



CAPITOL REVIEW

A WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

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A Weekly Legislative Report

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AG ALL STAR LEGISLATORS NAMED

Thirty-nine legislators were named **Ag All Stars by Food Producers of Idaho** based upon their voting records on selected pieces of legislation in the 2019 Idaho Legislative Session. The legislators were honored at a recognition banquet on Wednesday evening. Over 130 industry and legislative guests were present.

Food Producers of Idaho, representing over 45 different agriculture commodity and farm organizations in Idaho, annually honors legislators for their voting record on issues supported or opposed by the organization. According to Executive Director Rick Waitley, the first year a legislator is honored, the award is an Ag License plate that reads, "**AL STR**". Each year after the initial award, a smaller plate with that year engraved on it is presented to each honoree.

Ag All Star legislators are important to Idaho's agriculture and natural resource industries. The award has been presented for the last **twenty legislative sessions**. Every bill that is identified as a tracked issue by the Food Producers organization may be a bill that will be used on the organization's scorecard at the end of the session. The following were recognized as 2019 Food Producers of Idaho Ag All Stars:

2019 Senators (21 All Stars)

- | | |
|------------------|----------------------|
| Jeff Agenbroad * | Abby Lee * |
| Kelly Anthon * | <u>Dave Lent</u> |
| Steven Bair * | Patti Anne Lodge * |
| Van Burtenshaw | Dean Mortimer |
| Don Cheatham | Jim Patrick * |
| Carl Crabtree | Jim Rice * |
| Jim Guthrie * | Mary Souza * |
| Mark Harris * | Steven Thayn |
| Lee Heider * | Steve Vick |
| Brent Hill | Janie Ward-Engleking |
| Todd Lakey * | |

2018 Representatives (18 All Stars)

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Jiff Addis | <u>Bill Goesling</u> |
| Robert Anderst * | Clark Kauffman * |
| Scott Bedke | Ryan Kerby* |
| Megan Blanksma * | <u>Laurie Lickley</u> |
| Greg Chaney * | <u>Jerald Raymond</u> |
| Lance Clow | <u>Doug Ricks</u> |
| Gary Collins * | Caroline Troy * |
| Gayann DeMordaunt * | Fred Wood * |
| Marcus Gibbs * | Rick Youngblood * |

**Received award every year eligible*
Underline indicates first-time recipient.

NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL ASSOCIATION

The Idaho Noxious Weed Control Association held their annual conference in Boise this past week with over 200 in attendance. During the course of the event, two individuals were recognized for their outstanding contribution to weed control efforts in Idaho.

Carol Randall is a forest entomologist with the **USDA Forest Service's Northern and Intermountain Regions** who specializes in the **biological control of weeds**. Carol works closely with the land managers in Idaho and other western states to help promote the successful deployment of weed biological control agents as a meaningful component of integrated weed management strategies. Over the last 20 years, Carol has worked with a number of western weed biological control specialists to develop a series of weed biocontrol technology transfer documents. Her efforts include publications, forest evaluation, developing user friendly 'how to' guides to facilitate the expansion of biological control efforts, and collaboration with land managers. In 2008, she received the Regional Foresters' award for technology transfer.

Carol is a founding member of the Idaho Biocontrol Task Force, and has remained an active member of the Task Force. Carol truly enjoys, with a passion, assisting land managers meet their management goals. Carol is very

proud to be associated with Idaho's biological control of noxious weeds and is proud the State of Idaho has taken an active role in implementing and assessing the value of biological control as a management tool in the fight against noxious weeds. Carol has been based in Coeur d' Alene for most of her career.

Lloyd Knight serves as **Administrator for the ISDA Plant Industries Division**. Lloyd's entire career has been spent in some aspect of agriculture and he is aware of the impact of noxious weeds on the environment. From 2003-2007, Lloyd served as Executive Vice President of the Idaho Cattle Association. He was appointed by Governor Butch Otter to be a Senior Analyst with the Division of Financial Management in the Governor's office. In 2009, Lloyd joined ISDA as the Administrator of the Plant Industries Division where the State Noxious Weed program and coordinator resides.

AN ASSESSMENT NOT A TAX

Idaho agriculture has been fortunate to have a number of commodity commissions representing many of the commodities in the state. These commissions are classified as **quasi government entities**. Each of the commissions has some similar characteristics:

- 1) Commissions were created by growers - based upon a need the producers of that commodity identified.
- 2) Commission board members are appointed by the Governor.
- 3) Commodity producer names for the Governor's consideration are submitted by grower organizations related to the specific commission.
- 4) Yearend financial reports (no matter the size of the commission) are submitted to the legislature each year.
- 5) The structure and operating procedure for the commission is spelled out in Idaho Code.
- 6) Change in structure and how a commission functions is handled as a law change by the Idaho legislature.
- 7) Commissions establish an annual fee based upon a measurement (pounds, gallons, hives, etc.) for payment to the commission – this is referred to as an assessment.
- 8) Commission expenditures mainly fall in three categories - Research, Education and Promotion. How those allocations of funds are made and what percent to each of these areas is directed by members of the commission.
- 9) Records (minutes, financials, etc.) are public records.
- 10) Funds collected from growers when deposited into a commission account become assets for the State of Idaho – hence the reporting of these funds to the Legislature when requested.
- 11) Commissions are not all structured the same.
- 12) Some commissions have refund language which allows for a producer to request their individual assessment returned to the producer.

While all Idahoans pay federal and state taxes (many of which we have little say in – property, sales, income, excise, etc.) the payments made by producers to

commodity commissions is not a tax but an assessment – set by and driven by the producers of that commodity. Growers do have a say in the operation of their commission:

- A) Since the commission board is made up of growers, individual producers can contact them with questions related to how commission funds are spent, producers can also allow their name to be placed before the Governor for consideration of appointment.
- B) Often, commodity commissions will select to increase their assessment – for various reasons. Sometimes this might require a referendum of producers of that commodity to vote on the assessment increase – it depends upon how the commission is established in Idaho Code. That is the case of the Idaho Alfalfa and Clover Seed Commission who over the summer voted to increase their assessment in order to make an investment in the upgrades to the Parma Research and Extension Station which that Commission feels will benefit their industry.

DRIVING PRIVILEGE CARD

Last week we reported that **Senator Jim Guthrie was considering the introduction of legislation to address issuing driver's licenses to individuals from a foreign country and that are not lawfully present in the US to qualify for a driving privilege card**. The legislation originated out of Eastern Idaho where driving on Idaho roads has been difficult for foreign born agriculture employees and students involved in high school sports and FFA activities. **Currently 7 of 13 Western States offer this privilege (including WA, NV and UT)**. This week, after a number of discussions and meetings the decision was made to appoint a working committee to explore options and issues surrounding this proposal. The working group would be made up of all interested parties including law enforcement, agriculture interests and legislators.

FEWER RULES IN IDAHO

Governor Brad Little has initiated two important Acts that have been worked on by his staff, agencies and the general public since the closure of the 2019 Idaho legislative session. The two Acts were titled: **the Red Tape Reduction Act** and **the Licensing Freedom Act**. Agendas of committees throughout the legislature the past two weeks have been filled with docket numbers and bills addressing the implementation of these two Acts.

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