

Dear 2022 CEC Committee,

May I begin by expressing my appreciation to the Senators and Representatives serving on this committee for your invitation to share my thoughts. The views and opinions expressed in this letter are my own and do not represent the policy or opinion of my employer. To share my thoughts, please allow me to share some of my background with you.

I have served the citizens of Idaho for nearly twenty years in various commissioned roles within the Idaho State Police. Over the past twenty years, I've had excellent annual evaluations, appreciation letters from the public, and service awards. However, I did not join the Idaho State Police for awards or accolades, I joined the Idaho State Police to serve our neighbors, our communities, and our state. My desire to serve has been rooted in me since my early childhood and was strengthened while serving our country for eight years in the US Marine Corps. After my military service, I took on the corporate world as a mid-level manager. The 9/11 attack on our country commanded me to return to service, so I joined the Idaho State Police to serve our great state and citizens.

Being an Idaho State Police Trooper/Detective is an honor, a demanding career, and a unique profession. These demands are physical, mental, and 24/7, for we are never truly off-duty and periodically encounter law enforcement and first responder requirements while off-duty. Adding to these demands is the unique requirement to forgo anniversaries, birthdays, holidays, and periodically postpone family vacations or other family events to meet the law enforcement needs of our state. We do all this because we are honored to serve our neighbors, our communities, and our state. We chose this career, and we choose to serve and protect with honor, integrity, and professionalism. These unique demands are unlike other professions, we are held to a higher standard of law, the work schedule outweighs our personal schedule, and we encounter physical and mental demands unlike any other profession.

When it comes to Idaho State Police pay, I've always told my team members that we must live to our income and I've used my career(s) as an example. However, over the past twenty-years inflation has outpaced our income by roughly 10%. This 10% doesn't include the ever-increasing consumer price index (CPI). The Troopers and Detectives of the Idaho State Police have fallen 10% behind inflation and the growing CPI further hinders our ability to meet the needs of our families. The inability to, at a minimum, match the inflation makes it extremely difficult for us to "live to our income" and support our family's needs.

I respectfully request the Senators and Representatives of the CEC Committee to consider the unique demands of being an Idaho State Police Trooper/Detective and the impact of inflation and CPI to our pay. While I'm nearing the end of my career, we need Troopers/Detectives to continue to serve our state without being financially burdened, without feeling the stress of living paycheck to paycheck, and without the temptation to leave the Idaho State Police for more money elsewhere. I am requesting the CEC Committee to consider a minimum of 10% increase to Idaho State Police base pay and another 3% increase to our base pay to make the Idaho State Police competitive at recruiting service oriented candidates, for a total pay increase of 13%.

Respectfully,



J. M. Lake
Idaho State Police Detective

Dear CEC Committee,

Thank you very much for being open to input from the staff who serve this state as employees. In this dynamic employment time where there are a lot of options for workers, it is important to look at what the state is offering in order to ensure that Idaho is recruiting and maintaining the best workers. Below are my thoughts about employee compensation:

1. A lot of employees were upset by the last CEC increase in May 2021, specifically when the base pay for a position was raised and resulted in long-term and high-performing employees making the same salary as brand-new employees. The compression of employees results in long-term and high-performance employees not being rewarded for their work. I think it is great that the base pay is increased. However, most employees are being paid at the very bottom of the pay range, so when there is a raised base pay, it nullifies all of their accomplishments. So, employees that have been working for many years will be getting the same pay as someone who started two weeks ago. Similarly, employees who received an exemplary review will also be getting the same pay as someone who started two weeks ago and someone who has lower performance. Idahoans and politicians like to say “pull up your boot straps and work hard and you will succeed.” Well, that is not true if you work for the state of Idaho. The message to employees is that your service and the quality of your work are not important, that you are just another warm body. The current system does not do anything to incentivize longevity or hard work.

This was not the first time this happened, it has been a continual problem with the state. In 2021, because of the way the CEC raise was administered, one of my longest serving employees quit working for the state. Additionally, this situation is also a reason I will be quitting in a few weeks. I have no respect for an employer that does not live up to the values it espouses. If the state would like to correct these injustices, I am asking the CEC Committee to take into account staff longevity and performance when employee compensation is being considered. If a base pay is increased, everyone should be brought up to that amount and then a certain percentage more should be added for longevity and high performance/merit.

