

Bill would repeal last reference to dueling in Idaho law

By RYAN STRUYK, Associated Press

BOISE, Idaho (AP) — A 151-year-old state law that reportedly drew its inspiration from the legendary duel between former Vice President Aaron Burr and former Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton might soon be taken off the books.

The House Judiciary, Rules and Administration Committee voted Friday to consider ridding Idaho of a 150-year-old rule on jurisdiction for out-of-state duels. The law was passed during Idaho's very first territorial legislature in 1864.

Currently, the law states that Idaho has jurisdiction if a person dies in the Gem State after getting injured in a duel out-of-state.

Republican Rep. Thomas Dayley joked that some lawmakers may want to take advantage of the statute before its repeal would take effect in July.

Michael Kane from the Idaho Sheriffs' Association had been tasked with finding outdated laws to repeal from Idaho code, he said. "Needless to say, this is obsolete," he told lawmakers.

The rule has been untouched for most of its tenure, but it was amended in 1986 as part of a larger change to grant jurisdiction to the entire state rather than a specific county.

The 1986 amendment passed the Senate unanimously, but it passed the House by only one vote because of a disagreement over whether Ada County should host the trial if it wasn't clear which county should.

The bill has its roots in an 1804 duel between former Vice President Aaron Burr and former Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton, Kane said.

The duel took place in New Jersey, but Hamilton died in New York. Both states charged Burr with murder.