



## Week Eleven Idaho Legislative Update for March 17 – March 21, 2025

It's one thing for us to describe just how busy things are here in the 2025 Idaho Legislature. It's quite another when statistics do the talking. Each Friday during session, the Legislative Services Office (LSO) posts a running tally of bills, resolutions and measures along with comparisons dating back to 2020. Last Friday's report shows lawmakers are setting a new standard again this year.

To date, LSO has tallied 890 pieces of new legislation and 243 additional amendments for a total of 1,133, up from the previous high of 1,067 set last year. As of last week, 584 bills had been introduced in both chambers, up from 550 in 2024 and 523 at this time in 2020. There have been 72 introductions of resolutions, memorials and proclamations, also a five-year high. At the same time, fewer bills have passed both houses and been signed into law – at least at this point.

This record churn can be traced to the growing influence of out-of-state think tanks treating Idaho as a “bill mill.” In other words, Idaho is seen as fertile testing ground for injecting ideas into the broader legislative bloodstream. Once introduced in Boise, D.C. policy wonks can use the traction here to push it on a national scale. This tactic has become a brutal distraction, an annoyance to many and has spawned the introduction of record numbers of predatory bills.

This trend also helps explain the ongoing length of the session, calendar bloat in the House and Senate and the fraying patience and goodwill of legislators over the last month. At times it can be hard to discern one bill from another, but it's become glaringly obvious that many of these are simply tradeoffs for increased campaign donations and PAC spending, which has also soared to record levels. This new normal for bill tallies and increased super PAC engagement throughout the year means our part-time lawmakers have so much more to do with limited staff and support systems.

Ok, on to some legislative news. The Senate passed and sent to the Governor's desk [HB 304](#), which cuts \$100 million from local government units as property tax relief. Gov. Little signed the comprehensive reform to Idaho's Medicaid program, which includes changes to Medicaid Expansion. He also signed legislation allowing physicians to refuse certain types of care if it violates their beliefs.

The budget writing committee members rolled up their sleeves and passed more than three dozen agency budgets, including transportation, education, natural resources, IT, and many more enhancement budgets. Despite JFAC approval, these big agency budgets still need a greenlight from the House and Senate. Meanwhile, budgets for smaller departments continue to get shot down in the quest for savings, including a handful Friday morning sure to be tweaked next week. Generally speaking, however, budget writers are signaling they're about done with the games and acrimony and are intent on setting passable budgets and getting out of town.

Amid the chaos, we are witnessing a dizzying amount of back-room negotiations and horse trading, meaning a steady flow of new or revamped bills continue to move through the pipeline. We are also seeing a few bills resurrected after undergoing major overhauls, including a huge new urban renewal bill, a community infrastructure district bill and a new utility wildfire mitigation/liability bill. At this point, bills like these seem to have a predetermined outcome and are moving swiftly, yet another signal Sine Die is near.

As we enter the final turn of the session, tensions remain high. Legislators and staff are exhausted. Some of our competitors are no longer showing up, while others seem spent and content to just mill about the halls. We remain vigilant and are already looking forward by engaging lawmakers now on potential policy ideas and solutions for 2026.

All bills for the 2025 session can be found on the [Idaho State Legislative website](#). Interested in finding your legislator? Visit [HERE](#). Daily reading calendars and agendas are found [HERE](#). As usual, we're available if you have questions.



## Policies

### **HJM 7 - Medicaid Waivers - House Health and Welfare**

A House Joint Memorial to call on the US Department of Health and Human Services to approve the pending Idaho Medicaid Waivers that have been sent since fall 2019. These waivers include family planning, alcohol and drug treatment, work or educational requirements, and rules preferring that newly eligible Medicaid recipients first apply for public assistance through the state's insurance exchange.

**Sponsor: Rep. Redman (R-3)**

### **HB 117 - Insurance Data Security, Breach Reporting – Returned to Business Committee**

Requires that insurance companies with 50+ employees be required to maintain data storage, maintenance, and security standards for the safety of Idaho citizens. If any breach identified, they also would be required to report the finding.