2. State employees did not get an increase in 2020 when members of the CEC Committee stated they were concerned about the state budget. However, it is very frustrating to now see the state have such a huge budget surplus, some of which came from the backs of state employees. I am glad that there was some raise in compensation in 2021, but the state should have done more to make up for that pay difference in 2021. I am asking that with the huge budget surplus, the state take the opportunity in 2022 to finally get state employee pay closer to the stated compa-ratio pay goals.
3. The state needs to start considering a location-based salary adjustment to address dramatic rises in the cost of living. In the state system, employees make the same amount whether they work in Boise or Blackfoot. As you are well aware, the cost of living in Boise and some other areas has increased so dramatically that they are no longer affordable places to live. Most state employees are in the lower-mid classifications and the salaries are no longer very reasonable for staff in expensive areas. If the state wants to retain good employees in places like Boise, the pay will need to be reassessed.
4. There is a problem with employee retention in the state, as far as I understand. It definitely seems to be a problem at my agency. I have been frustrated by the lack of initiative that the

state shows in figuring out why people are leaving. There seems to be more energy put into recruiting and hiring new people, than figuring out how to keep the already trained staff. A lot of time, money, energy, and work output would be saved if we focused on keeping employees instead of replacing them. I have not found the state very receptive to feedback, which is part of the problem. I ask this committee to look deeper into retention and employee satisfaction. If the state actually cares about having high-quality employees, there are many areas in need of improvement that are not just salary-based. I think that there are opportunities to provide benefits to employees. A lot of people that have quit have told me that some of the reasons are that they want more flexibility in their schedules or more vacation time.

Again, I do appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback. I hope that the committee can think about how best to recognize the contributions of employees and ensure that the state has competent, hard-working employees. I would be happy to talk you more if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Gwen Ayres

gwen.ayres@isda.idaho.gov

Cell phone: [REDACTED]

January 14, 2022

Greetings to the CEC Committee

RE: Change in Employee Compensation

I do not want to take up a lot of your time as I am sure you could possibly be receiving thousands of emails.

My comment is this: I have a hard time with the fact that the teenage niece of my daughter-in-law is making \$18 an hour working at Panda Express which is more than I make after working, extremely hard, for 7 ½ years with my current employer, 10 years total service with the State. Granted, that teenager doesn't have benefits and I do tell everyone that the State of Idaho has good benefits. Most teenagers are not supporting themselves paying a house payment, utility bills and all that comes with being an adult.

I had to do my job by myself for 6 ½ years rarely taking time off including during the time of both my parents' illnesses and both in the dying process because I was the only office position. The reason for that? My agency not having the approval of enough positions to give me some help/coverage. We did end up getting a part-time, 19 hour a week person a year ago which helped during the hours that she was here. I finally have full-time help but only because another PCN number came available from another District which luckily occurred at just the right time because I had to be out on sick leave for a few months due to a serious medical condition, a condition that I truly believe was partly due to years of extreme stress and fatigue that I experienced in my job. I love my job and I love working for the State, but people should not be put in the position of having so much stress and overwork because of lack of funding for positions.

Another problem state agencies are having is attracting new hires because the wages are, for the most part, so low while the cost of housing, food, gas and basically everything continues to rise.

Please don't get me wrong, I am grateful for what Governor Little has approved for us this year because it is at least something but with the way prices are going up, I fear for the future.

Respectfully,


Carrlea Jackson



January 14, 2022

Esteemed Members of the Change in Employee Compensation Committee,

The Idaho School Boards Association wishes to express our most sincere and deepest request for policymakers to consider an increased funding for Idaho's Classified Employees in Public Schools – whose salary increase would come recommended by the Change in Employee Compensation Committee.

While the pandemic and the changes it has had on Idaho's workforce have been difficult on educators and administrators – speaking purely from the Idaho school system - our classified employees are as deserving of recognition for Idaho's capability to return to and maintain in-person learning. While they don't always receive the outpouring of support our educators do, classified employees are essential for our schools to stay open, and they assist in providing a stable learning environment.

Classified employees are, in essence, all school employees who do not hold a certificate – including paraprofessionals, bus drivers, and maintenance staff all the way up to our human resource specialists and our business/financial managers. The practical effect of the state's funding structure is that schools are provided the same state support for a janitorial employee as they are to recruit and retain a school business manager, whose responsibility is to oversee millions of state, federal, and local tax dollars. Both positions are critical for public schools to operate safely and effectively, but while the qualifications are vastly different for each position they are treated the same in respect to how funding is allocated. In 2019 – prior to the pandemic – school districts and charter schools were spending a \$1.68 for every \$1 of salary-based apportionment provided by the legislature for our classified employees – a total difference of \$85.2 million. In addition, schools must hire many more positions than are attributable to the staff allowance. This is because of the number of classified positions provided for in the salary-based apportionment funding formula. While we are unable to provide the most current figures from the State Department of Education, we can assume that gap has widened even further since FY19.

Attachment A

Across Idaho, our schools are experiencing the most urgent need in classified positions, not unlike labor shortages in the private sector. The difference is, however, that a public school's inability to recruit and retain classified employees is impacting kids in Idaho directly and rapidly creating unreachable hurdles for our members' to provide a level of service that kids and families in Idaho deserve and expect. For example:

- **The Twin Falls School District has 63 unfilled classified openings within their school district, and most of them are for paraprofessional positions that assist with students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). These students need services from these paraprofessionals so that they can succeed in school. As such, these vacancies are impacting their highest-needs kids.**
- **The Shelley School District is currently paying their classified employees 30% more than the state average to be competitive with the private sector. This is funding by local taxpayers via their \$575,000 supplemental levy. Significant investment in these positions would take the pressure of school districts relying on their property taxpayers to make up the cost.**

