



CAPITOL REVIEW

A WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

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A Weekly Legislative Report

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NWACC/FFA DAY ON THE HILL

The Northwest Agricultural Cooperative Council (NWACC) and FFA sponsored a luncheon event this week where FFA members, industry participants and legislators came together to recognize honorary state FFA degree recipients and NWACC Friends of the Coops award winners. The NWACC, which represents agricultural cooperatives in **Idaho, Washington and Oregon**, recognized two legislators for their passion and support of Idaho agriculture. Those legislators were Senator Abby Lee and Representative Britt Raybould. The honorary state FFA degree recipients were Senator Mark Nye and Speaker of the House Scott Bedke.

Senator Abby Lee received her Bachelor's degree in communications and a Master's degree in instructional and performance technology from Brigham Young University. She is currently working to complete a PhD in public policy and administration. Away from the legislature she is employed as the Associate Vice President of College and Public Relations at Treasure Valley Community College in Ontario, OR. Senator Lee is a board member on the Saint Alphonsus Medical Center Ontario Community Board and serves as the Senate Representative to the Committee for Food Safety Modernization (FSMA) Oversight through the Idaho State Department of Agriculture. Senator Lee represents **District 9** which includes Adams, Washington, Payette and part of Canyon County. She currently serves as **Vice Chairman of the Judiciary and Rules Committee**, and is a member of the **Senate Health and Welfare Committee** and **Joint Finance and Appropriations Committee**.

Representative Britt Raybould is serving her second year of her first term in the Idaho legislature. Representative Raybould graduated from Sugar-Salem High School. She received her Bachelor's degree from Boise State University and her Master's degree in Professional Communication from Westminster College in Salt Lake. Representative Raybould represents **District 34** which includes a

portion of both Bonneville County and Madison County. Representative Raybould was recently elected President of the National Potato Council. Her family is immersed in farming in Eastern Idaho near Rexburg where she serves as the Chief Financial Officer for Raybould Brothers Farm. She was elected to the seat her grandfather Dell Raybould held for many years. Currently, she sits on the **House Resources and Conservation Committee**, the **Environment, Energy and Technology Committee** and the **Joint Finance and Appropriations Committee**.

POTATO COMMISSION UPDATES

A bill has been printed in the House Agricultural Affairs committee that would amend existing law and **revise different portions of the Idaho Potato Commission's statutes** under Idaho Code. **H389** was introduced by Representative Britt Raybould and would establish that commissioners serve at the pleasure of the governor to provide anti-trust protection for the promotion and marketing activities of the commission. It would also change the appointment date of a commissioner from September 15 to September 1 and update the definitions to more adequately reflect that shippers also may be growers or processors in their operation if they are vertically integrated.

Other changes that may receive more pushback include **moving district boundaries eastward** for "grower" commission positions in an effort to better reflect production areas in the state, as well as the added **creation of an at-large grower commissioner from Eastern Idaho**. This would constitute a sizable shift in representation for the commission. Additionally, it would allow the commissioners to call a referendum that would need the support of six or more commissioners, of whom would have to comprise at least one grower, one shipper and one processor. H389 has not yet been heard in front of the committee.

SEED CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

S1248 would amend Idaho Code and remove the requirement that the Idaho Agricultural Experiment Stations managed by the University of Idaho College of Agricultural and Life Sciences would have to use the Administrative Rules process for setting standards for seed certification. The current process that allows for public and industry input in setting seed certification standards through the Idaho Crop Improvement Association would remain in place, but the added formal rule promulgation process would be removed. Layering the formal rule promulgation process on top of the process that has been developed through the Idaho Crop Improvement Association **has added a level of bureaucracy and timelines that limits the ability to amend standards in a manner responsive to industry needs.** The current framework for gathering stakeholder and industry input used by the Idaho Crop Improvement Association allows those that are impacted by changes to the standards to be involved in the process. Additionally, a 30-day public comment period for the standards would be required prior to their establishment.

UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLES

H376 would clarify and enhance restrictions on the use of drones. This legislation amends Idaho Code to **strengthen the prohibition of surveillance by drones on individuals and private property.** It provides a narrow scope for law enforcement and fire departments the use of unmanned aerial vehicles without a warrant. The amendments to the current code will clearly spell out that individuals along with local, state and federal agencies may not use drones or unmanned vehicles to intentionally conduct surveillance, gather evidence or collect information about specific people. The legislation was brought by **Representative Doug Ricks from District 34.** A print hearing was held this past week and a full committee hearing will likely be held over the course of the next few weeks.

LOCAL UNITS OF GOVERNMENT

In 2014 the Idaho legislature passed a bill that would require all local governing entities to report to a central registry. The purpose for the reporting was that there were many local governing entities in the state that were unaccounted for by the legislature. The legislature required the Idaho State Tax Commission to submit a list of all taxing districts within the state and for county clerks to submit a list of all taxing districts in their counties. After the list was compiled, all local governing entities were required to report administrative information, financial information, bonds or other debt obligation information, audits and all reasonable fees, costs and other expenses incurred.

Though the effort at transparency was successful, a problem has arisen with too much information being gathered by the Legislative Services Office (LSO) without them being able to process the material. To rectify the problem and not add more staff to the office, **S1265** has been printed by Senator Steve Bair. **The bill would eliminate a requirement that local units of government submit a recently adopted budget.** The language would be eliminated because the relevant financial information is required elsewhere already. Local units of government already submit revenues and expenditures for the most recently completed fiscal year. Senator Bair argues this requirement is sufficient and more appropriate than requiring a recently adopted budget. The bill also eliminates a notification requirement for certain units of local governments to notify their appointing authority that they have compiled their information in a five-day timeframe. S1265 has not been heard in front of the committee at this time.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST ECONOMIC REGION

This past week in the Senate Agricultural Affairs committee, the **Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER)** made a presentation outlining their involvement in agriculture. PNWER is a statutory, **public-private partnership chartered in 1991** by the U.S. States of Alaska, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and the Canadian Provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and the Yukon and Northwest Territories. The Region has a GDP of over \$1Trillion, with a population of 24.4 Million people, making it the **13th Largest Economy in the world.** PNWER has received money in the past several years to study the economic impacts that invasive species could have on the region. Those invasive species are specifically quagga and zebra mussels. A 2014-2015 study funded by the State of Washington found that the estimated economic impact of the region is over \$500,000 per year, every year, for the coordination, inspection, and public relation efforts. This is a small sum compared to the potential outbreak and infestation of mussels. The economic impact of a quagga or zebra mussel infestation in Idaho would likely exceed \$94 million annually according to a study conducted by the Idaho Invasive Species Council. This sum would not include agricultural impacts. The best cure is prevention and that is what the Idaho State Department of Agriculture has been practicing with their invasive species program.

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