

# Idaho Legislature 101

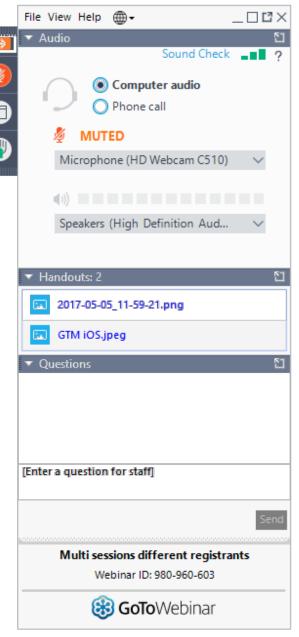


# Webinar Logistics

- All webinar attendees are muted to ensure sound quality
- Ask a question at any time by typing in the text box of the GOTOWEBINAR control panel
- Handouts will be visible on your control panel

Please submit questions throughout the webinar using the "questions" box





#### **Presentation Outline**

- 1. Introduction: Idaho Voices for Children
- Idaho Legislature: Understanding the Territory
- 3. How a Bill Becomes a Law
- 4. Engaging with Elected Officials
- Next Steps: Taking Action



# IDAHO VOICES I WE CHILDREN

- We champion policies that help kids and families thrive in the areas of:
  - Health and access to care
  - Child safety and well-being
- Education
- Family economic security

### Improving the Health & Well-Being of Kids



Research & Partner Input

Identify Solutions



Evaluate & Monitor

Educate Lawmakers & Public



Advocate for Change



# Policy Advocacy Definitions

Public Policy

Advocacy

Lobbying

Grassroots Organizing Collective Impact

Social Change

# Why Policy Advocacy is Important

- Improve laws, policies, structures and beliefs
- Remove systemic barriers
- Ensure our priorities are heard
- Engage communities and lift up individual voices



### Advocacy Goal: Remove Systemic Barriers







- They are being treated equally
- They are being treated equitably
- The <u>systemic</u> <u>barrier</u> was removed

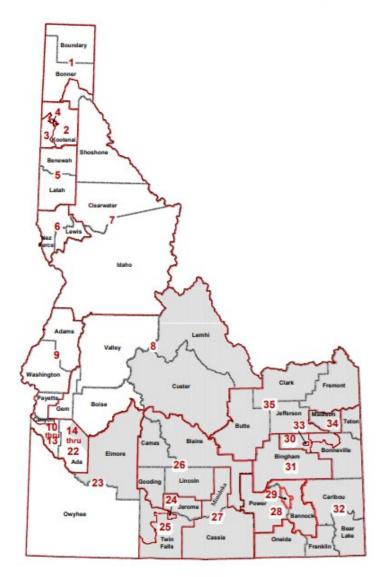
# IDAHO LEGISLATURE: Understanding The Territory



- Governor
  - Serves 4 year terms
  - No term limits
- Lieutenant Governor
  - Serves 4 year terms
  - Presides over the Senate



- Idaho Legislature
  - 105 Members from 35 Districts
  - 35 Senators
  - 70 Representatives
  - All serve 2 years terms
  - No term limits
  - Legislature meets annually from January until about mid-March
- Congress
  - 535 Members
  - Senators serve 6 year terms (2 per state)
  - Representatives serve 2 year terms (1 per district apportioned by population)



- Idaho's Citizen Legislature
  - 105 Members
  - Part-Time
  - Two Chambers: Senate and House
- Each Legislative District Has:
  - 1 State Senator
  - 2 State Representatives
- Annual Sessions
  - Convenes Each January
  - Adjourns once budget set & business complete (typically about 3 months)