"Empower Local Boards for Student Success"

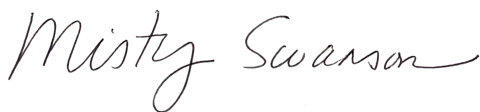
- **The Moscow Charter School has lost multiple student aids, a custodian, and a secretary this year when those employees were able to receive at least a five dollar raise by driving 11 miles over the Washington border. In addition, one took a job at a local fast food restaurant whose starting wage was \$15 an hour. It took them four months to secure a custodian.**

These stories are not unique to just these districts and charter schools – it is an issue impacting both traditional school districts and charter schools from Bonners Ferry to Preston. There has never been an opportunity more urgent than now for policymakers to take a thoughtful and honest look at solutions. Some possible policy solutions include, but are not limited to the following:

- **An increase above the proposed 5% increase to the base salary of school classified employees to reflect their actual salary more accurately. In most cases, even a five percent raise does not allow a school to compete with the private sector jobs like Amazon or McDonald’s who are advertising their minimum salary at \$14/hour.**
- **A method in which Super Classified Employees could be considered for our professional, hard-to-fill positions such as Human Resource Directors, IT and Technical Staff, Finance Officers, and more. Many of these positions require advanced degrees or national certifications in their field of work.**
- **A classified career ladder allocation model, which could model the historic investment of the legislature like Idaho’s Career Ladder for Certificated staff.**
- **The Idaho State Legislature can amend Idaho’s Salary-Based Apportionment Allowance for classified employees in public schools, which could fund an amount closer to the actual cost of keeping the employees necessary to provide services to students and communities.**

We are aware of the limitations this committee has on recommendations of the many of the policy proposals above. We also realize that a historic state surplus places an duty to policymakers to spend and save to the public’s money, and to make investments in communities, programs, and infrastructure needs. We respectfully request that you to consider studying the issue of Idaho’s school-based classified positions more deeply so that we can continue to serve Idaho’s most treasured citizen – the schoolchildren of Idaho.

Sincerely,



**Misty Swanson
Executive Director**



**Quinn Perry
Deputy Director**

“Empower Local Boards for Student Success”

School District	Equivalent 20-21 FTE Teachers	Funded classified numbers as multiplied by .375 (Idaho Code 33-1004)	Equivalent 20-21 classified employees	Percentage of classified hired compared to allocation
Valley	38.9	14.59	14.56	99.81%
Nampa	792.58	297.22	308.28	103.72%
Rockland	17.07	6.40	6.66	104.04%
Genesee	21.4	8.03	8.73	108.79%
Meadows Valley	14.49	5.43	6.06	111.53%
Joint School District No. 2	2026.27	759.85	904.24	119.00%
Richfield	16	6.00	7.16	119.33%
Clark County	14.66	5.50	6.63	120.60%
Bliss	14.24	5.34	6.47	121.16%
Middleton	191.3	71.74	87.34	121.75%
Shoshone	34	12.75	15.55	121.96%
Dietrich	16	6.00	7.56	126.00%
Culdesac	12.75	4.78	6.05	126.54%
Snake River	100.21	37.58	47.64	126.77%
Nezperce	15.91	5.97	7.68	128.72%
Blackfoot	218.16	81.81	105.34	128.76%
Highland	15.5	5.81	7.5	129.03%
Firth	45.89	17.21	22.97	133.48%
Boise	1521.88	570.71	791.74	138.73%
Mountain Home	200.27	75.10	105.14	140.00%
Caldwell	334.87	125.58	178.75	142.34%
Cottonwood	27.71	10.39	15.09	145.22%
Buhl Joint	73.46	27.55	40.5	147.02%
Jefferson County	307.83	115.44	171.09	148.21%
Mccall-Donnelly	82.77	31.04	46.07	148.43%
Blaine	259.01	97.13	144.44	148.71%
Cassia County	311.39	116.77	174.81	149.70%
South Lemhi	12	4.50	6.74	149.78%

Kuna	288.46	108.17	162.91	150.60%
Council	19	7.13	10.77	151.16%
Vallivue	483.3	181.24	281.62	155.39%
Melba	48.5	18.19	28.38	156.04%
Cambridge	15.28	5.73	8.95	156.20%
Wendell	62.66	23.50	37.06	157.72%
Basin	26.51	9.94	15.76	158.53%
Filer	88	33.00	52.78	159.94%
North Gem	16.37	6.14	9.86	160.62%
Twin Falls	487.95	182.98	296.43	162.00%
Midvale	13.47	5.05	8.26	163.52%
Homedale	67.72	25.40	41.81	164.64%
Camas	16.66	6.25	10.29	164.71%
Wallace	39.21	14.70	24.31	165.33%
Butte County	26	9.75	16.15	165.64%
Gooding	75.21	28.20	47.8	169.48%
Coeur D'alene	568.85	213.32	362.7	170.03%
Sugar-Salem	86.13	32.30	55.01	170.32%
Post Falls	288.91	108.34	184.91	170.67%
Minidoka	238.14	89.30	152.96	171.28%
Castleford	21	7.88	13.65	173.33%
Madison	262.01	98.25	171.52	174.57%
Hagerman	22.82	8.56	14.94	174.58%
Pocatello	619.77	232.41	407.16	175.19%
Preston	114.01	42.75	75.15	175.77%
Marsh Valley	72.13	27.05	47.75	176.53%
Challis	25.88	9.71	17.45	179.80%
Shelley	112.24	42.09	75.85	180.21%
Teton County	105.02	39.38	71.32	181.10%
Idaho Falls	508.43	190.66	345.67	181.30%
Jerome	211.96	79.49	145.29	182.79%
Fremont	127.6	47.85	88.24	184.41%
Bonneville Joint	644.77	241.79	446.82	184.80%
Glenns Ferry	32.47	12.18	22.63	185.85%

