

MINUTES  
**SENATE AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Tuesday, March 03, 2026

**TIME:** 8:00 A.M.

**PLACE:** Room WW53

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Nichols, Vice Chairman Zito, Senators Lakey, Lent, VanOrden, Blaylock, Kohl, and Taylor

**ABSENT/ EXCUSED:** Senator Semmelroth

**NOTE:** The sign-in sheet, testimonies and other related materials will be retained with the minutes in the committee's office until the end of the session and will then be located on file with the minutes in the Legislative Services Library.

**CONVENED:** **Chairman Nichols** called the meeting of the Senate Agricultural Affairs Committee (Committee) to order at 8:02 a.m.

**MINUTES APPROVAL:** **Vice Chairman Zito** moved to approve the minutes of February 12, 2026. **Senator Taylor** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

**PASSED THE GAVEL:** Chairman Nichols passed the gavel to Vice Chairman Zito.

**S 1342** **Chairman Nichols** explained many Idahoans living in single-family homes were prohibited from household egg production due to local ordinances. She claimed eggs were a basic food staple and household egg production supported food security, agricultural literacy, and self-resilience. **S 1342** established a statewide minimum standard for household egg production. The legislation allowed a minimum of 4 hens per detached, single-family home, while preserving local authority related to health, safety, and nuisance concerns. Political subdivisions and homeowners associations (HOAs) could permit more than four hens if desired and roosters were prohibited unless expressly permitted. **Chairman Nichols** stated the chapter applied prospectively and did not affect enforcement actions finalized prior to July 1, 2026. She compared **S 1342** to a broader Arizona backyard chicken law that was passed in 2024 and noted how additional states had passed similar legislation (Attachment 1).

**TESTIMONY:** The following spoke in favor of **S 1342**:

- Jeff Schumacher, constituent.
- Sebastian Griffin, Nampa City Council District 6.

The reasons given to support **S 1342** included protecting individual liberties, Idaho heritage, and improving food security, self-sufficiency, and resilience. **Mr. Schumacher** expressed his concerns regarding HOAs and how they should be balanced to protect what he characterized as basic American liberties. **Mr. Griffin** explained families should have reasonable freedom to provide for themselves.

**DISCUSSION:** **Senator Taylor** asked Mr. Griffin if he was representing the Nampa City Council. **Mr. Griffin** stated he was representing himself and his district.

**TESTIMONY:** The following spoke in opposition to **S 1342**:

- Brittany Bones, Idaho Community Association Institute - Legislative Action Committee.
- Jonathan Wheatley, Deputy Director, Association of Idaho Cities.

**Ms. Bones** explained **S 1342** would interfere with the right to contract by invalidating Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions (CC&Rs). She suggested CC&Rs could be amended in lieu of legislative mandates to allow household egg production. She added the legislation created ambiguity regarding potential commercial egg sales within HOAs. **Mr. Wheatley** explained this legislation was a blanket approach that did not account for city nuances. He believed such topics should be processed at the local level. Both **Ms. Bones** and **Mr. Wheatley** stated the legislation did not include a lot size minimum requirement and failed to consider usable green space for chickens.

**DISCUSSION:** **Senator Blaylock** inquired how this legislation would operate in practice with HOAs. **Chairman Nichols** explained **S 1342** was prospective so any enforcement action, fine or penalty, or legal proceeding that was final prior to July 1, 2026, would not be affected. **Senator Blaylock** referred to S 1026 from 2025, and asked what their differences were. **Chairman Nichols** said **S 1342** left lot restrictions up to local authorities. She noted she received feedback from S 1026 and that feedback was embodied in **S 1342**. **Senator Lakey** queried about rooster ordinances. **Chairman Nichols** explained that in **S 1342**, roosters were prohibited unless expressly permitted by a political subdivision or HOA. **Senator Taylor** wanted clarification about Arizona's backyard chicken protection law and the proposed legislation of limited household egg production. **Chairman Nichols** stated chickens were necessary for egg production and **S 1342** focused specifically on permitting backyard egg production for household use, similar to maintaining a backyard garden. **Vice Chairman Zito** asked if she were to live in a non-regulated area, if she could only have up to four chickens. **Chairman Nichols** explained **S 1342** set a minimum statewide standard, not a maximum.

**Chairman Nichols** closed by thanking those who testified and stating the legislation set a floor to household egg production and that eggs were another form of small scale food production. She requested **S 1342** be sent to the floor with a do pass recommendation.

**MOTION:** **Senator Lent** moved to send **S 1342** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Blaylock** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

**DISCUSSION:** **Senator Taylor** explained his disapproval of the bill, as he believed this was a state overstep on local authority. He requested to be recorded as voting nay.

**PASSED THE GAVEL:** Vice Chairman Zito passed the gavel to Chairman Nichols.

**ADJOURNED:** There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Nichols** adjourned the meeting at 8:33 a.m.

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Senator Nichols  
Chair

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Rachel Verrette  
Secretary