



# 7th Legislative Update

February 29, 2008

## Legislative Links

Who's my legislator?  
Idaho Legislature website  
How a bill becomes a law  
How to testify before a legislative committee

Idaho State Legislature  
2008 Legislative Session

## Legislators focus on early education

On Wednesday the Senate Education Committee held a hearing on two bills we mentioned briefly last week--[Senate Bill 1404](#) and [Senate Bill 1406](#). Both pieces of legislation focus on creating opportunities for children age 4 to attend prekindergarten. After much discussion, the Committee elected to withhold a formal decision on both bills until the next committee meeting. [Read the article from the Idaho Statesman's Thursday edition](#) to learn more about the hearing. For an informative overview of the early education debate, read [this article in this week's Boise Weekly](#).

## Idaho Kids Count releases results of public opinion poll

### Questions from BSU Public Policy Survey focus on early education and child care

The results of a public opinion poll commissioned by [Idaho Kids Count](#) examines the public perceptions of early education opportunities, child care quality, and child care affordability in Idaho. The poll was carried out as part of BSU's annual public policy survey. Along with other findings, the results of the poll show that most Idahoans are supportive of early childhood programs.

Click on the links below to read the report and related documents. The documents are also posted on the Idaho Voices homepage, [www.idahovoices.org](http://www.idahovoices.org).

[Press Release: IKC Early Childhood Report](#)

[Briefing Report: Public Perceptions about Early Childhood Issues - without graphs](#)

[Briefing Report: Public Perceptions about Early Childhood Issues - with graphs](#)

[Results Slideshow](#)

[Questionnaire](#)

## Legislative Tracking made easier

As the days of the Idaho legislature fly by, the number of bills grows geometrically. To help you keep up on issues vital to children and to save our readers time, we've added a new section to our legislative tracking, titled "New This Week". This section will highlight new legislation rather than grouping by issue. This will make it easier for you to view legislation we've added to our legislative tracking, without having to wade through bills which we have highlighted previously. Next week, the bills highlighted this week will be moved to their topic area.

**We will continue to track legislation and keep you informed of proposals that may affect Idaho's children.**

**To view a list of our policy priorities for the 2008 legislative session, visit our website at <http://www.idahovoices.org/policy/policy.htm>.**

- Join IVC today and receive regular legislative updates!
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## Legislative Tracking