West Side Joint	43.82	16.43	30.75	187.13%
Kimberly	102.02	38.26	71.66	187.31%
Lewiston	282.32	105.87	198.5	187.49%
Kamiah	32.5	12.19	22.97	188.47%
Moscow	150.34	56.38	107.18	190.11%
Notus	28.1	10.54	20.19	191.60%
Hansen	22.78	8.54	16.38	191.75%
Potlatch	31.25	11.72	22.99	196.18%
Weiser	83.09	31.16	61.16	196.29%
Parma	60.13	22.55	44.59	197.75%
Orofino	70.49	26.43	52.52	198.69%
Wilder	31.6	11.85	23.63	199.41%
Soda Springs	49.19	18.45	36.83	199.66%
New Plymouth	51.57	19.34	38.64	199.81%
Mackay	16.76	6.29	12.58	200.16%
Lake Pend Oreille	221.8	83.18	166.69	200.41%
Garden Valley	20	7.50	15.11	201.47%
Salmon River	15	5.63	11.43	203.20%
West Jefferson	36.33	13.62	27.74	203.62%
Salmon	45.87	17.20	35.3	205.22%
Mullan	14	5.25	10.83	206.29%
Emmett	134.75	50.53	105.21	208.21%
ST Maries	60.5	22.69	47.41	208.97%
Bear Lake	68	25.50	53.59	210.16%
West Bonner	69.25	25.97	54.66	210.48%
Mountain View	70	26.25	55.78	212.50%
Plummer-Worley	36.4	13.65	29.01	212.53%
Boundary	81.47	30.55	65.16	213.28%
Murtaugh	26.25	9.84	21.05	213.84%
Lakeland	224.56	84.21	180.44	214.27%
Marsing	51.1	19.16	41.2	215.00%
Payette	78.62	29.48	63.55	215.55%
Aberdeen	45.81	17.18	37.26	216.90%
Fruitland	82.75	31.03	68.56	220.94%
Ririe	39	14.63	32.51	222.29%
Bruneau-Grand View	22.75	8.53	19.19	224.94%

Kootenai	17	6.38	15.09	236.71%
Swan Valley	4.7	1.76	4.19	237.73%
Troy	20.8	7.80	18.55	237.82%
American Falls	89.98	33.74	80.83	239.55%
Cascade	18	6.75	16.31	241.63%
Grace	32.08	12.03	29.48	245.05%
Avery	1.9	0.71	1.78	249.82%
Kendrick	17.5	6.56	16.53	251.89%
Arbon	1.8	0.68	1.77	262.22%
Horseshoe Bend	17.5	6.56	17.62	268.50%
Whitepine	18	6.75	18.94	280.59%
Lapwai	35	13.13	38.42	292.72%
Kellogg	63.28	23.73	74.51	313.99%
			Average	181%
The number of FTE on this chart are the number that are employed, not what a district qualifies The number of classified includes transportation employees.				
Districts that had one or less teachers were not included in the calculations.				
Three Creek	0.9	0.34	0	0.00%
Pleasant Valley	1	0.38	0	0.00%
Prairie	0.97	0.36	1	274.91%
Oneida County School District was not included in the numbers because most of their district is an online				
Oneida County	365.31	136.99	54.27	39.62%

Dear C.E.C Committee,

Thank you for taking the time to meet and discuss the needs for compensation adjustments for the department. My name is Dominic Martinez, I am a landscape foreman at the Southwest Idaho Treatment Center in Nampa. I have been with the department for almost five years, and in that time, I have only seen one C.E.C raise approved. At the rate of growth in the Treasure Valley, that rate of pay raises is not keeping up with the growth pains of the valley. We are all Idahoans and need not an explanation of what exactly those growth pains are.

Speaking for the rest of my fellow co-workers, we do not work at SWITC for the money, we work here to help struggling dual diagnosed individuals find reason to wake up every day. But dual diagnosed individuals are a difficult population to work with day in and day out. Many coworkers I see get burned out at an alarming rate. It is tough for them to drive home each day and see monstrous warehouses advertising jobs, paying exceptionally more money to do a job that is not supporting a population that needs caring people in their lives, day in and day out. If they know their family has a more fruitful income, it might help them continue to look past those billboards and continue to serve those in need. These individuals here at SWITC are still Idahoans, and Idahoans support one another.

