

BOARD OF MEDICINE – CEC PRESENTATION

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to be here today.

My name is Anne Lawler and I am the Executive Director of the Idaho State Board of Medicine.

The Idaho State Board of Medicine is a self-governing agency operated with dedicated funds from licensure fees. The Board has primary responsibility for licensure and regulation of physicians, physician assistants, athletic trainers, dietitians, and respiratory therapists. The Board's mission is to protect the health and safety of the public.

We have a staff of 15 employees in the three departments of licensure, discipline, and pre-litigation, along with our in-house attorney, financial technician, receptionist, and associate director.

The CEC is important to our smaller agency because it assists us in filling positions at all levels and helps us retain staff in these positions. This past calendar year, we had four of our staff leave the state, most for family or employment opportunity reasons.

Two of these openings were for investigators on our discipline team, which are required to be medical professionals, namely, a nurse, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant. Recruiting for these positions was challenging, especially because the salary we are able to offer is not as competitive as what many of these professionals are able to obtain in the private sector. Further, the salary we are able to offer is close to what these professionals earn right out of school, yet the Board expects seasoned professionals in these investigative roles to advise the Board about these discipline cases. We worked from April to November to fill both positions.

When we are recruiting for new employees, we are able to point to the CEC as a performance-based benefit that new employees may work toward. This was helpful this year when recruiting our new administrative assistant, licensing specialist, and the two medical investigators.

It is important for the Board to have a highly qualified work force to be able to meet the complexities of licensing and regulating the medical workforce, especially given the health professional shortage in Idaho and the extreme underserved areas for healthcare across the state.

The CEC is not only a helpful tool for recruitment, but also for retention. We use a matrix that takes into account performance, years of service, and compa-ratio (to policy) to evaluate each employee. The result is that we are able to reward higher performers at all salary levels and years of experience.

As a small agency, our personnel budget is narrow, so we have very little with which to work, and rarely do we have any salary savings. Accordingly, the CEC is extremely helpful because it gives us a means to provide incentives and rewards to our higher achieving employees.

We appreciate the Governor's commitment to the state workforce and his recommendation of a 3% CEC this year. We find our employees truly appreciate the CEC. It provides them with merit-based incentives toward which they may work. As our agency strives not only to recruit, but also to retain quality employees, working toward policy pay rates helps us to be more competitive with the external labor market for similar positions.

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, on behalf of the Board of Medicine, I thank you for the opportunity to present this information today and I am happy to stand for any questions.