



# CAPITOL REVIEW

## A WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

AMG : RICK WAITLEY | ROGER BATT | BENJAMIN KELLY | PATXI LARROCEA-PHILLIPS  
55 SW 5TH AVENUE, SUITE 100 MERIDIAN, ID 83642 PH: 208-888-0988 FX: 208-888-4586

### A Weekly Legislative Report

Vol. 21 No. 7

02/26/2021

#### BROADBAND ADVISORY BOARD

H127 creates an Idaho Broadband Advisory Board and establishes the Idaho Broadband Fund. The Advisory Board would consist of nine members and be **tasked with developing, implementing and maintaining a statewide broadband plan.** The Idaho Broadband Fund would be created to accept such monies as allocated by the legislature and distribute such funds according to the statewide plan as implemented by the Idaho Broadband Advisory Board. Governor Little's **Building Idaho's Future investment package recommends \$35 million for a competitive broadband grant program** with an emphasis on bringing access to rural unserved or underserved households. These projects are long-lasting contributions to Idaho's future economic prosperity. The State of Idaho is **already seeing the results from the \$50 million in broadband infrastructure investments that was made last year** with federal coronavirus relief dollars. H127 passed out of committee this week and is waiting to be heard by the full House.

#### DRIVER AUTHORIZATION CARDS

S1132 will improve Idaho's road safety, ensure more drivers on Idaho roads are covered by insurance, enhance driver education and training for all Idahoans, and generate additional state revenue for Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) programs. A study conducted by the Office of Performance Evaluations (OPE), which was overseen by members of the Idaho Legislature revealed that **accidents with unlicensed drivers are three times deadlier than accidents with licensed drivers.** Further, the average property damage claim involving an unlicensed driver is \$22,000 higher than claims involving a licensed driver. Unlicensed drivers also create more burdens on the judicial system as they are 9.5 times more likely to flee the scene of a fatality accident. The limited requirements will help more people get the legal ability to drive, providing the potential to reduce burdens on the criminal justice system and reduce costs of judicial and law enforcement administration. People looking to

get a Driver's Authorization Card **will need to provide documents that provide their proof of residency in Idaho and proof of person such as a birth certificate.** They will also receive proper training before getting behind the wheel to drive. Undocumented workers are already using Idaho's roads. The **Driver Authorization Cards will hold them to the same standard as citizens, permanent residents or lawful visitors** by making available the safety training and licensing fees that are currently required. If S1132 is passed, an estimated 17,600 driving authorization cards are expected to be issued to unauthorized immigrants in Idaho within the first 30 months of a driving authorization program. There are currently an estimated 37,000 unauthorized immigrants that live in Idaho.

#### ENERGY AND SALMON CONCEPT

You are invited to a presentation by Congressman Mike Simpson on his recently announced energy and salmon concept, **which includes breaching the four lower four Snake River dams.** This presentation was arranged by Food Producers of Idaho and we wanted to invite those affected and any other landowners to participate.

**Congressman Mike Simpson**  
**"Energy and Salmon Concept"**  
**Tuesday, March 2, 2021 – 10:00 AM (MT)**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5801975135?pwd=MjBtdHBoMIR4Smx0ZEw2bWlscKhDdz09>

Meeting ID: 580 197 5135

Passcode: AMG

One tap mobile

+13462487799,,5801975135#,,,,,0#,,430140# US

Meeting ID: 580 197 5135

Passcode: 430140

#### RECREATIONAL AGREEMENTS

Idaho's recreational access laws encourage private landowners to grant public access to their property for

recreational purposes. Amidst COVID-19 state and public lands saw surging amounts of visitors. Idaho has also seen very high levels of fishing and hunting licenses sold which indicates the public's interest in getting outdoors. While most recreational users behave responsibly, occasionally a member of the public causes substantial damage to gates, fences, crops or other areas closed to motorized vehicles. H187 would clarify that when a landowner enters into a recreational access agreement with Fish and Game, and **both the landowner and the department agree to certain restrictions on motorized vehicles**, the department actually has the authority to enforce those restrictions, as long as the recreational users are given notice of the restrictions. **H187 was supported by various members engaged in the Idaho Property Rights Coalition.** H187 was heard in the House Resources and Conservation Committee and is currently waiting to be heard by the full House.

### [VEHICLE EMISSION TESTING](#)

H154 would allow certain counties to opt out of vehicle and maintenance programs under specific conditions. The legislation passed the House this week and will move to the Senate. The current program came about as a preemptive measure to reduce pollution from the general public's vehicles and keep areas that were close to, or over non-attainment standards from becoming a non-attainment area for ozone pollutants. **Eliminating emission-testing programs puts the Treasure Valley's compliance with federal air quality standards at risk likely causing greater restrictions**, mandates and increased costs. The auto emission testing in both Canyon and Ada counties is important to maintaining good air quality in Treasure Valley because automobiles are the primary source of nitrogen oxide emissions. Once an area is designated a non-attainment area, we would be backed into a corner and **DEQ would be required by EPA to have stricter oversight to take steps to improve air quality.** These drastic reduction measures would impact everyone.

As we bring our commodities to town, **non-attainment would make it more difficult for food processors to make changes, adding more stringent permitting requirements.** Not being able to do so will hinder those facilities, which can have a direct impact on local production agriculture. Though less regulation on an already overregulated sector such as agriculture needs to be more balanced, not meeting EPA standards by the general public would only bring more onerous regulations on agriculture.

### [NEW LEGISLATORS](#)

This week we wanted to continue the trend and introduce several more **freshmen legislators.**

#### **Rep. Colin Nash District 16 (Ada County)**



Graduate of Concordia University School of Law and Weber State University; estate planning attorney in Meridian, Idaho; spouse: Hailey, educator; two children.

#### **Rep. Marco Erickson District 33 (Bonneville County)**



Born in Montana and raised in Boise, Idaho; bachelor's degree in psychology from Montana State University and a master's degree in psychology from Walden University; served 14 years in eastern Idaho providing mental health services to families; employed with state government managing departments, including education and public and behavioral health, with projects focused on mental health, HIV, homelessness, suicide, and drug and alcohol treatment and prevention; public speaker since age 19 and served on many national, statewide, and local boards and committees focused on building positive community change; married for 18 years; five children, four boys and one girl, ages 6-17.

#### **Rep. Chris Mathias District 19 (Ada County)**



Graduate of Boise State University with B.S. in criminal justice administration – McNair Scholar and student body president; U.S. Coast Guard veteran – top secret clearance, Arctic Service Medal, and two Antarctic Service Medals; former chief academic officer for the Idaho State Board of Education; former U.S. Senate law clerk; recipient of multiple civilian awards, including the Governor's Commendation for Distinguished Public Service and Idaho Business Review's Accomplished 40 Under 40; past and present volunteerism includes Boise State's School of Public Service Advisory Council and the Ada County Veterans Treatment Court; author of multiple articles about incident management and emergency preparedness in Idaho; spouse: Katie; two young children.

*Capitol Review* is written to inform the clients of Association Management Group (Waitley Associates, Batt Associates, Kelly Associates and LP Associates & Agriculture) about activities in the Idaho Legislature and, due to the proprietary nature of the publication, IS NOT for distribution to others **without attribution to AMG.**