I thank you for your time in considering my words of suggestion, as do the rest of the individuals in the department.

Take care,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dominic Martinez". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

-Dominic Martinez

Dear Senators and Representatives of the 2022 CEC Committee,

My name is Gideon Roberts, and I am a 7-year employee of the State of Idaho as an Idaho State Police Trooper, with 10 years prior experience with another agency. What follows is my opinion and does not necessarily represent the official policy or opinion of the Idaho State Police or any other state agency.

I am writing to you because I feel I can no longer be silent on such an important issue. The Idaho State Police is considered by many to be the premier law enforcement agency in the State of Idaho, yet my hourly wage has not kept up with the cost of living and has fallen far behind industry standards. As a result, my family and I are finding that my paycheck doesn't stretch as far as it used to. I'm incredibly thankful for my job and the life it affords me and my family, however, many Troopers I personally know aren't as financially stable, which creates unnecessary stress and distractions at work and home. Also, recruiting and retaining quality individuals has become quite difficult. Those outstanding individuals who choose to be an Idaho State Police Trooper as their profession are aware of the difficulties and hardships that come with the job, and yet they do it anyway, with integrity and honor, rarely thinking of themselves. But when they are asked to perform those duties for a wage that many times doesn't even cover their monthly bills, most of them seek out other agencies that better provide for them and their family.

The 2019 median household income in Idaho was \$60,990¹. Starting Trooper pay is currently \$22.81 per hour, which equals just over \$47,444 per year. This means that the starting wage for an Idaho State Police Trooper is about 22% less than the median household income. *

Twenty years ago, the starting pay for a Trooper was \$15.50 per hour. In 20 years, the starting pay for an Idaho State Police Trooper has only increased by \$7.31 per hour; that is a 47.16% increase. By comparison, the US inflation rate over the same period was 57.0%.² While various attempts have been made over the years to increase state police employee pay, you can see that starting wages for Troopers have fallen behind the cost of living by nearly 10%. The net effect is that Idaho State Police employee income continues to decline year after year. *

I have watched many of our Troopers devote one or more of their scheduled "days off" each week to work extra shift, just to ensure they make ends meet. Those "days off" should be spent with their families or pursuing other interests, so they can decompress from the stresses of the job and be refreshed, ready for the next week. Unfortunately, they can't afford to miss those extra shifts, but in taking them on, they continue to pile on more stress, put off important things at home, and

¹ Idaho | Data USA. (n.d.). Retrieved January 11, 2022, from <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/idaho>

² Inflation Calculator | Find US Dollar's Value from 1913-2021. (2021, December 10).

<https://www.usinflationcalculator.com/> *Compiled by M. Mooney, used with permission.

miss out on so much of what this great state has to offers its families, all because their wage simply isn't adequate.

During the State of the State address, Governor Little said we are living in unprecedented times financially. We may never have another opportunity like we do right now to correct the past's shortcomings within the pay structure of Idaho State Police. I ask you to demonstrate the value you place on the Troopers of the Idaho State Police by making a recommendation to increase their pay by 10% or more. I would also ask that this pay increase not be based on "merit", but simply provided to every Trooper in good standing, as a token of gratitude for their selfless service from a grateful state.

Please show Idaho State Police Troopers that you see their hard work and sacrifice, and that their efforts can and will be rewarded through significant pay increases designed to sustain their families and keep in step with other premier law enforcement agencies around the state.

Thank you for you being willingness to listen to input on such an important issue, and to participate in such an important committee.

Respectfully,

Gideon Roberts

Det. Gideon Roberts
Idaho State Police
District 2 Investigations

January 16, 2022

Dear CEC Committee:

I appreciate your taking the time to listen to some of the changes I would like to see to the state's employee compensation. I know your job is a difficult one and I'm sure you receive many requests for change.

There are two things I would like to see addressed concerning the wages for Idaho State Troopers. I would like to see an increase in the cost-of-living compensation, and I would like to see a change in the way overtime is paid out.

The cost-of-living compensation doesn't even come close to increasing wages in proportion to the actual cost of living. While I am extremely grateful for what we do get, and my husband works hard to get the highest percentage possible, it doesn't cover the increase in cost of goods. While the wages for workers at grocery stores, restaurants, gas stations, etc. continue to rise this has a domino effect in the price of goods. Meanwhile the wage increases for the Idaho State Troopers is considerably less than that of other types of employment.

Through emails I receive from the office of the governor and via his state of the state I am constantly seeing how successful Idaho has been in having a surplus of monies. It is very frustrating to see how these monies are being distributed to other areas and not to the employees of the state. I know the CEC committee is aware of how difficult it is to retain Idaho State Troopers due to low wages. Now is the time to get a handle on it.

The second item on my list is the distribution of overtime earned. My husband works a substantial amount of overtime, and it is frustrating that even this does not seem to find its way into our bank account. His hours must be banked, and the state holds onto them for a certain amount of time before he finally gets paid for the time he has earned, or he is encouraged to use it as time off. If any other business were to "hold onto overtime hours" rather than pay them out, they would be subject to labor law violations. I propose that their overtime gets paid out at the rate of time and a half during the pay period that it was accrued.