### New This Week

<p style="margin: 0;"><b>H0509</b> Sponsors: Rep. Chew, Rep. Henbest</p>	<p><b>Idaho Prescription Drug Program</b> - Its purpose is to provide those uninsured and underinsured with rates not available to them but available to those in group plans to purchase medications. This program is expected to save an average of 40-60 percent.</p>	<p>House Health &amp; Welfare Committee</p>
<p style="margin: 0;"><b>H0511</b> Sponsors: Rep. Matthews, Rep. Henbest</p>	<p><b>Child mortality prevention team</b> - establishes a statewide multidisciplinary, multiagency Child Mortality Prevention Team to aid in the prevention of child deaths through the examination of relevant records.</p>	<p>House Health &amp; Welfare Committee</p>
<p style="margin: 0;"><b>H0513</b> Sponsor: Rep. Henbest</p>	<p><b>Access to health insurance</b> - This legislation intends to align current Idaho Statute with policy and practice changes associated with medicaid reform. The bill provides for increased availability of premium assistance to individuals, small businesses, and large businesses. The legislation also tasks the Department of Health and Welfare to conduct program outreach and marketing.</p>	<p>House Health &amp; Welfare Committee</p>
<p style="margin: 0;"><b>H0521</b> Sponsor: Rep. Henbest</p>	<p><b>Health insurance premium increases</b> - This bill provides that all insurance policies operating under Idaho Code and providing coverage to Idaho residents will include a provision in their policies that keeps the annual maximum amount of a premium increase to no more than the rate of medical inflation.</p>	<p>House Business Committee</p>
<p style="margin: 0;"><b>H0548</b> Sponsor: Liza Carberry, Investment Manager, State Treasurer's Office</p>	<p><b>College Savings Program, revised</b> - New language will allow the Board to authorize minors to open accounts. This will encourage young people to save for their own education.</p>	<p>House Education Committee</p>
<p style="margin: 0;"><b>H0551</b>  Multiple Sponsors--see legislation for complete list</p>	<p><b>School age revised</b> - This legislation will amend Idaho Code by revising the provisions relating to school age for purposes of enrollment in first grade. It will allow any child who is of five years of age and who has completed private kindergarten in this state or another state, or public out-of-state kindergarten, but has not reached the "school age" requirement in Idaho the opportunity to enter the first grade.</p>	<p>House Education Committee</p>
<p style="margin: 0;"><b>H0566</b>  Sponsors : Rep. Patrick; Christina Linder, State Dept. of Education</p>	<p><b>School Employees/Criminal history checks</b> - This legislation will enhance the safety of Idaho's public school children by addressing several gaps in the fingerprinting and background check system, which currently put Idaho's students at risk of coming into contact with adults who should not have contact with minors. These changes include requiring background checks for student teachers, independent contractors and their employees, and other individuals who have unsupervised contact with students in a public school setting.</p>	<p>House Education Committee</p>
<p style="margin: 0;"><b>S1343</b>  Sponsor: Kandee Yearsley, Health &amp; Welfare</p>	<p><b>Child support, insurance, costs</b> - The federal government has mandated that states implement an income based reasonable cost definition regarding the cost of health insurance or cash medical support as ordered in a medical child support order. This legislation will meet the federal mandate by adopting the federal reasonable cost definition, which will assure more equitable insurance enrollment, encouraging longer term employment for parents who are court ordered to carry medical insurance.</p>	<p>House PASSED; Senate Health &amp; Welfare Committee</p>
<p style="margin: 0;"><b>S1394</b>  Multiple Sponsors--see legislation for complete list</p>	<p><b>Insurance, dependent, age</b> - In 2007, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 1105 to raise the dependent age that children could remain on their parents' health insurance policy. That age was raised to 21 if the dependent was not a full-time student or to age 25 if the dependent was a full-time student. The intent of SB 1105 was to affect all types of health insurance. Inadvertently, large group, government entities, fraternal societies, public service corporations and self-funded plans were excluded. This legislation rectifies that oversight. The indirect benefits of this legislation would be to: a) reduce the number of uninsured, b) reduce the educational cost of going to college, and c) improve the actuarial demographics of individual and group policies, as they retain coverage on an age group which is typically healthy and inexpensive.</p>	<p>Senate PASSED; House Business Committee</p>
<p style="margin: 0;"><b>S1443</b>  Sponsors: Sen. Werk, Sen. Broadsword, Rep. Henbest</p>	<p><b>Schools, pupils, medication</b> - This legislation amends Section 33-520 of Idaho Code to allow for the self-administration and possession of an epinephrin Auto-Injector by K-12 students. Both the possession of an epinephrin Auto-Injector and the ability to self-administer are limited to prescribed medication that alleviates severe allergic reactions. The legislation maintains the authority of school districts to require the registration of medication through school administrative procedures.</p>	<p>Senate 2nd Reading</p>

