
Legislative Action Guide

Idaho Association of Counties



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(In addition to these resources, IAC issues legislative alerts and a legislative bulletin on a regular basis during the legislative session. These items are emailed to our members.)

1 IAC Legislative Committee and Legislative Staff

1.1 IAC 2020 — 2021 Legislative Committee

Chair: Justin Baldwin, Gooding County Assessor
Vice Chair: Donna Peterson, Payette County Treasurer

Brad Wills	Twin Falls County Assessor	IACA
Doug Zenner	Nez Perce County Commissioner	IACC
Carrie Bird	Clearwater County Clerk	IACRC
Annette Dygert	Owyhee County Treasurer	IACT
Danny Clark	Bonneville County Prosecutor	IPAA
Scott Carver	Valley County Coroner	ISACC
Kieran Donahue	Canyon County Sheriff	ISA
Dan Dinning	Boundary County Commissioner	Dist. 1
Justin McCleod	Lewis County Commissioner	Dist. 2
Phil McGrane	Ada County Clerk	Dist. 3
Don Hall	Twin Falls County Commissioner	Dist. 4
Terrel Tovey	Bannock County Commissioner	Dist. 5
Brent Mendenhall	Madison County Commissioner	Dist. 6

1.2 IAC Legislative Staff

Seth Grigg, IAC Executive Director

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Cell: 208.695.7312

Sara Westbrook, IAC Policy Director

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1.3 Dear County Official:

Over the years, the Idaho Association of Counties has built a reputation at the Statehouse of effective lobbying, but we can't be as effective without your help. To be especially persuasive at the Legislature, we need a strong grassroots network to augment our staff capability.

This guide will help you navigate the legislative maze to create a greater impact on the decisions and voting record of your representatives and senators. IAC hopes this will enable you to become a more effective advocate for your county and for the IAC priorities decided on by the members.

IAC strives not only to be a powerhouse lobbying force at the Capitol, but also to make sure our members are kept current with legislative activity. We will keep you up-to-date with weekly legislative bulletins and when quick action is needed legislative alerts throughout the session. You will receive these via email. You can also access our bill tracker and other advocacy information on our website, idcounties.org.

If you have questions or comments on either this guide, please contact IAC Policy Director Sara Westbrook or any other member of our policy staff.

—IAC Policy Team

2 The Legislature on the Web

The Idaho legislative website provides an invaluable resource to Idahoans: legislature.idaho.gov. You can find up-to-date information on:

- Legislative Sessions
- Laws, Rules
- House and Senate calendars
- Agendas for House and Senate committees
- Access to remote testimony sign-ups
- Live stream coverage of House and Senate committees
- Bill Tracker
- Administrative Rules
- Legislative Directory
- Archives
- Live stream of the House and Senate floor action
- And so much more

From this website, you can search Idaho Code, read the Idaho Constitution and search prior years' legislation dating back to 1998.

To watch the legislative wrap up for the week, check out Idaho Reports via their website <https://www.idahoptv.org/shows/idahoreports/>.

3 Outreach to Your Legislators

3.1 Emailing Your Legislators

In this high-speed communication age, one of the simplest ways to communicate with your legislators is through email. The Idaho Legislature's home page links to each legislator's email address. Simply visit: <https://legislature.idaho.gov> click on Senate or House, then click on Members to find your legislators. You may also click on Committees if you are looking for the contacts from a specific committee. Pertinent contact information will also be included on IAC Legislative Alerts.

3.2 Calling/Texting Your Legislators

An effective way to ensure contact with your legislators is with a phone call or even a text. Be sure to have your legislators' cell phone numbers if at all possible. You will want to verify all contact information after each election. When you call, be sure to offer to be a resource for them.

Regular contact via phone reminds legislators county officials are great resources of information. Building a relationship with them through regular contact will also help your legislators feel more comfortable reaching out to you for input when they are considering votes concerning counties.

4 Meet with Your Legislators

Your time and opinions are much too valuable to waste, so consider meeting face-to-face with local lawmakers to discuss issues. Many legislators are happy to meet with constituents to personally take the pulse of public opinion.

IAC encourages you to visit regularly with your legislators, whether it is in Boise or back home. Developing a personal relationship with your legislators can be mutually beneficial.

To leave a favorable impression with your Idaho legislators, follow these very basic instructions:

- Before calling for an appointment, look briefly at your Representative or Senator's background. You may find you have something in common to help break the ice.
- Make sure to have your facts clear on the one or two topics you wish to discuss during this visit. A packet of information briefly outlining your views may be given at the end of the visit.
- If you need specific information prior to your visit, please contact IAC. Remember the IAC website has a wealth of information www.idcounties.org.
- Also check out IAC's [Data Portal](#) for up-to-date data on a variety of issues from property taxes to justice related services and more.
- Be brief.
- Following your visit, write a personal note thanking the legislator for his/her time and reminding him/her of your position on the issues discussed.

