



# Idaho Medical Association

## 2019 LEGISLATURE: IMA STATUS REPORT Week of January 14 – 18, 2019

### BIG CHANGES TO HEALTH AND WELFARE COMMITTEES IN 2019

As you know, the 2018 elections led to many changes in Idaho government. In addition to changes resulting from election outcomes, several legislators made the decision to not seek re-election. As a result, approximately one-quarter of Idaho's legislators are new to the legislature. Another change is that many committee chairs either lost their legislative races, retired, or changed committees. Committee chairs have significant power in the Idaho legislature with the authority to control whether legislation gets a hearing, when a hearing is scheduled, and how much testimony will be allowed. In effect, a committee chair can kill a bill simply by not acting on it.

Here is an introduction to the 2019 House and Senate Health and Welfare Committees:

SENATE HEALTH AND WELFARE COMMITTEE						
NAME	PARTY	YEARS IN LEG	NEW TO COMMITTEE	DIST	CITY	OCCUPATION
Fred Martin (Chair)	REP	7		15	Boise	Teacher
Mary Souza (Vice Chair)	REP	5		4	Coeur d'Alene	Business Owner
Lee Heider	REP	9		24	Twin Falls	Contractor (Ret)
Abby Lee	REP	5		9	Fruitland	Public Relations
Mark Harris	REP	5		32	Soda Springs	Rancher
Van Burtenshaw	REP	5	X	35	Terreton	Farmer/Rancher
Regina Bayer	REP	Temp	X	21	Meridian	Retired
Maryanne Jordan	DEM	5		17	Boise	Retired
David Nelson	DEM	1	X	5	Moscow	Engineer

HOUSE HEALTH AND WELFARE COMMITTEE						
NAME	PARTY	YEARS IN LEG	NEW TO COMMITTEE	DIST	CITY	OCCUPATION
Fred Wood (Chair)	REP	13		27	Burley	Physician (ER-Ret)
Jarom Wagoner (Vice Chair)	REP	3		10	Caldwell	City Planner
John Vander Woude	REP	9		22	Nampa	Farmer
Mark Gibbs	REP	11	X	32	Grace	Farmer
Megan Blanksma	REP	3		23	Hammett	Agribusiness
Mike Kingsley	REP	3		6	Lewiston	Semi-retired
Bryan Zollinger	REP	3		33	Idaho Falls	Attorney

Chad Christensen	REP	1	X	32	Ammon	Business Owner
John Green	REP	1	X	2	Post Falls	Attorney
Laurie Lickley	REP	1	X	25	Jerome	Rancher
Sue Chew	DEM	13		17	Boise	Pharmacist
Ilana Rubel	DEM	7		18	Boise	Attorney
Muffy Davis	DEM	1	X	26	Ketchum	Prof Speaker

If you know these legislators or if you live in their districts, please consider taking the time to speak to them about the issues that are important to you and to the practice of medicine in Idaho. Politics is relationships and sharing your views with those who make the decisions is critical to the process.

## NEW ISSUES THIS WEEK

### **Maternal Mortality Review Committee ~ SUPPORT**

IMA is in the final stages of preparing legislation to create a Maternal Mortality Review Committee (MMRC) within the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare. The US has experienced an increase in maternal deaths in recent decades that far exceeds the rates in other comparable countries. For example, the US has a maternal death rate of 26.4 per 100,000 live births compared to other countries such as UK (9.2), Germany (9), France (7.8), Canada (7.3), Spain (5.6), Italy (4.2) and Finland (3.8). (*Source: The Lancet*). Idaho had six maternal deaths in 2017 (27.1 deaths per 100,000 live births) and has had an average of just over five maternal deaths per year from 2008 to 2017 for a total of 49 maternal deaths among Idaho women in that nine year period. (*Source: IDHW 2017 Mortality Report by Idaho Vital Statistics*). The majority of maternal deaths are preventable and the MMRC would be created to study why maternal deaths are happening in Idaho and what can be done to improve outcomes. The MMRC would cover all deaths, regardless of provider type or birth setting. The purpose is education, not punishment, and all MMRC work would be subject to the protection of state peer review statutes.

