



CAPITOL REVIEW

A WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

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A Weekly Legislative Report

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WHAT IS TOO MUCH

This week the House Ways and Means Committee introduced a resolution related to the proposed increase in compensation for legislators. The current pay for the **parttime position is \$19,993** and the Citizens Committee on Legislative Compensation in 2024 recommended a **pay increase to \$25,000**. The recommendation went into effect in December 2024. The resolution introduced would allow any legislator to donate any portion of the compensation to a fund that is aimed at property tax relief. There are some members in the body who feel that the current compensation of just under \$20,000 is excessive. Rep. Monks in addressing the resolution stated that is the very reason the tax relief fund was established. Last week the Senate voted down a resolution that would reject the legislator's pay raise. The resolution in the Senate was sponsored by Rep. Zito out of Mt. Home who had previously served in the House 2016-2020 and in the Senate 2020-2022 and was elected back to the Senate in November 2024. The Monk's resolution sent the measure to the full floor of the House for a vote.

WINTER FEEDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Senator Mark Harris, wants to bring some clarity to the **Winter Feeding Advisory Committee** that is overseen by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game. S1011 addresses the Committee made up of five members. The committee is responsible for the winter feeding of antelope, elk and deer in districts designated by the Department. S1011 explains that after July 1, 2025 when a vacant position on the board is available the position should **be filled by an agricultural producer**. The measure also states that any committee member appointed must reside in the district for which the committee was formed.

LONG TERM LEGISLATORS

I was in a discussion this week with some folks related to the longevity of legislators serving in the 2025 Legislature. So with a little research here is the list:

HOUSE:

Rep. Mike Moyle	14th term
Rep. Brent Crane	10th term
Rep. Judy Boyle	9th term
Rep. Joe Palmer	9th term
Rep. Vito Barbieri	8th term
Rep. John Vander Woude	8th term
Rep. James Holtzclaw	7th term
Rep. Ron Mendive	7th term
Rep. Jason Monks	7th term
Rep. Wendy Horman	7th term
Rep. Barbara Ehardt	5th term

SENATE:

Senator Janie Ward Engelking	8th term
Senator Ilana Rubel	7th term
Senator Jim Guthrie	7th term
Senator Julie VanOrden	6th term
(3 of which were in the House)	
Senator Kelly Anthon	6th term
Senator Lori Den Hartog	6th term
Senator Mark Harris	6th term
Senator C. Scott Grow	5th term

A term is two years. These statistics translate to the fact **that only 20 legislators have served more than 5 terms** (10 years) in the Idaho legislature. The wisdom and institutional memory of the legislative process is very important to continuity in how the legislature functions.

S1013 – TRAPPER EDUCATION

Senator Mark Harris has introduced the legislation which I brings from rule what must be taught in a **hunter and trapping education course** while also consolidating the requirements. It adds the requirement

that students must receive instruction on trespassing and personal and real property tampering laws. The bill also allows individuals to trap under the supervision of a certified guide without the individual being certified themselves. This allows the individual to receive hands on instruction and take the animals trapped without having to wait months to take a trapping education course. If that individual wishes to trap independently, they will still have to take the trapper education course but will have the additional experience

Specific areas to be taught as outlined in S1013 are the following subjects:

Such programs shall provide instruction on:

1. The safe handling of lawful hunting and trapping equipment
2. Weapon safety
3. Wildlife and natural resource conservation and laws
4. Good conduct and respect for the rights and property of others,
 1. including laws prohibiting trespass and tampering with real and personal property
 5. Species identification and non-target species avoidance
 6. Ethical practices
 7. First aid
 8. Survival in the outdoors

The measure is currently in the Senate Resource and Environment Committee.

WHO ACTUALLY DRAFTS A BILL

Pieces of legislation can come from a variety of sources: legislators, lobbyists, organizations, government agencies or individuals to name a few. However, in the end the starting point is a division of state government called Legislative Services. This week they reported that in **2024 a total of 2400 pieces** of legislation were drafted. While the Legislative Services Office (LSO) has a total of 78 employees there are only **six bill drafters**. This is a unique skill and talent and takes a great deal of understanding of Idaho Code and laws to be sure nothing is contrary to existing Idaho law with hopes of avoiding court challenges to laws past.

DEPREDAATION ISSUES WITH WILD ANIMALS

S1012 introduced by Senator Van Burtenshaw from Eastern Idaho provides an appeal option for individuals experiencing **depredation from wolves, grizzly bears, black bears, and mountain lions**. Currently, when an individual suffers loss, they must call APHIS-Wildlife Services, a division within a federal department, and have an investigator come inspect the injured or dead animal. Wildlife Services follows a grading system of confirmed, probable, possible, or

unknown and generally only observe the body. An individual can only receive compensation from federal government grants if the depredation is confirmed and state funding from wolf and grizzly bear loss when the depredation is confirmed or probable. Confirmed depredation is also a statistic to determine control of wildlife throughout the state. In its current form, once this single federal investigator makes a determination, that is the end of it. This bill would create an appeals board where three experts look at all the evidence and reconsider the determination of the initial federal investigator. This reconsideration would also assist the state in determining where control efforts should be prioritized. This board expends no money. They review all evidence. Having a closed-door meeting will help protect the identities and locations of those who are appealing and all involved in the appeals process. Money an individual receives is still public information and will continue to be.

AG ECON PUBLIC POLICY TOUR

Food Producers of Idaho will be hosting the **23rd Annual University of Idaho Ag Econ Public Policy Tour**. This year nine students and three faculty will be engaged. The group arrives on Sunday evening and are with us through Food Producers on Wednesday. They will spend time hearing from lobbyists, visiting legislative committees and hosting legislators for a dinner on Monday evening. Through the years a total of 350 participants have been part of this annual tour. Once the students and faculty members arrive in Boise, they are guests of Food Producer members. Those attending this year and their hometowns are as follows:

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|----------------------|--------------------|
| - Sam Kerner | Weiser, ID |
| - Layla Knight | Yamhill, OR |
| - Madi Passmore | Kuna, ID |
| - Brock Phillips | Star, ID |
| - Hannah Poland | East Wenatchee, WA |
| - Oree Reynolds | Castleford, ID |
| - Tristan Van Komen | Parma, ID |
| - Caleb Vernon | Eagle, ID |
| - Connor Wells | Boise, ID |
| - Dr. Chris McIntosh | Moscow, ID |
| - Dr. Tim Nadreau | Moscow, ID |
| - Dr. Jessica Windh | Twin Falls, ID |

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