

MINUTES  
**HOUSE TRANSPORTATION & DEFENSE COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Wednesday, February 18, 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) Green

**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 1:31pm.

**H 663:** **Rep. Raymond**, District 31, stated this legislation moves the long overdue redesign responsibilities for the agriculture license plate from the Food Producers of Idaho to the Ag in the Classroom Board of Directors. He stated, 75% of the money from the agriculture license plate goes to the Ag in the Classroom program. He also expressed how important this program is for children to know where their food comes from. The Food Producers of Idaho support this change.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Mickelsen** made a motion to send **H 663** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

**Cassidy Plum**, State Director, Ag in the Classroom, spoke **in support** of **H 663**. She stressed how important the Ag in the Classroom program is to children and said they have a designer from Idaho who will lead a competition for children to design the new agriculture license plate.

**Samantha Parrott**, Executive Director, Snake River Sugarbeet Growers Association, spoke **in support** of **H 663**. She stated the Ag in the Classroom is a wonderful program and highlighted the school curriculums they have put in place and new ones under development.

**VOTE ON  
MOTION:** **Chairman Palmer** called for a vote on the motion to send **H 663** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. Raymond** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

**H 628:** **Rep. Mendive**, District 5, stated this legislation is the culmination of many attempts, since 2020, to bring this issue to the finish line. In 2025, **H 99** became law, allowing parents the option to teach their children how to drive, as long as they live in a rural school district or in a school district that does not offer a driver's training course. **H 628** broadens it allowing parents to teach their children how to drive statewide. Additionally, the Idaho Digital Learning Alliance (IDLA) was removed from the legislation as a recommended source and is now included as one of several state-approved online driver's training courses available to complete the required 30 hour classroom training.

**Robert Scoville**, representing himself, spoke **in opposition** to **H 628**. He was of the belief safety of the children and other drivers would be at risk if this bill passes. He believed if parents are forced to teach their children the fundamentals of driving, that it would not go well, rather, it is critical having a trained driver's instructor. He believed the death rates on the roads would increase if this bill is allowed to become law.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Harris** made a motion to send **H 628** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

Committee members expressed concern over **Mr. Scoville's** comments suggesting parents would not be good teachers for their children. When asked for accident and/or fatality statistics, Mr. Scoville provided statistics from the years prior to **H 99** passing in 2025. Committee members spoke about their personal experiences teaching their children to drive and how important it was for them to emphasis safety to their children.

**Rep. Mendive** stood and closed. He emphasized, nobody is forcing parents to teach their children to drive. **H 628** provides the option statewide for parents to teach their children if they choose to.

Committee members continued the discussion about safety and statistics. A committee member expressed concern allowing parents to teach their children in busy urban areas because children tend to not listen well to their parents, so might be better off with a third party instructor. Another committee member countered the concerns by pointing out in 2024, 74% of the fatal accidents happened in rural areas where there are less people and cars compared to urban areas.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** **Chairman Palmer** called for a vote on the motion to send **H 628** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. Mendive** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

**ADJOURN:** There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 2:07pm.

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Representative Palmer  
Chair

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Tracey McDonnell  
Secretary