle registration are sufficient for a vehicle to be lawfully operated on Idaho roadways. He remarked, eliminating the sticker will save the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) approximately \$300,000 annually. Those savings stay with ITD and can be moved to other programs.

MOTION: **Rep. Handy** made a motion to send **H 533** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. Weber** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

H 500: **Rep. Mathias**, District 19, stated this legislation is designed to promote safety on Idaho roads and close several loopholes in statute. He told the story from March of 2024, when a teenager was riding his electric bicycle (e-bike) in a bicycle lane on a one-way street in Boise and was hit by a car when the driver made a right turn into an alley. The driver was cited for violating **Idaho Code, Section 49-615**, which requires motor vehicle drivers to exercise due care to avoid colliding with bicyclists. The driver contested the citation, and won in court because the judge ruled e-bikes do not meet the definition of bicycle under the law because it is not human powered. **Rep. Mathias** remarked, this legislation updates the 1988 bicycle definition to include electric bicycles, it also clarifies riders are required to exercise due care when operating an e-bike, and finally, it clarifies riders of e-bikes are also prohibited from allowing additional riders when there is not a seat available for them.

In response to committee questions regarding motobikes, scooters, and other non-human powered vehicles, **Rep. Mathias** stated those are an entirely different issue, and **H 500** is just the start of addressing the operations and safety of the many new non-human powered vehicles.

MOTION: **Rep. Green** made a motion to send **H 500** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

Daniel Murphy, Boise, representing himself, stated he is **in support** of **H 500** because he wants to have a safe environment for bike riders and those around them.

Sean Norton, Boise, representing himself, stated he is **in support** of **H 500** because he is the teenager who **Rep. Mathias** referenced in his bill introduction. He remarked, he never expected at the time of the incident, it would take him on a longer journey to try and protect others from having the same thing happen to them because of an outdated definition written in 1988. Mr. Norton stated he wants kids and families to be safe when they ride their bikes to school and in their neighborhoods or cities and be protected under the law.

VOTE ON MOTION:

Chairman Palmer called for a vote on the motion to send **H 500** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. Mathias** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

H 553:

Rep. Petzke, District 21, stated this legislation closes a loophole by changing the definition of when a person becomes a resident in Idaho. Currently, there is no timeframe in statute; this legislation will require a person to apply for an Idaho driver's license and register vehicles within 30 days of becoming an Idaho resident.

In response to committee questions regarding fines for non-compliance, **Rep. Petzke** stated there is a \$75.00 fine for a person who fails to obtain an Idaho driver's license, but currently, there is no fine for failure to register a vehicle within 30 days.

The committee discussed with concern the removal of the words "for purposes of vehicle registration" in the definition of resident found on page 2, line 7. The committee was concerned without those words, as found in other statutes defining resident, there could be confusion and lack of consistency throughout statute. **Rep. Petzke** stated this concern could easily be fixed.

MOTION:

Rep. Mickelsen made a motion to send **H 553** to General Orders.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION:

Rep. Shepherd made a motion to **HOLD H 553** in committee. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

H 552:

Rep. Handy, District 27, stated this legislation changes the phrase "certified copies" to "record" of judgment. It also changes seven calendar days to seven business days for an individual to request an administrative license suspension hearing, and clarifies if a hearing is not requested, it will be recorded as a default judgment.

MOTION:

Rep. Petzke made a motion to send **H 552** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. Handy** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 2:14pm.

Representative Palmer
Chair

Tracey McDonnell
Secretary