As stated previously, my husband works his fair share of overtime – not because he wants to but because it is the nature of the job, and he is thorough and committed to a job well done. Troopers are subject to call outs and can't just leave in the middle of an arrest or crash to go home simply because they have put in their ten hours for the day. It is ludicrous that they must wait a month or longer to be compensated for the entirety of hours they have worked in a pay period.

Law enforcement is a crucial part of keeping Idaho the great state that it is. I thank you again for the opportunity to express my opinion on the topic of their wages.

Sincerely,

Brenda Davis



January 17, 2022

Subject: Change in Employee Compensation recommendations

To Members of the CEC Committee:

Process needs to be revised

The Change in Employee Compensation Committee process should be revamped because it is not adding much value. Per Appendix D of the Fiscal Year 2023 CEC Report, since Fiscal Year 2018, there have been few material differences between the governor's recommendations and the CEC Committee's actions. Further, now that no public testimony is taken, we have a situation where advocacy for state employees is not balanced with advocacy for taxpayers, self-employed individuals, and small businesses.

The members of this committee are put in a difficult position. If they publicly oppose the recommendations for employee increases, those who surround them at the Capitol for three months will know it.

The importance of improving this process cannot be overstated now that we are in a period of inflation the likes of which we have not seen in about 40 years. Economists use the term "wage-price spiral" to refer to a situation in which inflation leads to higher wage demands and higher wage demands lead to higher inflation as labor inputs surge. If this committee is not careful, the government sector, Idaho's largest employer, will ignite a "wage-price" spiral in our state.

CEC recommendation

The Idaho Freedom Foundation is opposed to the governor's recommendation on CEC for the reasons outlined below. While we acknowledge the inflationary pressures facing all Idaho families, including state workers, we don't believe that the recommendation made by the Governor and supported by DHR Administrator Lori Wolff is the best path forward.

IFF suggests the following:

- IFF supports the 2% salary structure adjustment for an all funds cost of \$30.3 million, as recommended, BUT,
- IFF proposes an alternative to the merit increase component as follows: a one-time bonus of \$1,000 per full-time employee and \$500 per part-time employee, at an approximate cost of \$23 million; and an increase in the amount available for "specific occupational inequity/payline exceptions from \$1.2 million to \$3 million." The total all funds cost of item 2 is about \$26 million, or approximately \$20 million less than the governor's

recommendation. One-time bonus money will be less likely to fuel a “wage-price spiral” and will not be built into the base budget in perpetuity.

Summary points

The comparison of state to private sector wages and benefits is not apples to apples.

- The total compensation, including salaries and benefits, that is depicted on page 31 of the CEC report, was 12% below the total compensation of the private sector market. However, there is no easy way to compare the expected value of the job security a state job offers to the expected value of job security in the private sector. This uncaptured “expected value” could explain why so few state employees leave government for the private sector, except in high demand fields like IT or nursing.
- Appendix T in the FY23 CEC report shows that only 1.6% of the separated state employees in FY21 went to the private sector. While it is clear from the data that certain fields have higher turnover and vacancy rates, those should be addressed without lumping the entire state workforce into one bucket.
- Page 25 of the FY23 CEC report shows that the FY21 voluntary turnover was 10.8%, involuntary turnover was 4.7% and total turnover, including retirement, was 18.9%.
- In the most recent report, according to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, the voluntary turnover rate was 25%, the involuntary turnover rate was 29%, and the total turnover rate was 57% on a national scale.
- A key factor in the underperformance of many European countries over the past decades, “Euro-sclerosis,” was elevating the government sector to the most attractive employment alternative for job-seekers. The state should not use public money to compete with the private sector for scarce employees.

Shortages in critical areas should be addressed without paying everyone more

This would be the appropriate response with a total workforce of around 25,000 people.

The CEC process usually produces the outcome that the governor seeks

The committee should seek alternative resources and reports in formulating recommendations.

No real taxpayer representation on CEC

Legislators are put in an awkward position of having to discuss wages and benefits in front of state employees without the benefit of verbal testimony from small businesses, taxpayers, or self-employed workers representing the worldview of those who have been shattered by government-imposed restrictions during the pandemic. For these individuals, the issue is not how big the raise, but how to rebuild their lives.

Respectfully,



Fred Birnbaum, Legislative Affairs Director

17 January 2022

Change in Employee Compensation (CEC) Committee
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, Idaho 83720-0081

Greetings CEC Committee,

Thank you for soliciting testimony. The following testimony is from us as state employees; however, we are not speaking on behalf of the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, Family and Community Services, Children and Family Services. We are presenting ourselves as current employees of the foster care licensing team in Region 3 and would like to provide our combined testimony as stated below. This testimony is in relation to employee compensation.