**Status:** *Language is being finalized and this legislation will be introduced in the next few weeks.*

### **Insurance Coverage for Hearing Aids and Speech Therapy for Idaho Children ~ SUPPORT**

Rep. Ilana Rubel (D-Boise) is leading the charge to require insurers to cover medically necessary hearing aids and speech therapy sessions for approximately 1,000 Idaho children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Under the new rules, insurers must cover new hearing devices once every three years, as well as 45 hours of speech therapy during the first year after receiving the hearing aid.

**Status:** *The rules passed the House Business Committee on Thursday and will go to the Senate Commerce Committee for a vote next week.*

### **Board of Medicine Statute and Administrative Rules Updates**

The Idaho Board of Medicine has undertaken a rewrite of their statutes and rules to modernize the language and to ensure that what is in law reflects the processes and procedures BOM currently follows. There are, however, a few new provisions:

**New Grounds for Medical Discipline.** BOM has added unprofessional or disruptive behavior to the list of acts that are considered grounds for medical discipline. The language in the new law addresses a physician who is: *Engaging in a pattern of unprofessional or disruptive behavior or interaction in a healthcare setting that interferes with patient care or could reasonably be expected to adversely impact the quality of care*

*rendered to a patient; provided that such behavior does not have to have caused actual patient harm to be considered unprofessional or disruptive.*

*Changes to PA Supervision Ratios.* BOM is increasing the number of PAs a supervising physician or alternate supervising physician may supervise from three to four. The provision enabling a physician to petition the board to supervise up to six PAs will remain in place.

*New PA Position on Board of Medicine.* BOM is adding a PA position to their full board. The board will now consist of eleven members: seven physicians, one PA, two public members, and one representative of law enforcement.

## **ONGOING PRIORITY ISSUES**

### **Graduate Medical Education ~ *SUPPORT***

IMA is committed to full implementation of the State Board of Education's 10-Year Strategic Plan for GME Expansion, which will create 19 new slots for residents and fellows in the next year. It also increases the per-resident funding amount that the state provides to our existing GME programs, which is critical to their sustainability. This year is the second year of funding for the ten-year plan and we anticipate programs will receive an additional amount of \$1,657,500 over and above existing funding for residency programs in Idaho.

*Status: This budget request will be heard in the Joint Finance and Appropriations Committee in February.*

### **Proposition 2 (Medicaid Expansion) ~ *SUPPORT***

IMA is equally committed to full implementation of Medicaid expansion due to passage of Proposition 2 in November. Some legislators who still oppose expanding Medicaid are discussing work requirements and other possible barriers to coverage for the gap population. IMA opposes unnecessary and costly barriers to coverage in Idaho. Experience in other states shows that restrictions are very expensive for the state and do not prove to be effective at doing anything other than endangering the very coverage Idahoans voted to provide.

*Status: Discussions are ongoing.*

### **Requiring Meningitis Vaccination for High School Seniors ~ *SUPPORT***

The Idaho Department of Health & Welfare has submitted an administrative rule that adds a new school entry immunization requirement. It requires a second dose of meningococcal (MenACWY) vaccination before a student enters the 12th grade in Idaho, or a first dose if the student was not previously vaccinated, starting with school year 2020-2021. If a student received their first dose of the vaccine at 16 years of age or older, they will not be required to receive the second dose before entry into the 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

*Status: This rule was heard in the House Health & Welfare Committee on Thursday morning and, after lengthy debate, was approved on a 7-6 vote. The rule now goes to the Senate Health & Welfare Committee for a vote.*

## **WEEKLY REPORTS ON LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY**

As always, the IMA will provide weekly electronic legislative reports during the session. If you have questions or concerns on any of the issues discussed in our reports, please contact us. We are always happy to provide context, additional information, or background on how IMA legislative policies are developed.

If we don't have your current email address you could miss out on important legislative news. If you would like to receive the reports, please send your current email address to

[membership@idmed.org](mailto:membership@idmed.org) or call us at (208) 344-7888. For more frequent legislative updates, follow the IMA on Facebook!

**SUPPORT IMPAC, THE IMA'S POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE!**

The IMA Political Action Committee (IMPAC) Board uses your contributions to support a variety of bi-partisan candidates based on the best interests of Idaho physicians and their patients. Even though there was just an election in late 2018, please consider donating to IMA's political action committee (IMPAC). Campaign contributions are made during election years (every two years in Idaho) and it is important that the PAC coffers get refilled in the non-election years.

**IMPAC needs your contributions now to support the house of medicine in Idaho!**

Go here to donate: [IMPAC](#)