



Week 4 Idaho Legislative Update for February 1-5, 2021

The fourth week of the First Regular Session of the Sixty-Sixth Idaho Legislature brought an increased number of committee meetings, hearings, and legislators' commitments. At the same time, the traditional receptions and gatherings are still being missed. The committee members are now comfortable with the process and understand their roles within. This inevitably leads to a faster pace throughout the building and more robust discussion on legislation.

Earlier this week, Governor Little announced an easing of the COVID 19 related restrictions and moved the state to a modified [STAGE 3](#). The new guidelines have helped ease tensions in the Capitol while also giving hope to Idahoans looking forward to overcoming the pandemic. In addition to the loosening of restrictions, Governor Little also recently announced a new online tool for Idahoans to learn more about the vaccine distribution and allocation in Idaho. The new website details Idaho's plan and outlines priority groups. The [COVID-19 VACCINATION](#) site also provides the public with a resource where Idahoans can find out when they are eligible to receive the vaccine and where to access enrolled COVID-19 vaccine providers in their area.

The Governor's supplemental recommendations for [BUILDING IDAHOS FUTURE](#) continue to be scrutinized by the legislature both in the budget committees and in the germane policy committees who have asked the Governor's agency heads and staff to present, along with legislative services staff, to better understand the roll-out of programs from water, broadband, transportation and more. In order for these plans to move forward, the legislature must appropriate the general funds for these recommendations. They may also produce legislation to define how the funds can be utilized by the agencies.

At the end of the fourth week of the session, rewrites of bills and resolutions continue to be introduced, seeking to reign in the Governor's emergency powers. This week also marked a traditional turn in the legislature as February begins and committee members dig in on policies and floor debates. This week's process and atmosphere throughout the Capitol was much more in line with previous years, but with the continued limitations for health and safety. Committees are getting more comfortable with remote (virtual) testimony, but chairmen continue to prefer in-person testimony or written testimony.

As always, all bills from the session can be tracked [HERE](#). We monitor this daily and will be on the lookout for anything that may be of relevance.



[SJR101](#) - Anti-legalization Constitutional Amendment – Passed Senate – Filed with House State Affairs Committee

Senator Grow presented SJR 101, a constitutional amendment that would stop Idaho from legalizing-controlled substances. This resolution would add a code reference to the Idaho constitution. As Idaho Code is updated, the Idaho Constitution would refer to that section of the code. On Wednesday, February 3, the Senate passed this resolution with a 24-11-0 vote and will be filed with the House State Affairs Committee for further action.

This bill will receive a full committee hearing sometime early next week.

[House Bill 33](#) –District Board of Health – Awaiting Hearing in House Health and Welfare Committee

House Bill 33 was introduced by House Health and Welfare. This bill would allow review and override of Public Health District Actions, Orders & Decisions by County Commissioners. The bill would also make public health violations an infraction for the first two offenses, and a misdemeanor for a third offense also includes specified fines.

This bill may receive a full committee hearing sometime early next week.

[House Bill 34](#) - Health Ordinances, City Limits - Awaiting Hearing in House Health and Welfare Committee

House Bill 34 was introduced by the committee and was presented by Representative Brandon Mitchell (D5). This bill would remove authorization in Idaho code, Chapters 53-04 and 56-06, allowing city jurisdiction during public health emergency to 5 miles outside city limits to comply with Idaho Constitution Article 12, Section 2.

This bill may receive a full committee hearing sometime early next week.

[House Bill 36](#) - Vital Statistics Records – Passed the House Floor – Filed with Senate Health and Welfare Committee

House Bill 36 was introduced in House Health and Welfare by James Aydelotte, Bureau Vital Statistics. The Bill would Repeals a reporting requirement for artificial insemination that requires written husband and wife consent to be filed with the Bureau of Vital Statistics. Passed the house with a 69-1 vote and has been filed with the Senate.

This bill may receive a full committee hearing sometime early next week.



[House Bill 42](#) Idaho Patient Act – Medical Debt Collection Extension – Passed the House Floor – Filed with Senate Commerce and Human Resources Committee

The Idaho Patient Act was passed in 2020. It sets requirements for medical debt collection. The act requires hospitals and other medical providers to notice patients and meet strict timelines before pursuing medical debt collections. The act specified July 1, 2020, as a deadline for providers to have systems in place to meet the law's requirements. Due to COVID-19 and difficulty adjusting electronic medical records, the provider cannot meet the July 2020 deadline. This bill extends the deadline to July 1, 2021 and allows for collection activities to continue prior to July 1, 2021. All other provisions of the act remain unchanged.

This bill should have a full committee hearing sometime early next week.

[Senate Bill 1038](#) - Relating to Public Assistance - Passed House Health and Welfare Committee – Awaiting House Floor Vote

Senate Bill 1038 was presented by Matt Wimmer, the Administrator for Division of Medicaid and Idaho Department of Health and Welfare. This bill would remove outdated sections of code related to Medicaid programs that no longer exist. These programs and sections are as listed; 56-209 – Pilot weight management program, 56-236 – Insurance access card program, 56-241 – Small Business Insurance Program – providing temporary health insurance for small businesses, 56-242 – Access Card Program including subsidies for those under 100% of federal poverty to purchase subsidized health insurance – replaced by the Health Insurance Exchange. This bill has passed the committee and sent to the floor for a Senate vote.

The bill should be debated and voted on next week

[House Bill 79](#) – Annuity Consumer Protection Act – Introduced in House Business Committee

House Bill 79 was introduced in House Business Committee by Dean Cameron, Director of the Department of Insurance. This bill would adopt the received NAIC model regulation into statute rather than into rules. This bill would clarify chapter 19 Title 41 of Idaho Code to provide provision for insurance producers and insurers to "act in the best interest of the consumer when making a recommendation of an annuity, to establish producer training expectations, and to require insurers to establish and maintain a system to supervise recommendations."

This bill should have a full hearing sometime early next week.



Rules

No rules were presented or scheduled this week in the House or Senate Health and Welfare Committees.

As a reminder, if the rules pass either the House or the Senate, they are set to go into effect. If the legislature fails to pass the “go home bill” that enacts the rules, the Governor will likely sign an executive order enacting all the rules as temporary for one year as he has the past few years.

Senate Confirmations

Brett Thomas to the **Idaho Health Insurance Exchange Board** – **Passed Committee** – **Awaiting Full Senate Confirmation Vote** – Monday February 8th senate will take this Gubernatorial Appointment up.

NICE JOB IN COMMITTEE BRETT! Way to Rep IAHU!!!