<b>Child Health</b>		
<b>H0396</b> Sponsor: Aylee Schaefer, State Board of Education	<b>Schools, children, vision screening</b> - implements a structure to offer training to vision screeners, screen children at consistent intervals, and screen children across the state of Idaho.	House Education Committee
<b>HCR043</b> Sponsors: Sen. McGee, Rep. Bilbao	<b>Concurrent Resolution Recognizing the Importance of Children's Health</b> - reaffirms that children are one of Idaho's most important assets and declares that children should have access to high-quality, comprehensive, affordable primary and preventive health care services. Indicates that with access to health care for children there would likely be less reliance upon more expensive types of health care services such as emergency rooms, which pass the costs for treating uninsured children onto other consumers and overall communities. Makes clear parents are responsible to provide for their children's health and dental care but sometimes have trouble accessing affordable care.	Held in the House Health & Welfare Committee on a 7-5 vote  AYES - Block, Bilbao, Rusche, Chew, Burgogne (Acting Rep., Dist. 16)  NAYS - Nielsen, McGeachin, Lortscher, Shepherd (8), Marriott, Luker, Thayne
<b>Safety</b>		
<b>H0462</b> Sponsors: Sen Broadsword, Rep. Ringo	<b>Child safety restraints required, when</b> - provides that there shall be no exceptions to the law requiring all children six years of age or younger to be properly secured in a child safety restraint.	House Transportation & Defense Committee
<b>H0499</b> Sponsor: Dean Sangrey, Dept. of Parks & Recreation	<b>Boat/personal watercraft, operation</b> - establishes mandatory boating safety education for operators 14 years of age and younger.	Held in the House Resources & Conservation Committee on a 15-3 vote
<b>S1361a</b> Sponsors: Sen. Goedde, Sen. McGee	<b>Speed limit, school zones</b> - provides for reduced speed limits in school zones; requires certain information on a school zone sign; and specifies a fixed penalty for exceeding the posted speed limit in a school zone.	Senate 14th Order; To engross
<b>S1376</b> Multiple Sponsors--see legislation for complete list	<b>Daycare facilities</b> - revises and extends the state's licensing requirements for child care providers. Extends licensing to all providers who receive compensation and care for four or more children, with current exceptions maintained.	Senate Health & Welfare Committee
<b>Child Welfare</b>		
<b>H0382a</b> Sponsors: Rep. Clark, Sen. Darrington	<b>Sex offender, no access/school child</b> - clarifies restrictions on adult criminal sex offenders' access to children in school buildings, on school grounds and properties used by a school.	House 3rd Reading As Amended
<b>H0444</b> Sponsor: Rep. Patrick	<b>School district contractor/criminal history</b> - clarifies the requirements of school contractors to have background checks for employees in direct contact with school children.	House Education Committee
<b>HJM007</b> Multiple Sponsors--see legislation for complete list	<b>Internet pornography/access stopped</b> - urges the United States Congress to take action to help stop children and employees from accessing Internet pornography.	House 2nd Reading
<b>S1263</b> Sponsors: Sen. Davis, Dale Higer	<b>Uniform Child Abduction Prevention Act</b> - provides courts with guidelines to follow during custody disputes and divorce proceedings, helps courts identify families at risk for abduction, and provides methods to prevent the abduction of children.	Senate PASSED House Judiciary, Rules & Administration Committee
<b>Education</b>		
<b>H0503</b> Multiple Sponsors--see legislation for complete list	<b>Key to the Future Scholarships</b> - provides eligibility criteria for Key to the Future Scholarships for students; provides that Key to the Future students shall remain drug, alcohol and tobacco free.	House Education Committee
<b>S1404</b> Multiple Sponsors--see legislation for complete list	<b>School age, revised</b> - provides that children of four years or older may attend prekindergarten in the public schools and provides that Idaho public schools may offer prekindergarten programs if a majority of voters approve such a program in an election and provides that the voters may approve a levy to pay for the program.	Senate Education Committee

Education (continued)		
<p><b>S1406</b> Sponsors: Sen. Burkett, Sen. Bastian, Sen. Corder</p>	<p><b>Early childhood development/education</b> - establishes a voluntary pre-kindergarten program for children 4 years of age. Local pre-K councils appointed by the district superintendent may plan and develop a high quality pre-K program for the community. Pre-K education is to be provided by qualified pre-K educators and in compliance with state pre-kindergarten learning standards.</p>	Senate Education Committee
<p><b>S1409</b> Sponsor: Sen. Sagness</p>	<p><b>Alternative educ, support units</b> - addresses the intensifying needs of Idaho school districts to provide alternative education programs for at-risk students in grades K-6.</p>	Senate 2nd Reading
<p><b>SCR122</b> Sponsor: Sen. Keough</p>	<p><b>School funding formula, study</b> - authorizes the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee to direct the Office of Performance Evaluations to conduct a study of Idaho's kindergarten through grade 12 public education funding formula in order to identify &amp; evaluate issues relating to the adequacy of K-12 public education funding.</p>	Senate State Affairs Committee
<p><b>SCR123</b> Sponsors: Sen. Schroeder, Rep. Trail</p>	<p><b>International education, supported</b> - States legislative findings and supports specified international education.</p>	Senate Education Committee



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This legislative update has been sent to all *Idaho Voices for Children* members. If you have questions or wish to remove your name from this mailing list, email Sara Herring at [sara@idahovoices.org](mailto:sara@idahovoices.org) or call 208. 336. 5533 x 233

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