



Week Twelve Idaho Legislative Update for March 24 – March 28, 2025

The end of the Sixty-Eighth Idaho Legislature's first regular session is near, but not here, yet. As we enter the fourth month, signs things are drawing to a close are everywhere. Committee meetings are becoming rare and shorter in duration, replaced by longer floor sessions dominated by debates centered on proposed budgets. House and Senate leadership has significantly dialed back – though they didn't quite stop – the introduction of new bills. The atmosphere inside the Capitol is noticeably quieter and more subdued now that most of the big policy debates have played out.

This morning, the 82nd day of the session, the Joint Finance Appropriations Committee made a handful of technical fixes and resubmitted education enhancement budgets rejected on the House Floor earlier this week. The committee promptly adjourned at the call of the chair with no plans to meet again. But with other budgets failing on the floor today and several of the large budgets pending floor discussion, JFAC members may be compelled to reconvene next week.

There is still much work yet to be done in both chambers, especially on the Senate side of the building. Budgets, which are constitutionally mandated to be funded and balanced, are the reason work will stretch into next week. This is an uneasy statehouse tradition, and after all the games in JFAC the last few months, tensions on budgets are higher than ever. Floor debates on budget bills remain contentions, and we anticipate spirited discussions on budgets for higher education, the Idaho Transportation Department, Department of Environmental Quality, Health and Welfare, and the State Board of Education next week. A handful of policy bills that have been swiftly amended by House and Senate members, including revisions to the Idaho LAUNCH program, will likely be called up next week as well.

At the same time, activity in the Governor's office has escalated. This week, Gov. Little put his signature on legislation cutting \$100 million from local units of government for property tax relief, bringing the overall tax cut total this session to more than \$400 million. A bill he signed Thursday, [HB 83](#), giving law enforcement new authority when engaging with illegal immigrants drew an immediate [legal challenge](#) from the ACLU. A pair of bills with new mandates on how local governments use state funds for roads await the Governor's review after passing on a nearly party line vote.

There is some bittersweet news to report about leadership at the Department of Health and Welfare. It was announced this week that Director Alex Adams has been [nominated](#) to serve as Assistant Secretary for Family Support with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. While it's a terrific and worthy promotion for Adams, it's a staggering loss for Idaho, Health and Welfare, and the important work he is doing in reforming the department and putting more focus on the state's foster care program. Director Adams' service to Idaho, in various capacities, has been brilliant. He will be missed.

While we've reported on the heightened tensions, frayed relationships and lost patience in recent weeks, we would be remiss if we didn't take a moment to point out a moment of true compassion and bipartisan solidarity among legislators this week. On Tuesday, several lawmakers from both parties walked over to a salon a block from the Capitol to shave their heads in support for Rep. Brook Green, who is undergoing chemotherapy treatment for breast cancer. You can read more about that [here](#), but we applaud the spirit behind it all and wish Rep. Green peace and healing.

The House and Senate may adjourn Sine Die or recess or next week, then return to respond to any bills vetoed by Gov. Little. Leadership has hinted, however, that they may declare they've achieved enough over the last 12 weeks and call for Sine Die instead of waiting. Whenever the session wraps, we'll be quick to share the news with you. Stay tuned.

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

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) – House Concurred (52-18-0) – 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 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

HB 134 – Breast Cancer Screening – Signed into Law

Appropriations and Budgets

S 1194 -Department of Health & Welfare, Public Health Services FY26 Enhancement – House Floor

Includes the restoration of funding for several programs in the division that include Suicide Prevention, Drug Overdose Prevention, WIC Food Program, Alzheimer's and Dementia programs, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and partial funding for the Hepatitis C and HIV Prevention programs; funding for the continuation of several ARPA programs; funding for the fourth year of communicable disease prevention grant funding; new funding for the Immunization Assessment Fund and changes \$19M of ongoing funding to onetime funding; additional appropriation for revenue generated in the Vital Records Bureau; new funding for the Home Visiting Program and changes \$3.5M of ongoing funding to onetime funding for the program; and funding for the Rural Nursing Loan Repayment Program for years 3-5 of the program totaling \$27.7M.

Sponsors: Rep. Manwaring (R-29) Sen. Woodward (R-1)



S 1201 – Department of Health & Welfare, Division of Medicaid FY26 Enhancement – Senate Floor

includes appropriations for the Hospital Assessment Fund, the federally required Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) surveys, expenses for the Adult Developmental Disabilities Resource Allocation model required by court order, actuary contract amendments, the federally required External Quality Review contract for Managed Care Organizations, year four of the MMIS procurement process, and population forecast adjustments. This bill also provides the appropriation to move Extended Employment Services from Services for the Developmentally Disabled to the Division of Medicaid as part of the department's overall reorganization totaling \$674M.

Sponsors: Sen Bjerke (R-5), Rep. Furniss (R-31)

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