5 Timing Your Email or Visit

Having already established the need to contact your legislator, the timing of your contact regarding a specific issue is essential to the success of your effort.

For example, an email that arrives two months before legislation has been heard will not receive the attention it deserves. Likewise, an email sent a day after legislation has been voted on is moot. This also can be said of phone calls and personal visits. Unless the issue is important at the time, your legislator may avoid your call or the appointment or be distracted and put your discussion on hold.

To help schedule your emails and visits appropriately, IAC issues legislative alerts detailing the name and number of the bill, its status in the legislative process, contact information for the legislators and why it is to your advantage to contact your legislator.

If, however, you want to voice your opinion on other matters, the following information can help you time your email or visit to receive maximum attention:

- Before a bill is first introduced and assigned to a committee, you should contact your legislator and ask him/her to sponsor the bill
- If a bill is tied up in committee and shows signs of staying there indefinitely, you may wish to contact committee members to push it along
- When legislation is about to come up on the floor of the House or Senate, you may wish to urge your legislator to support the position you advocate
- Although IAC has a lobbying staff working on legislative issues, only individual constituents can lend that added legitimacy to make a legislator realize the consequences his actions will have on you and your county

****Remember, if you don't voice your opinion, someone with the opposite opinion will, and they have the full attention of your lawmaker. Silence may be the difference between winning and losing.***

6 How To Testify

When a bill is scheduled for a hearing, you will sign in when arriving to the committee room. The sign-in sheet will ask you whether or not you want to testify. Make sure you indicate "yes."

Please note, this year most, if not all, committee chairs are allowing opportunities to testify remotely. Some committees have different steps for signing up for remote testimony in comparison to other committees. Please reach out to a member of the IAC policy team to help you navigate the process to sign-up to testify remotely.

Whether testifying in person or remotely, the following instructions should be followed for best success.

When the Chair of the committee calls upon you:

- Thank the Chair and the committee for the opportunity to testify
- Identify yourself and who you represent
- State your position clearly and be concise
- When closing, thank the Chair and committee again for the opportunity to testify and state that you would be willing to answer any questions
- When questions come, address them through the Chair (i.e. Mr. Chairman /Madam Chair, Senator/Representative...)
- Answer the question
- When you are done thank them again (you can never be grateful enough for the opportunity to be there)
- After the hearing, follow up with your Senators and/or Representatives and thank them for listening, regardless of the end result

Here's a quick example:

Thank you Madam Chair Lodge and members of the committee for the opportunity to testify today. My name is (insert name). I am a (insert county office) from (insert county).

I am here to testify in support of X. I believe X is critical for our county to function properly. Here are some facts to support why X is so important.

Thank you Madam Chair Lodge and members of the committee for allowing me the opportunity to testify. I stand for any questions you may have.

7 Leaders of the 66th Legislature

7.1 House of Representatives

Speaker of the House

Scott Bedke (R)
208.332.1111
SBedke@house.idaho.gov

House Majority Leader

Mike Moyle (R)
208.332.1120
MMoyle@house.idaho.gov

Assistant Majority Leader

Jason Monks (R)
208.332.1120
JMonks@house.idaho.gov

Majority Caucus Leader

Megan Blanskma (R)
208.332.1120
MBlanskma@house.idaho.gov

House Minority Leader

Ilana Rubel (D)
208.332.1132
IRubel@house.idaho.gov

Assistant Minority Leader

Lauren Necochea (D)
208.332.1132
LNecochea@house.idaho.gov

Minority Caucus Leader

Sally Toone (D)
208.332.1132
SToone@house.idaho.gov

[Click here to view an up-to-date list of all House committee chairs and committee members.](#)

7.2 Senate

President Pro Tempore

Chuck Winder (R)
208.332.1300
CWinder@senate.idaho.gov

Senate Majority Leader

Kelly Anthon (R)
208.332.1305
KAnthon@senate.idaho.gov

Assistant Majority Leader

Abby Lee (R)
208.332.1308
ALee@senate.idaho.gov

Majority Caucus Leader

Mark Harris (R)
208.332.1304
MHarris@senate.idaho.gov (R)

Senate Minority Leader

Michelle Stennett (D)
208.332.1410
MStennett@senate.idaho.gov

Assistant Minority Leader

Grant Burgoyne (D)
208.332.1411
GBurgoyne@senate.idaho.gov

Minority Caucus Leader

Janie Ward Engelking (D)
208.332.1412
JWardEngelking@senate.idaho.gov

[Click here to view an up-to-date list of all Senate committee chairs and committee members.](#)

8 IAC's Legislative Process

First, resolutions are developed by affiliate associations, IAC districts, IAC committees and/or individual elected officials. Legislative resolutions are proposals that express the opinion of the association in support of a state law change for which the introduction of legislation is necessary.

