



DISTRICT 27 e-NEWSLETTER – February 17, 2014

This week both the House of Representatives and the Senate honored the great President Abraham Lincoln. The House presentation was led by former Lt. Gov. David Leroy along with a Lincoln and two civil war re-enactors.

The session has hit the midway point, and we are as busy as ever. This marks a few changes: the first-half Senate and House Pages (high school seniors working at the Legislature) have returned home to school and a new group has arrived. We were privileged to have Kortni Wells from Burley and Kami Elorrieta from Eden. Now we welcome Kamil Blacker from Heyburn, Lydia Woodland from Burley, and Kindra Lind from Oakley. The Page program is a great way for students to learn more about state government. The Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee has completed its hearings on agency budget requests and will begin setting those agency budgets. The Senate is also grappling with the idea of guns on campus; the bill has moved out of committee and will come before the Senate.

Finally, there are two pieces of news about health insurance. The Idaho Healthcare Exchange is ranked as the second-fastest growing state exchange in America. Idaho has nearly doubled its enrollment, despite the failures of the federal government's exchange. For more about this, click [here](#). We reiterate our opposition to the federal health exchange. Recently, President Obama delayed the medium-sized (50-99) employer mandate until 2016. This is good news for those employers, but the overall implementation of this exchange is frustrating. We would prefer a delay for all employers.

Speaker Scott Bedke

Phone: 332-1111 Email: sbedke@house.idaho.gov

This week a very important piece of legislation moved out of the Idaho House of Representatives and to the Senate committee. House Joint Resolution 2 will place on the November ballot a proposed constitutional amendment. In order to understand what this amendment will do, a little history is in order:

The legislative branch creates the laws and the executive branch often enforces those laws by creating rules that have the full force and effect of law. Most of the time these rules are within the original intent of the legislation. There are times, however, when the rules created by the agencies go beyond or are inconsistent with legislative intent.

For more than 30 years the Idaho Legislature has had the ability to review and then approve or reject the rules created by agencies. A 1990 Idaho Supreme Court decision affirmed this oversight as being within the authority of the legislature. HJR 2 passed the House unanimously last week and needs a 2/3 majority vote by the Senate in order to go before the citizens of Idaho for approval. If HJR 2 is approved by voters this November, the legislature's authority to review administrative rules will become a part of the Idaho Constitution.

Why is this important to ordinary citizens? Whether they realize it or not, the people of Idaho are affected everyday by agency rules. Virtually every aspect of our daily lives, from the barber shop to the bank to the tax commission, is subject to regulation of one form or another. The legislative review of agency rules serves to keep those regulations in check, assuring that they are reasonable and necessary, rather than intrusive and overreaching. If the legislature's oversight authority is enshrined in our Constitution, as HJR 2 will do, our ability to review these agency rules will be even more firmly established than it has been and will not be vulnerable to a future court challenge.

I hope this brief explanation has helped inform you on this legislation so you can in turn inform your friends and neighbors, and then all of you will be informed voters when you see this measure on the November ballot. To read more about this, click [here](#).

Representative Fred Wood

Phone: 332-1138 Email: fwood@house.idaho.gov

This week the House Health and Welfare Committee heard from the Statewide Healthcare Innovation Program, or SHIP. This is led by Dr. Ted Epperly, CEO and President of Family Medicine Residency of Idaho. This program operates with a grant that the Department of Health and Welfare oversees, with the goal of improving health, improving healthcare, and decreasing costs for all Idahoans. This program evolved from a 2007 healthcare summit that Governor Otter convened. SHIP works to create, promote and facilitate a multiplayer healthcare delivery system. They have held 60 town hall meetings and focus groups all over our state.

The goal is to improve patient outcomes by helping primary care providers better share their information. This will help prevent "relapses" in medical issues by tracking the information more thoroughly which will help save Idahoans' lives and money. SHIP's governing board is made up of providers, consumers, payers (ex: Medicaid, Dept of Health and Welfare, etc) and others, including legislators. Regional collaboration throughout Idaho ensures all citizens are represented and involved, in addition to helping synchronize the system to help keep Idahoans' healthy. The Idaho Health Data Exchange helps SHIP share information and decrease costs. This project will benefit all Idahoans. To read more about SHIP, click [here](#).

Senator Dean Cameron

Phone: 334-4735 Email: dcameron@senate.idaho.gov

This week the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee made a decision to adopt the number \$2.9 billion as our FY 2015 state revenue number. We will spend less than this amount, but it is the number we will operate with from a revenue standpoint. This was what both Gov. Butch Otter and the Joint Economic Outlook & Revenue Assessment Committee recommended. Additionally, JFAC also passed a change in employee compensation (CEC) for state workers as recommended by the Joint CEC Committee. This is a 2% increase for state employees. Of this change, 1% will be a one-time addition and the other 1% will be ongoing. This sets the framework for us to start building budgets over the next few weeks.

JFAC also held a public hearing last Friday to give Idahoans an opportunity to share their budgetary concerns. We heard from a variety of citizens and their concerns. Education funding was the largest concern, followed closely by Medicaid funding. We also heard comments about the need for better agricultural education from an FFA president and supporting young adults. There was testimony by some school children which was particularly compelling. Many concerned teachers, retired adults, parents of students and children with disabilities were present as well. For some testimony highlights, press reports and pictures click [here](#) and [here](#).

As always, there are unfortunately more requests than money to allocate, but JFAC will continue to do its best. We were grateful for the concerned citizens who came to tell us where they thought their tax dollars should be allocated. We heard from young school children to grandparents-- with people coming from north Idaho, Idaho Falls and everywhere in between. We listened, we heard your concerns, and we will do our best.

With Appreciation

Thank you all for the opportunity to serve our legislative district and state. It is truly a privilege that we greatly appreciate and do not take for granted. Please feel free to share your thoughts, ideas, or suggestions by emailing us or calling our offices. Often the best ideas come from constituents, like you. Please feel free to share this newsletter with others. If they would like to be added to our mailing list please send us an email.

Thank you,



Scott Bedke
District 27
Idaho State Legislature



Fred Wood



Dean Cameron

