

MINUTES  
**HOUSE BUSINESS COMMITTEE**

- DATE:** Monday, February 23, 2026
- TIME:** 1:30 P.M.
- PLACE:** Room EW41
- MEMBERS:** Chairman Redman, Vice Chairman Wheeler, Representatives Crane(13), Palmer, Barbieri, Cornilles, Crane(12), Ehlers, Monks, Cannon, Harris, Marmon, Rasor, Thompson, Cheatum, Veile, Berch, Green
- 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.
- Chairman Redman** called the meeting to order at 1:29 p.m.
- Chairman Redman** introduced the committee's new page, **Caelynn Short**.
- Chairman Redman** explained the introduction of **RS 33065C1**, having been in error, will not replace **H 647**.
- MOTION:** **Rep. Thompson** made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2025 and January 29, 2025 meetings. **Motion carried by voice vote.**
- Chairman Redman** turned the gavel over to **Vice Chair Wheeler**.
- H 703:** **Chairman Redman** presented **H 703**, explaining the legislation establishes a unified, division-wide disciplinary framework for all boards, commissions, committees, and programs administered by the Division of Occupational and Professional Licenses. By consolidating duplicative and inconsistent disciplinary provisions currently scattered across numerous practice acts, the bill creates a single procedural section that standardizes how complaints are processed, how investigations are conducted, what due process protections apply, and how sanctions are imposed.
- Testifying **in support** of **H 703**, **Sean Schupak**, Idaho Associated General Contractors encouraged the committee to send the legislation to the floor with a do pass recommendation.
- MOTION:** **Rep. Crane (12)** made a motion to send **H 703** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. Redman** will sponsor the bill on the floor.
- H 704:** **Chairman Redman** presented **H 704**, explaining the legislation adds to Idaho employment law to prohibit employment of illegal aliens and require employers to E- verify an employee's legal employment status as a condition of employment, amenability to amendments.
- Rep. Crane (12)** explained how illegal immigration has impacted Idaho and the process for employers to utilize E-Verify to confirm an employees status. He also shared the experience of other states which have implemented E-Verify.
- The committee inquired regarding, I9 utilization, code definitions, process time, employers subject to legislation, use of stolen identity, biometric identifier definition, compliance proof, identity documentation, employer definitions, implementation time, economic implications, H2A visa program for more industries, industry collaboration, filing baseless claims, seasonal employment.

Testifying **in support** of **H 704**, **Michael Angiletta**, Secure Idaho, **Lidia Strong**, **Charles Strong**, **Carlos Vidales**, **Bill Cooper**, **William Mostoller** and **Tim ODonnell**, Secure Idaho, shared their experiences demonstrating support for the legislation.

Testifying **in opposition** to **H 704**, **Scar Rulien**, **Nissa Nagel**, **Nikson Mathews** **Rick Naerebout**, Idaho Dairymen's Association and **David Pettinger**, shared their experiences demonstrating opposition for the legislation.

**Rep. Berch** made a point of order, expressing concern about the manner in which **Mr. Pettinger** was testifying.

**Vice Chair Wheeler** put the committee at ease for 3 minutes.

**David Pettinger** completed his testimony **in opposition** to **H 704**.

**MOTION:**

**Rep. Harris** made a motion to send **H 704** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

Speaking to the motion, committee members noted constituents support legislation, shared family members' successful immigration experience and sponsor's willingness to make changes. Members also expressed concern about the potential economic costs and implementation time line and noted immigration is a federal issue.

**SUBSTITUTE MOTION:**

**Rep. Cheatum** made a substitute motion to send **H 704** to General Orders.

Speaking to the substitute motion, members expressed concern with no penalty for baseless claims and the possibility of additional amendments. Members shared about current Idaho statutes regarding filing baseless claims.

**ROLL CALL VOTE ON SUBSTITUTE MOTION:**

A roll call vote was requested. **Motion failed by a vote of 7 AYE, 11 NAY.**

**ROLL CALL VOTE ON ORIGINAL MOTION:**

A roll call vote was requested. **Motion carried by a vote of 16 AYE, 2 NAY.** **Rep. Redman** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

**Vice Chair Wheeler** turned the gavel over to **Chairman Redman**.

**H 700:**

**Rep. Harris** presented **H 700**, explaining the legislation creates a new chapter in Idaho law, making it a misdemeanor for employers, labor representatives, or employment agents to knowingly hire, continue employing, recruit individuals who are not lawfully present in the U.S. or authorized to work under federal law. It defines when an individual is considered unauthorized and requires employers to stop employment if they know or should know that work authorization has expired or been revoked. Employers who verify work authorization through the federal E-Verify system before hiring, and receive confirmation, are shielded from criminal liability and may raise good-faith compliance as an affirmative defense.

Committee inquired regarding presumptive defense, state sovereignty, enforcement, fiscal note, enforcement manpower, supremacy clause, redundancy of federal law, grounds for tips, and policing of businesses.

Testifying **in support** of **H 700** **Michael Angiletta**, **Lidia Strong**, **Charles Strong**, **Carlos Vidales**, **Tim ODonnell**, Secure Idaho, explained experiences demonstrating their support for the legislation.

Testifying **in opposition** to **H 700 Nissa Nagel**, explained experiences demonstrating her opposition of the legislation.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Rasor** made a motion to send **H 700** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Reps. Wheeler** and **Green** requested to be recorded as voting **NAY**. **Rep. Harris** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

**H 645:** **Rep. Monks** presented **H 645**, explaining the legislation seeks to modernize Idaho's labor market by establishing a framework for Voluntary Portable Benefits. Under current Idaho law, many independent contractors and self-employed individuals—representing a growing segment of the state's workforce—face significant barriers to accessing traditional benefits like health insurance and retirement savings because such offerings are typically tied to traditional employer-employee relationships. This bill provides a "safe harbor" to ensure that voluntary benefit contributions do not trigger worker reclassification, thereby allowing benefits to remain portable and tied to the worker rather than a single employer.

Committee inquired regarding e-Verify, bank account type, subcontractors, multiple portable plans and entities, tax implications, lapses in employment and contributions, contribution payment accounts, reason against independent contractors having portable benefits, misclassification of independent contractors, tier one and tier two subcontractor definitions, enforcement of existing definition of independent contractor, amendments, 1099 employee misclassification laws, exclusion of portable benefits for construction industry, and incentivization of misclassification of 1099 employees.

Testifying **in support** of **H 645**, **Jostan Rice**, Libertas Institute, shared experiences demonstrating support for the legislation.

Testifying **in opposition** to **H 645**, **Gil Aroset**, Western State Regional Council of Carpenters, and **Kenny Huston**, AFL-CIO shared experiences demonstrating their opposition to the legislation.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Palmer** made a motion to send **H 645** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

Speaking to the motion, **Rep. Berch** shared he will not support the motion, citing the need for more information about some of the issues discussed.

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

**ADJOURN:** There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

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Representative Redman  
Chair

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Michelle A Anderson  
Secretary