



2023 LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Welcome to the first edition of the 2023 IMA Weekly Legislative Report. Every week during the Idaho Legislative Session, you will receive an update from the lobby team highlighting activities around the Capitol, updates on IMA's Legislative Priorities, and progress on legislation impacting IMA in the form of a bill tracker.

Governor Brad Little's State of the State Address

The Governor's State of the State address acts as the official beginning to the Idaho Legislative Session. Similar to what you see with the U.S. President's State of the Union, this highlights the Governor's legislative priorities, budget requests, and accomplishments over the last year. Most importantly, it sets the tone for the Legislative Session. While a large part of Governor Little's focus was on education, he followed up his address highlighting the following health and human services priorities:

- Adds \$824k in GME funding. This includes \$600k for 10 new **medical residents** (16 total new positions; 6 are fully federally funded) to address the shortage of physicians in the state and continue implementation of the 10-year Graduate Medical Education expansion plan. In addition, there is a bump of \$2000 per resident funding increase for existing seats.
- Provides \$3 million to assist independent physicians with establishing medical clinics to increase healthcare capacity and primary care access in rural Idaho.
- Provides \$72 million (\$21.6 million General Fund and \$50.4 million federal funds) ongoing for the Idaho Behavioral Health contract that will provide 10% rate increases and expanded **behavioral health services** to Medicaid beneficiaries.
- Includes \$24 million for the construction of a secure, forensic 26-bed **mental health facility** to care for patients committed and determined to be dangerously mentally ill by Idaho courts.
- Provides \$20 million in ongoing federal funding for Ground Emergency Medical Transport to ensure that access to ambulance services and **emergency medical care** in rural areas remains viable.
- Provides \$4 million in ongoing dedicated and federal fund spending authority to open and operate the Post Falls **Veterans Home**, and \$68.4 million in federal fund spending authority to match the state's previous General Fund investment to renovate the Boise Veterans Home.
- Provides a \$2 million investment in evidence-based child abuse and neglect prevention programs.

Idaho Legislature: Leadership and Relevant Committee Assignments



The first week of December, the House and Senate convened for the Organizational Session. During this time, each party in each body votes on the makeup of their parties' leadership. With Scott Bedke successfully running for Lt. Governor, the House Leadership was expected to see significant changes. Below is a complete leadership breakdown for both the House and Senate for the 2023-2024 Legislative Session:

House

Speaker of the House - Mike Moyle (R-Star)
Majority Leader - Megan Blanksma (R-Hammett)
Assistant Majority Leader - Sage Dixon (R-Ponderay)
Majority Caucus Chair - Dustin Manwaring (R-Pocatello)
Minority Leader - Ilana Rubel (D-Boise)
Assistant Minority Leader - Lauren Necochea (D-Boise)
Minority Caucus Chair - Ned Burns (D-Bellevue)

Senate

President Pro Tempore - Chuck Winder (R-Boise)
Majority Leader - Kelly Anthon (R-Burley)
Assistant Majority Leader - Abby Lee (R-Fruitland)
Majority Caucus Chair - Mark Harris (R-Soda Springs)
Minority Leader - Melissa Wintrow (D-Boise)
Assistant Minority Leader - James Ruchti (D-Pocatello)
Minority Caucus Chair - Janie Ward-Engelking (D-Boise)



Following Leadership elections, those that were successful began the process of building each House and Senate committee. First, by selecting Chairs and Vice Chairs, and then building the body/membership of each committee. For IMA, the two of the most impactful committees are the House and Senate Health and Welfare Committees and the Joint

Finance-Appropriations Committee (JFAC). The latter is responsible for funding GME. Below is a complete breakdown of those committees:

House Health & Welfare

Chair, Rep. John Vander Woude (R-Nampa)
Vice Chair, Rep. Marco Erickson (R-Idaho Falls)
Rep. Megan Blanksma (R-Hammett)
Rep. Mike Kingsley (R-Lewiston)
Rep. Brandon Mitchell (R-Moscow)
Rep. Chenele Dixon (R-Kimberly)
Rep. Jacyn Gallagher (R-Weiser)
Rep. Dori Healey (R-Meridian)
Rep. Jordan Redman (R-Coeur d'Alene)
Rep. Josh Wheeler (R-Ammon)
Rep. Sue Chew (D-Boise)
Rep. Ilana Rubel (D-Boise)
Rep. Nate Roberts (D-Pocatello)

Senate Health & Welfare

Chair, Sen. Julie Van Orden (R-Pingree)
Vice Chair, Glenneda Zuiderveld (R-Twin Falls)
Sen. Abby Lee (R-Fruitland)
Sen. Mark Harris (R-Soda Springs)
Sen. Carl Bjerke (R-Coeur d'Alene)
Sen. Melissa Wintrow (D-Boise)
Sen. Ron Taylor (D-Hailey)

Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee

(JFAC)

JFAC is a joint committee, combining membership from the House Appropriations Committee and the Senate Finance Committee.