**Sponsor: Rep. Redman (R-3)**

### **HB 134 – Breast Cancer Screening – Passed the House (62-6-2) – Passed the Senate (25-10-0) – Sent to the Governor**

Allows for coverage of supplemental breast cancer screening for persons of heightened risks, including genetic predisposition, prior radiation therapy and other factors. Coverage applies to health insurance plans other than Medicaid or self-insured ERISA plans. There is likely to be a fiscal impact.

**Sponsors: Rep. Green (D-18), Rep. Healey (D-15), Rep. Rubel (D-18)**

### **HB 135 – Illegal Aliens Health, Social Benefits – Passed the House (46-22-2) – Senate Floor**

Amends Idaho Code to remove certain non-emergency health care benefits and social benefits for illegal aliens residing in Idaho. The bill would not require verification of lawful presence in Idaho for emergency health care, short-term non-cash disaster relief, or programs at short-term shelters. Also further defines lawful presence in Idaho.

**Sponsor: Rep. Redman (R-3)**

### **HB 136aaS – Transparency in Drug Pricing Program – Passed the House (67-0-3) – Passed the Senate (32-3-0) – Sent to the Governor**

Adds new section to Idaho Code to establish provisions related to the 340B drug pricing program. Defines 340B covered programs and sets criteria for those programs to report before April 1 of each year to DHW, Attorney General and State Controller.

**Sponsor: Rep. Redman (R-3)**

### **HB 219 - Health Insurance, Cost Sharing - House Health and Welfare**

Establishes provisions regarding cost-sharing requirements for health benefit plans. Defines the terms “cost-sharing requirement” and “health care service” and includes enrollee transparency guidelines. Would require health insurance companies to apply toward the insured’s copay, deductible and out-of-pocket maximum those payments made by a third party for the benefit of the insured.

**Sponsor: Rep. Cannon (R-30)**

### **HB 385 - 340b Prescription Program- House Health and Welfare**

Protects and expands the 340b, prohibiting pharmaceutical manufacturers from interfering with delivery of drugs, or imposing restrictions on program participation. Also ensures that safety-net clinics in rural areas can partner with local pharmacies to distribute discounted medications, safeguarding affordable healthcare access for underserved communities.

**Sponsor: Rep. Redman (R-3)**



**[HB 345](#) - Managed Care Medicaid – Signed into Law**

**[HB 14](#) - Idaho Code Cleanup Act – Signed into Law**

**[HB 31](#) - Medicaid Payer of Last Resort – Signed into Law**

**[HB 38](#) - Idaho Life and Health Insurance Guaranty Association Act – Signed into Law**

**[HB 62](#) – Medicaid Fraud & Tax Commission – Signed into Law**

**[HB 71](#) - Uniform Standards-Insurance – Signed into Law**

**[HB 116](#) - Small Employer Carrier Insurance Repeal – Signed into Law**

**[HB 90](#) – Public Assistance, Legislative Action – Signed into Law**

### **Appropriations and Budgets**

This is where appropriations and budgets of interest will appear as introduced in the session.

### **Rules**

[HERE](#) is the link for the Index of all Pending Rules seeking legislative approval. Committees in both the House and Senate are assigned rules to approve. As a reminder, the rules docket needs to pass both the House and the Senate, they are set to go into effect but need to be enacted by legislation or executive order. Once a pending rule is approved, a (+) symbol will appear in front of the docket number. If a pending rule is not approved by the Legislature a (-) will appear in front of the docket number.

### **Department of Health and Welfare**

(+) (+) [16-0309-2401](#) – Medicaid Basic Plan Benefits (ZBR Chapter Rewrite) – Proposed Rule

### **Appointments**

On January 20, 2025, Alex Adams was confirmed by the Senate as the Director for the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare.

On January 23, 2025, Steve Landon was confirmed by the Senate to the State Insurance Fund Board

On February 5, 2025, Tara Malek was confirmed by the Senate to the Idaho Health Insurance Exchange Board