In order to be considered for incorporation in the IAC legislative package, legislative resolutions must be submitted electronically to the IAC office no later than September 1 of each year and must meet all of the following criteria:

- Focus on a single issue within the general realm and scope of county government;
- Affect more than one county;
- Affect more than one elected office or department;
- Affect taxation, spending, revenue generation authority or create significant efficiencies or cost savings; and
- Be politically feasible.

During the IAC Annual Conference in September, following consideration by the assigned steering committees, the IAC Legislative Committee meets to review the documents and ensure they are compliant with IAC bylaws. If found to be noncompliant, the resolution will receive no further consideration. After reviewing the legislative resolutions, the IAC Legislative Committee submits its recommendations to the IAC membership for final consideration and approval.

The entire membership discusses and votes on the resolutions during the General Session of the Annual Conference. Two-thirds of the IAC membership must vote 'yes' for a resolution to be carried forward.

Once a resolution is passed by the membership, the IAC Legislative Committee determines which resolutions will be included in the IAC Legislative Package. No more than five (5) resolutions may be included in the IAC Legislative Package.

During the legislative session, the IAC Legislative Committee may take a position on other specific legislation that impacts Idaho's counties. The position to be taken needs to be consistent with IAC policy and whenever practical should be ratified by the IAC membership.

9 How a Bill Becomes a Law

A legislative bill is a proposal for the enactment, amendment or repeal of a law, or a call for the appropriation of public money. The following is the process by which a bill becomes law:

1. The bill is introduced to the appropriate legislative committee based on the subject matter
2. A Routing Slip (RS) is prepared for introduction to the legislative committee. Normally, only the sponsor of the RS is allowed to testify during introduction.
3. If approved, the RS is sent to print by the committee and referred to the Chief Clerk of the House or Senate Secretary for assignment of a bill number (HB or SB). If rejected by the committee, the RS is returned to the sponsor to hold indefinitely or revise for resubmission.
4. Once the bill is printed, a formal hearing is held with both pros and cons given. The committee decides the merits of the bill and whether to send to the full House or Senate with a "Do Pass" or "Without Recommendation" or they may decide to "Hold" in committee.
5. If the bill goes to the floor, it is read across the desk by name and title only for the second (2nd) reading one day, and on the next day advances to the third (3rd) reading calendar. If there is a full calendar, it may take upwards of a week before it is considered with full debate.
6. When a bill is finally considered on the 3rd reading calendar, the floor sponsor will debate in favor of the bill. Any other member may debate against the bill and ask questions. After closing debate, a vote is taken and it either passes or fails.
7. If the bill passes, it goes to the other chamber (House or Senate) and is assigned a committee whereby the same process is followed. During this process, a bill may be referred to the amending order by either house. When a chamber goes to the amending order, they will convene themselves as a "Committee of the Whole." Once convened, they will consider the amendment calendar where all proposed amendments are considered, debated and voted upon. If amended, the bill is referred to the engrossing committee and then placed back on the calendar to be considered as a new bill.
8. If it passes the second chamber, it is sent to the chamber where it was originally introduced. The bill is then enrolled and signed by the House Speaker and Senate President Pro Tempore and forwarded to the Governor.
9. After the Governor receives a bill, he may: (1) approve the bill by signing it within five (5) days after receipt (except Sundays); (2) allow the bill to become law without his signature; or (3) VETO the bill and return it to the house of origin, stating his reason for disapproval. In the event the Legislature "Sine Dies" (adjourns), the Governor has ten (10) days to act. A vetoed bill may be overridden by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members present in each house.
10. If signed by the Governor, the bill is transmitted to the Secretary of State for assignment of a chapter number in the Idaho Session Laws. The bill then becomes law July 1, unless there is an emergency clause or other effective date.

10 Tips on Successful Lobbying

NEVER TELL A LIE

Your reputation is everything. If you do not know the answer to a question, pledge to get one as soon as possible. You lose your credibility permanently if you lie.

BE PATIENT

As public officials, you know the demands on your time. Members of the Legislature also have many parties vying for their attention. While waiting for a meeting or committee hearing use your time constructively to work on your presentation.

BE COURTEOUS

Like you, members of the Legislature are human and expect common courtesy. Plus, they may (and usually will) be more helpful if you treat them with respect. If you are appearing before a legislative committee, be sure to use the appropriate protocol:

1. When you are presenting testimony, begin your address as follows: "Mr. Chairman or Madam Chair and members of your committee"
2. If you are responding to a question from a member of the committee you must always proceed through the chair: "Mr. Chairman or Madam Chair followed by Representative or Senator (include the last name of legislator who's question you are answering)."