House Appropriations Committee

Chair, Wendy Horman (R-Idaho Falls)
Vice Chair, Steve Miller (R-Fairfield)
Matthew Bundy (R-Mountain Home)
Britt Raybould (R-Rexburg)
Rod Furniss (R-Rigby)
Clay Handy (R-Burley)
Tina Lambert (R-Caldwell)
James Petzke (R-Meridian)
Josh Tanner (R-Eagle)
Brooke Green (D-Boise)

Senate Finance Committee

Chair, C. Scott Grow (R-Eagle)
Vice Chair, Carl J. Bjerke (R-Coeur d'Alene)
Van T. Burtenshaw (R-Terreton)
Dave Lent (R-Idaho Falls)
Kevin Cook (R-Idaho Falls)
Julie VanOrden (R-Pingree)
Ben Adams (R-Nampa)
Scott Herndon (R-Sagle)
Janie Ward-Engelking (D-Boise)
James R. Just (D-Boise)

Follow the hyperlinks to discover the membership of the remaining House and Senate committees.

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/committees/senatecommittees/>

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/committees/housecommittees/>

IMA Legislative Priorities

The IMA Board of Trustees creates a list of legislative priorities based on physician input at the annual House of Delegates meeting. Over the course of three weeks, the IMA lobby team toured the state to meet with members of the Idaho Legislature, with the purpose of educating them on the issues most important to you. The tour concluded nearly 1,900 miles later and with conversations with more than 50% of the Idaho Legislature. All told, the tour was a success.

We hope you were able to join us along the journey. However, in the event that you had a holiday conflict, we have included those priorities below.



Expanding Graduate Medical Education (GME): More Physicians Throughout Idaho

IMA supports funding for the 6th year of the Idaho State Board of Education's Ten-Year Graduate Medical Education Expansion Plan. IMA is strongly committed to growing our physician workforce, especially in rural and underserved parts of Idaho, to increase access to care, meet the demands of a fast-growing population, and produce the next generation of caregivers in Idaho's aging physician workforce.

For 2023, the Idaho State Board of Education and Idaho residency programs will seek \$1.2M in new funding for the 6th year of the GME expansion. This funding will expand residency positions by another 16 slots across Idaho (10 state funded,

6 fully federally funded), plus incrementally increase the base funding level by \$5000 for existing programs.

Ensuring Access to Women's Healthcare

IMA supports Idaho laws that ensure access to healthcare for women, especially those experiencing pregnancy complications. Idaho physicians want to be able to provide standard of care treatments in these situations to protect the lives, health, and fertility of Idaho women.

Idaho's current laws ban nearly all abortions except under a narrow set of circumstances. However, the language in the statutes also outlaws some medically necessary treatments for pregnancy complications in women who want to have children. It is IMA's understanding that this is not the outcome the Legislature intended but has since become an unintended consequence.

Care for Pregnancy Complications

IMA supports changes to Idaho's abortion laws to make it legal for physicians to provide standard of care, evidence-based treatments for women whose life or health may be endangered by the following pregnancy complications, among others:

- Ectopic or molar pregnancies
- Incomplete miscarriages
- Premature rupture of membranes
- Maternal diagnoses of cancer, preeclampsia, heart failure, or other serious medical conditions
- Lethal fetal diagnoses inconsistent with life outside the womb

Patient Safety and Access to Care

The current situation is impacting access to healthcare for women, which will likely cause Idaho's maternal mortality rates to worsen. Right now, Idaho women with pregnancy complications are experiencing lack of care or delays in care that endangers their lives, health, and future ability to have children. These are women who want to begin or grow their family but have received a devastating diagnosis.

Troubling Legal Provisions

Idaho's abortion laws have conflicting provisions and inconsistent terminology that create confusion and fear among physicians who take care of patients with pregnancy complications. This lack of clarity is compounded by two major components of Idaho's laws:

1. The law constructs "exceptions" to the abortion ban (life of the mother, rape & incest) as affirmative defenses physicians can use in court to defend themselves after they have been charged with a crime. This puts the burden of proof on physicians and takes away the normal legal precedent of innocence until proven guilty.
2. Physicians who follow the standard of care for treating pregnancy complications may be subject to criminal, civil and licensure sanctions. This triple threat of punitive action is creating reluctance to treat patients whose care may or may not be interpreted as legal by officials with no medical training.

IMA is committed to working with the Legislature to remedy the unintended consequences for Idaho families facing pregnancy complications, and we strongly support changes to the legal provisions of the law that negatively impact patient

access to care.

Physician Wellbeing & Impacts on Workforce Physician Burnout

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, physician burnout was recognized as a public health crisis in the U.S. While there is not an instant solution, IMA is committed to supporting the well-being of Idaho physicians. Currently, physician wellness programs aid struggling physicians. Expanding these programs and taking steps to ensure physicians feel comfortable seeking help are critical factors to combating physician burnout.

Threats and Harassment

Healthcare providers and public health officials have become the recent targets of 'doxing' (the public release of personal information with the intent to harass and intimidate). This tactic directly threatens the emotional and physical safety of both healthcare employees and their families. Doxing is unnecessarily contributing to the burnout of healthcare workers in Idaho.

IMA is committed to support any effort that will outlaw the publication of personal information when done with the intent to harass, intimidate, or harm healthcare workers and their families. IMA will also support efforts to limit public protests at healthcare employees' private residences.



If you ever have any questions or need any advice, don't hesitate to touch base with us.

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