



CAPITOL REVIEW

A WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

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A Weekly Legislative Report

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WHAT IS CAPITOL REVIEW?

You are receiving Capitol Review, a publication produced **each Friday** during the Idaho Legislature, as a board member of a client served by Association Management Group. Lobbyists **Rick Waitley, Roger Batt, Patxi Larrocea-Phillips, and Cassidey Plum** are working to keep you apprised about legislative issues. If you have questions on issues or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact our office. Rick Waitley, Roger Batt, Patxi Larrocea-Phillips, and Cassidey Plum will be representing the following clients during the 2025 legislative session:

Rick Waitley and Patxi Larrocea-Phillips:

AgWest Farm Credit
Food Producers of Idaho
Idaho Alfalfa/Clover Seed Growers Association
Idaho Hay/Forage Association
Idaho Onion Growers' Association
Idaho Noxious Weed Control Association
Nezperce Prairie Grass Growers Association
NW Agriculture Cooperative Council

Patxi Larrocea-Phillips:

Idaho Cattle Association
Idaho Wool Growers Association

Roger Batt and Cassidey Plum:

Coalition for Agriculture's Future
Idaho Eastern Oregon Seed Association
Idaho Ground Water Association
Idaho Irrigation Equipment Association
Idaho Mint Growers Association
Treasure Valley Water Users Association

Roger Batt:

Bayer US, LLC
Idaho Grape Growers/Wine Comm.

Cassidey Plum:

Idaho Honey Industry Association

GOVERNOR'S STATE OF THE STATE

On Monday, Governor Little highlighted his plan the budget and his approach for the coming legislative session. Below are several highlights for the coming year.

- **TAX RELIEF:** Idaho has already delivered \$4.6 BILLION in tax cuts to Idahoans in the past six years. His KEEPING PROMISES plan puts another \$100 million back in Idahoan's wallets.
- **SUPPORT FOR THE AMERICAN WORKER:** Elsewhere in the country, fewer and fewer students are moving on to some form of education or training after high school, but not Idaho! Idaho is bucking the trend. We had the largest cohort EVER of students enrolled in a program after high school thanks to Idaho LAUNCH. The Governor's plan adds \$25 million to increase capacity at community and technical colleges to get more working class Idahoans on the fast track to a career.
- **GREATER GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCIES:** President Trump's Department of Government Efficiency is already looking to the least regulated state for the blueprint on how to cut red tape, stimulate economic activity, and streamline government. Governor Little's KEEPING PROMISES plan puts more structure around our permitting reform efforts for largescale mining and energy projects.
- **INFRASTRUCTURE TO KEEP UP WITH RAPID GROWTH:** Idaho has championed record investments in roads, bridges, water, broadband, outdoor recreation and other infrastructure – without raising taxes or fees. Governor Little's KEEPING PROMISES plan keeps our foot on the gas with needed

transportation projects to keep up with record population growth.

- **WATER AND FIRE:** Governor Little's KEEPING PROMISES plan commits \$ 30 million to water infrastructure projects that are proven to increase water levels in the aquifer and protect Idaho agriculture. To keep up our state's defenses against wildfires that threaten our communities and natural resources, Governor Little also proposes over \$100 million for fire, including bonuses to retain firefighters as well as proactively and responsibly funding the state's fire suppression account so our firefighters know we've got their back.

AG ALL STAR AWARDS PRESENTED

A total of 53 legislators were recognized at an event on Wednesday evening, January 8 at the Food Producers Ag All Star event. Those being honored gained the recognition and award based upon their votes on Food

House (35 All Stars)

Senate (18 All Stars)

Todd Achilles

Christopher Allgood*

Megan Blanksma

Matthew Bundy

Ned Burns

Richard "Rick" Cheatum*

Lance Clow

Jeff Cornilles

Chenele Dixon*

Melissa Durrant*

Marco Erickson

Rod Furniss

Sonia Galaviz*

John Gannon

Dan Garner*

Brooke Green

Clay Handy*

Greg Lanting*

Dustin Manwaring

Chris Mathias

Lori McCann*

Stephanie Mickelsen*

Steve Miller*

Lauren Necochea

Jack Nelsen*

James Petzke*

Britt Raybould

Jerald Raymond*

Nate Roberts

Ilana Rubel

Mark Sauter*

Jon Weber

Josh Wheeler*

Kenny Wroten*

Julie Yamamoto*

Kelly Anthon*

Treg Bernt*

Van Burtenshaw

Kevin Cook

C. Scott Grow

Jim Guthrie*

Mark Harris*

Linda Wright Hartgen

James "Rick" Just*

Todd Lakey

Abby Lee*

Dave Lent

Doug Ricks

James Ruchti*

Geoff Schroeder*

Julie VanOrden*

Janie Ward-Engelking

Chuck Winder

**Received award every year eligible*

Underline indicates first-time recipient

Producers issues in the 2024 legislature. Ag industry leaders from a variety of industries joined the legislature for the breakfast honoring the achievement:

BALLOT INITIATIVES

One of the first pieces of legislation printed in the 2025 legislative session deals with ballot initiatives. H2 would amend Idaho Code to revise the voting threshold from 50% to 60% on statewide ball initiatives. Ballot initiatives have had an interesting path in recent years. In 2021, S1110 passed through the legislature and was legislation to increase voter involvement and inclusivity in the voter initiative and referendum process. It was intended to be accomplished by ensuring signatures are gathered from each of the 35 legislative districts, so every part of Idaho is included in this process. Unfortunately, later that summer the Idaho Supreme Court found the law unconstitutional when challenged in the legal process. Agriculture and rural communities stand to benefit from heightening ballot initiative requirements as many of those initiatives can be driven by urban areas.

ASSISTANCE FOR SPECIALTY CROPS

The Marketing Assistance for Specialty Crops program provides financial assistance to specialty crop producers to help them expand domestic markets or develop new markets for their crops. The deadline to apply is **January 10, 2025**. Please contact your local FSA County Office for more information on how to apply. MASC covers the following commercially marketed specialty crops grown in the US:

- Fruits (fresh, dried);
- Vegetables (including dry edible beans and peas, mushrooms, and vegetable seed);
- Tree nuts;
- Nursery crops, Christmas trees, and floriculture;
- Culinary and medicinal herbs and spices; and
- Honey, hops, maple sap, tea, turfgrass, and grass seed.

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