BE BRIEF

Keep your committee testimony short and to the point. If you are meeting in a legislator's office, get in and out quickly. Show that you know how valuable a legislator's time is.

GET TO THE POINT

Do not beat around the bush. Keep embellishments to a minimum. And remember the time constraints of your audience.

K.I.S.S.

Keep it simple, stupid. Do not be too technical, too detailed, too complex or too oblique. Get to the point, cover the basics, and make sure the legislator understands your main point. Never be condescending.

KEEP YOUR GROUP SMALL

An unwieldy group of people can make everyone uncomfortable, distract from your message and waste valuable time getting set up or presenting your testimony to committee.

PLAN YOUR PITCH

Make sure you thoroughly consider your position. Develop, rework and refine your stance in advance, not in front of the legislator or committee you want to impress.

PRACTICE! PRACTICE! PRACTICE!

Repeat your presentation over and over until it is a work of art. Nothing is more impressive to a legislator than a smooth and professional presentation. Nothing is less impressive than to go in unprepared and stumble through your case. Include everyone involved in the presentation in several practice sessions to avoid dissension and duplication among your delegation. Always try to anticipate and prepare for questions from legislators.

DON'T FORGET TO CLOSE

Always ask for the legislators' or the committee's support or opposition. Remember, that is what you went there for.

11 The Ten Commandments of Lobbying

–Steve Ahrens (Former President of IACI)

1. **THOU SHALT KNOW WHAT IN HEAVEN’S NAME THOU ART TALKING ABOUT.**

Facts are the best support for your position. Do careful research on your issue. There is no way legislators can know ALL the details of ALL the issues coming before them. They will want to know the FACTS about your issue. You may even be able to get to the point where your legislator relies on you for information on issues, but you MUST KNOW WHAT YOU’RE SAYING.

2. **THOU SHALT NOT LIE, EVEN IF IT PAINEST THEE TO TELL THE TRUTH.**

If you lie to a legislator, you are dead as a lobbyist. If you tell them something that later turns out not to be accurate, that’s not fatal. Everyone makes occasional mistakes, but CORRECT IT IMMEDIATELY. Don’t exaggerate. Without CREDIBILITY you cannot lobby effectively.

3. **THOU SHALT NOT THREATEN THY LEGISLATOR.**

Even if the cause is lost, you must retain your credibility for the next encounter. If you resort to “warning” or “threatening” legislators, the very human reaction is to do exactly what you don’t want them to do.

4. **THOU SHALT UNDERSTAND THY LEGISLATOR’S ROLE – AND THY OWN ROLE AS WELL.**

Legislators have their special job to do, just as you do. Each legislator represents about 27,000 people, not just you. They hear all kinds of requests, some of which conflict directly with yours. They must make decisions that are responsible to the majority, not just to a narrow segment of interests. And never forget – THEY HAVE THE VOTE. You don’t.

5. **THOU SHALT LOVE THY LEGISLATOR AS THY FRIEND.**

You can’t be effective with someone you obviously don’t respect or like. You can’t be effective with legislators who are suspicious of you, or who sense that you’d really rather try to catch rattlesnakes than talk to them. And if you have difficulty thinking of a legislator as your bosom buddy, you can still respect the SYSTEM and the legislator’s POSITION.

6. **THOU SHALT KEEP THY PROMISES.**

If you promise a legislator to get some information, GET IT. If you can do a favor or help the legislator, they’ll be more willing - maybe even feel obligated - to help you. Make sure the legislator knows how to contact you.

7. **THOU SHALT BE BRIEF.**

Especially during the session. The legislator has many people waiting to make their cases. A well planned, concise, complete explanation saves the legislator’s valuable time. A short, simple piece that they can quickly read and understand is far better than a lengthy, learned treatise that they never have time to read.

8. **THOU SHALT BE GRACIOUS IN VICTORY AND IN DEFEAT.**

A legislative session is a daily succession of battles. No one wins every battle. Whether you win or lose today, remember you’re going to have to deal with the same legislators on tomorrow’s issues. You have to come out of one issue – win or lose – with an atmosphere and attitude that leaves you still in tomorrow’s ballgame.

9. **THOU SHALT LOBBY AS THOU WOULD LIKE TO BE LOBBIED.**

That is just a variation of the Golden Rule, and should not need any explanation.

10. **THOU SHALT MAINTAIN THY SENSE OF HUMOR.**

Remember, when you get up to dance with an 800-pound gorilla, you don't sit down until the gorilla gets tired.