

MINUTES
HOUSE TRANSPORTATION & DEFENSE COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, February 26, 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:** 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 Palmer called the meeting to order at 1:30pm.

MOTION: **Rep. Pohanka** made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 16, 18, and 24, 2026 meetings. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

H 664: **Rep. Pickett**, District 27, stated this legislation is about road safety. He explained differential speed limits, most often in the form of forcing heavy trucks to travel slower than passenger cars, increases traffic turbulence, which leads to higher crash risks due to, for example, tailgating or road rage. When variances in speed occur at excessive speeds, such as on interstate highways, the severity of crashes increases dramatically, therefore, traveling at the same speeds would result in less incidents and accidents.

In response to committee questions regarding if trucks would then travel the posted speed limit of 80 mph, including triples, **Rep. Pickett** stated, yes they could, but clarified it doesn't mean trucks must go 80 mph. He explained, many trucking companies put speed governors on their fleet, and those drivers should know the capability of what their trucks can do regarding speed limits.

MOTION: **Rep. Veile** made a motion to send **H 664** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

Bryce Morgan, Vice President, Idaho Trucking Association (ITA); **Dan Taylor**, ITA; and **Harry Packwood**, ITA all spoke about safety concerns with **H 664**. They were of the opinion **H 664** creates safety issues because trucks traveling at 80 mph are not engineered for high speeds, rather they are designed for heavy weights. Truck weights need to be taken into account for what distance is necessary to bring a large heavy truck to a stop at any given speed. Additionally, truck tires are rated at 75 mph, so traveling faster will cause more tire wear and blowouts. They were concerned higher speeds will create more catastrophic accidents. It was also mentioned most trucking companies will not adjust the speed governors on their fleets, so **H 664** will do nothing to address the differential speeds.

Committee members were concerned about written testimony submitted by the Chairman of ITA, **Evan Oneto**, stating the position of ITA was neutral on **H 664** (See Attachment 1). The concern and discussion among many committee members revolved around the three ITA members who testified before the committee in a negative manner on **H 664**, which appeared to be in direct conflict with ITA Chairman Oneto.

Dexton Lake, Idaho Farm Bureau (IFB), spoke **in support** of **H 664** because it is not setting a minimum speed, which they would have issues with, but rather it is creating options. He stated, it is fine if trucks cannot drive the speed limit; for example, in the agriculture industry what slows them down is the weight, and there is nothing wrong with driving slower.

Rep. Pickett stood and closed. He stated the purpose of this legislation is to limit interactions that result in accidents as a result of differential speeds on highways.

Committee members continued discussion. Several expressed concern this would open the door to trucks driving at higher rates of speed because not all trucks have speed governors. Higher rates of speed with fully loaded trucks might result in more catastrophic crashes. Other committee members commented, nothing is forcing the removal of speed governors and nothing in this legislation is requiring trucks to travel at high rates of speed. **H 664** is simply trying to stop congestion and interactions on the highways by allowing trucks to travel faster in order to pass slower trucks. Another member noted, statistics show states with differential speeds have higher accident rates.

**ROLL CALL
VOTE ON
MOTION:**

Chairman Palmer called for a vote on the motion. A roll call vote was requested by **Rep. Boyle**. **Motion carried by a vote of 10 AYE and 6 NAY. Voting in favor** of the motion: **Chairman Palmer, Reps. Mitchell, Holtzclaw, Monks, Shepherd, Crane (12), Hill, Petzke, Harris, and Veile. Voting in opposition** to the motion: **Reps. Handy, Boyle, Mickelsen, Pohanka, Gannon, and Green. Rep. Pickett** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

H 667:

Rep. Handy, District 27, stated this legislation removes the statutory requirement for the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to issue commercial driver's licenses (CDL) to individuals who are not Idaho residents or are from foreign countries. He explained, this will not impact CDL drivers from Mexico and Canada because these countries already have reciprocal agreements. Additionally, there is already a federal exemption in place for farm vehicles to operate within 150 mile radius of the farm.

MOTION:

Rep. Mickelsen made a motion to send **H 667** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. Handy** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

H 717:

Rep. Mickelsen, District 32, stated this legislation will require new Idaho residents to register their vehicles within 30 days of becoming a resident, or within 30 days of the expiration of an existing registration. If a new resident fails to register their vehicle within 30 days, or anyone fails to register their vehicle within 30 days of expiration, it shall result in a \$75.00 fee. This fee will be deposited into the State Highway Account (SHA). She explained, this is the same fee structure in place for obtaining a driver's license and encourages people to contribute to the SHA, which pays for road maintenance.

The committee had questions regarding vehicles not being used, and not being registered, and would the owner be fined if they want to eventually register the vehicle. **Rep. Mickelsen** explained, there is form they can complete through DMV identifying vehicles not in use, then at such time the owner wants to register that vehicle, they would pay the registration fee, but would not be fined.

Sara Westbrook, Idaho Association of Cities, spoke **in support** of **H 717**, but requested the bill be sent to General Orders. She explained, after discussion with **Rep. Mickelsen**, and gaining her support, this would change the account where the \$75.00 fees would be deposited. Rather than all of it going to the SHA, the funds would go to the Highway Distribution Account (HDA), where there is a 60%-40% split to allow funds to go to state and local highway districts.

MOTION: **Rep. Veile** made a motion to send **H 717** to General Orders. **Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. Mickelsen** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

H 716: **Rep. Green**, District 18, stated this legislation addresses two issues. First, it is clean up for the HDA by streamlining the distribution process for vehicle registration fees and fuel taxes. It updates the HDA distribution to treat all user fee funds the same with a 60% state and 40% local split consistent with current policy. She explained, in 2019, legislation passed to shift the Idaho State Police (ISP) funding away from the HDA and replace it with money from the General Fund. This transition took place over a five-year period. Because ISP is now removed, there is no longer a need to track items separately. Secondly, **H 716** increases the local bridge inspection account from \$175,000 to \$300,000 in dedicated funds by a gas tax transfer to keep the fund solvent from FY27 and beyond. This is due to the increasing costs of inspections and the increased number of inspections over time.

MOTION: **Rep. Mickelsen** made a motion to send **H 716** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. Green** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 2:49pm.

Representative Palmer
Chair

Tracey McDonnell
Secretary