Child and Family Services primary commitment and responsibility is “the safety, well-being and permanency of children who are victims of child abuse, neglect or abandonment.”ⁱ The Child Welfare Team in its entirety, works as a four-legged table with those legs to include safety, permanency (recently disbanded in Region 3), case management, and foster care licensing teams. These teams work together to meet the needs of children and families in Idaho. Generally speaking, a table cannot stand when one leg is missing. This rings true as one team in child welfare cannot operate successfully without another; they are all inter-connected.

In October 2021, Cameron Gilliland, Administrator for the Division of Family and Community Services, made an announcement in a state-wide employee meeting. This announcement included intel that safety assessors and case managers would be given the option to sign a Memorandum of Understanding and commit to a \$4,000 bonus and proposed subsequent 7% raise. This was proposed as a gesture in retention and appreciation for the work they do.ⁱⁱ As a licensing team, it was a literal “gut-punch” to licensing and some permanency workers (recently disbanded in Region 3). The reason for this visceral response is due in-part that no bonuses or additional compensation would be paid to not only the licensing and permanency team, but to expand to support staff such as Client Service Technicians and Administrative staff.

This information was presented to us first thing on a Monday morning with absolutely zero warning or emotional preparation. As a result, it prompted those of us on the foster care licensing team in Region 3 to reassess our value as Department employees. While we are committed to the work we do—serving and supporting our foster families and children in their care—it is difficult to want to continue in this line of work when we feel undervalued and undercompensated.

When thoughts regarding this directive were presented before leadership at the Central Office level, the message received by an extensive number of employees was that: safety assessors and case managers were experiencing a higher level of turnover, in comparison to the remainder of the Child Welfare workforce.

As a Region 3 licensing team, the data presented before us during this meeting, as well as decisions being made with minimal (non-existent) stakeholder input, does not appear to correlate with the wage incentive and bonuses proposed. Region 3’s foster care licensing team has experienced an insurmountable rate of turnover; with over half of the team being onboarded to the licensing team since the summer of 2021. As it stands now, only 3 workers have been on the Region 3 licensing team for over 18 months.

Additionally, the decision made around increases in pay to a select number of employees who have the same title has caused dissonance to flare up in the worker environment. “Child Welfare Worker” is a universal job title/profession to include all pillars of child welfare. To only offer said bonuses and higher pay to only two positions when we are all coded the same as the Child

Welfare team has serious implications and continues to be contentious. It has also caused workplace morale to plummet.

The current worker conditions within Children and Family Services prove to be high-stress and high volume. With a staff shortage, the work we do as a licensing team proves to be even more tumultuous and stressful. As a team, we feel we continue to be overlooked and underappreciated, even though our case loads are over twice what is considered to be appropriate per state laws and standards.

Per IDAPA 16.06.02—Rules Governing Standards for Child Care Licensing,

“At the discretion of the supervisor, a social worker or service worker may be assigned a caseload of twenty (20) families with an adoption placement, active child foster care, or transitional living cases; or forty (40) adoptive families being studied or awaiting an adoptive placement or foster home certification cases, or a proportionate combination of these functions.”ⁱⁱⁱ

As it stands currently on the Region 3 Foster Care Licensing Team, our average caseload exceeds **two times** what IDAPA 16.06.02 allows. In order for us to operate at a level that is sustainable, as well as feel supported and more confident in the work we do, we would need to have two times the number of workers in our region. By adding a selective bonus and a higher rate of pay percentage increase to include only Child Welfare Social Workers in case management and safety assessment proves to be problematic and will continue to prove troublesome until the morale factor is addressed.

As a whole, we as a licensing team feel there is a lack of understanding regarding what we do day to day. Not only are we responsible for ensuring foster homes meet licensing standards per IDAPA, we have a plethora of collateral duties. These duties include writing comprehensive and in-depth home studies, assisting case managers with foster care placements, staffing safety concerns with regards to foster children and foster families and assisting foster families with ensuring they receive payment in a timely manner, to note a few.

On top of our job responsibilities, we have helped pick up the work load for our co-workers in case management and safety by assisting with transporting children in care, volunteering to stay at the short-term rentals when unable to secure an appropriate placement for children, among many other items. There have even been members of the licensing team who have helped by taking safety assessments from safety assessors when the workload has been unbearable. A lot of the tasks we have taken on to assist our co-workers who are struggling (just as ourselves,) are not only outside of our job responsibilities, but they have a tendency to be outside of our already packed 40-hour work week.

The child welfare team as a whole, has a tendency to be seen as a unit and we operate as one. Without one section of child welfare, all other sections flounder. We feel undercompensated and undervalued, struggling to function smoothly knowing new social workers now start at a higher rate of pay with additional bonuses than those of us who have been here for five, seven or ten plus years. **Paying all social workers an equal wage, and equal retention bonuses, ensures that the licensing team continues to be valued members of the team.**

Several of us on the team have recently been approached by recruiters from both private agencies and even internally at IDHW. The opportunities presented before us have a tendency to offer better pay and the possibility of a less stressful work environment; however, we stay not only because we love our work, but we also feel guilty about leaving our team and community in a bind. Several of us are in the position where we have to reconcile our feelings of guilt with the impact the stress of our jobs is having on our personal lives.