#### Interesting Facts About the Idaho Legislature:

- The Lieutenant Governor presides over the Senate and the Speaker of the House presides over the House of Representatives
- Currently there are 14 standing House committees and 10 standing Senate committees
- All committee meetings are open to the public
- Tax bills must start in the House
- Idaho is one of 16 states that has a "citizen legislature:" part-time, low salaries, few staff, and lawmakers have other jobs
- In 1890, legislators were paid \$5/day; now they are paid \$17,358/year plus a per diem for living expenses
- In 2018, the Legislature passed 359 new laws (out of 561 bills)
- The longest session lasted 118 days in 2009; 2018's lasted 80 days
- The Legislature is constitutionally required to pass a balanced budget

- The policy process varies for different legislative bodies
  - Idaho's legislative process is traditionally slow
  - Campaigns can take 3-5 years before gaining traction
  - Idaho Legislators have limited staff assistance

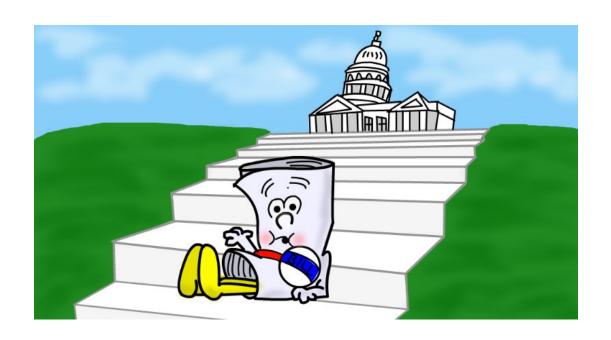


- Know when your voice will be heard
  - Public Hearings on the issue
  - Lobbying individual legislators
  - Rallies and town hall meetings

"Social advance depends as much upon the process through which it is secured as upon the result itself."

- Jane Adams

# IDAHO LEGISLATURE: How A Bill Becomes A Law



#### Idaho Legislature: Introduction Sponsor Drafts 'Routing Slip' Committee Prints RS How a Bill Becomes a Law **House Referral to Committee Senate Referral to Committee** House 1<sup>st</sup> Reading **House Committee Hearing Public Testimony**

# **Senate Committee Hearing**

Accepted

Committee Vote

#### **House Vote**

House 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading

House Floor Vote

**Public Testimony** 

Senate 1st Reading

Accepted

Committee Vote



Senate 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading

Senate Floor Vote



Governor

Option to Sign, Not Sign, or Veto

House & Senate Can Override Veto

# Tracking the Legislative Process

### http://legislature.idaho.gov/



# BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH LEGISLATORS



# Contacting Your Elected Officials

#### Request a meeting

- Meetings can be in person or over the phone
- For committee chairs, contact their secretaries
- Visit their office at the Capitol
  - Ask the front desk and/or security for assistance
- Send an email
- Give them a call
- Find on social media

 Don't be afraid to introduce yourself if you meet in the hall or in the community!

#### DISTRICT 19 ADA COUNTY



Cherie Buckner-Webb (D) - Senate
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(Served 1 term, House 2010-2012)
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Firm/Outfitter and Guide

Wife - Elizabeth

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Education

Committees: Appropriations; Judiciary, Rules & Administration; Transportation &

Defense

legislature.idaho.gov/legislators/

# Contacting Your Elected Officials



We Can Help!

# Tips for Talking with Elected Officials

- 1. YOU can make a difference and be an agent of change
- 2. Elected officials want to hear from you
- 3. There are a variety of opportunities to communicate with your officials



- 4. "What" you want to communicate is as important as "how" you communicate
- 5. Establish short-term and long-term goals

# Tips for Talking with Elected Officials

- 6. You are unlikely to agree on every issue
- You aren't expected to know everything
- 8. Always say "thank you"
- If you visited in person, don't forget to send a follow-up note
- 10. Become as involved and informed as possible!



# The Power of Relationship Building

- We are in this work for the long haul!
  - It is best to do a "get acquainted" meeting with the elected official prior to having an "ask"
  - Set the stage for a relationship by inviting the official to your site to get to know you

 Remember that each encounter with an elected official is part of an ongoing conversation



# ADVOCATES IN ACTION: NEXT STEPS