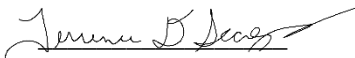
We, as a licensing team are constantly asked to do more with less and carry caseloads of 80 to 90 foster families. It is necessary for many relative and general foster families to meet outside of regular work hours. In order to meet these needs, several of us have to make outside arrangements for childcare. An increase in pay that reflects our value as an employee would mitigate the financial impact this has on making after hours childcare arrangements.

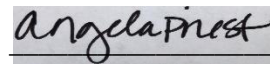
The last, but important matter we would like to articulate in hopes of consideration is decreasing the Rule of 90 to the Rule of 85 or 80. As a general statement, we know that social work and child welfare can be extremely taxing on our psyche. As the Honorable Judge Andrew Ellis reported in a recent article that gained traction in the community, child protection in many ways can be compared to a “psychological meat grinder.”^{iv} With high-stress conditions that are exacerbated even further with a shortage of staff, an influx in population, and more serious safety referrals filtering in, mixed with high-volume case loads and less resources, this proves to be more detrimental to the work force.

The Region 3 Licensing Team would like to thank you for all you do to support Idaho’s children and families. We are hopeful that you will take all of the items listed and presented before you into consideration as you brainstorm ways to continue to support us as state workers. We understand that even yourselves, as elected officials have a tendency to do the work you do with little or no compensation. You are tasked with responsibilities that have a significant impact to your constituents and the level and quality of work we are able to achieve. Every decision made, both as a departmental employee working with clients and also at the legislative level impacts our community at large.

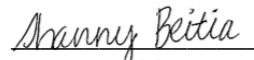
Thank you so much for taking the time to read this letter and take all points presented into consideration.

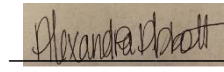
Respectfully,

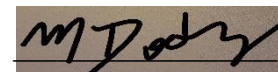

Terrence Scraggins, LSW


Angela Priest, LMSW

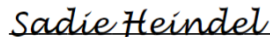

Stephanie Koopman, LMSW

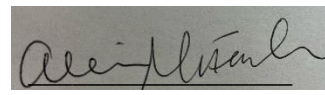

Shanny Beitia, LSW

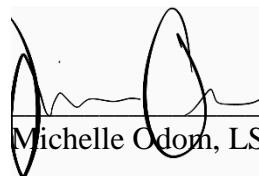

Alexandra Abbott (PSR)


M. Dooley, CPRP (PSR)


Skyler Thompson, LSW


Sadie Heindel, LMSW


Allison McFarlane, LMSW


Michelle Odom, LSW

ⁱ <https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/sites/default/files/2020-05/Child%20Protection%20Report.pdf>

ii <https://idahocapitalsun.com/2021/11/29/i-have-not-seen-it-like-this-idahos-child-welfare-safety-net-is-wearing-thin/#:~:text=There%20is%20a%20%242%2C000%20sign,period%20and%20completion%20of%20training.>

iii <https://adminrules.idaho.gov/rules/2002/16/0602.pdf>

iv <https://idahocapitalsun.com/2021/12/17/social-workers-are-leaving-the-idaho-health-department-now-some-case-metrics-are-dropping/>

Boise, ID. 83706

January 17, 2022

Idaho State Legislature
CEC Committee
c/o Christine Otto at: COtto@Iso.idaho.gov

To The Honorable Members of the CEC Committee:

Senator Jim L. Patrick, Co-chair
Representative James Holtzclaw, Co-chair
Senator Jeff Agenbroad
Representative Scott Syme
Senator Jim Guthrie
Representative Mike Kingsley
Senator Mary Souza
Representative Lori McCann
Senator Janie Ward-Engelking
Representative John Gannon

My name is Emily Alvord Nutting. I am an LMSW, licensed Clinician for Idaho's State Department of Health and Welfare and hold a master's in social work. I have worked for the State of Idaho for approximately 10 years. I am a member of the Developmental Disabilities, Crisis Prevention and Court Services Team and can assure you we are very dedicated to our profession; we work extremely hard in stressful conditions to support and protect the most vulnerable members in our State. I make \$26 p/hr while the entry salary for my Clinician position is \$22.36, the mid-point is \$31.95 p/hr and maximum pay rate is \$39.93 p/hr.

I live in Boise where my two daughters attend grade school. I struggle every month to pay my rent, medical bills, make my auto payments in addition to feeding and clothing our family of four on my salary. My landlord has given me notice that my rent for our 3 bedroom, 1200 sf apartment will be raised next month. I don't know if I will be able to afford this increase in addition to keeping up with the soaring cost of living impacting everything we purchase. Additionally, I have some serious health issues that have become more complicated as I age; these facts make me extremely stressed and fearful for my family's future. There have been so many challenges over the last two years to feel depleted and discouraged over, it would be a huge relief to get receive positive news on state compensation.

When I was hired by the State of Idaho, I was told that I could expect to reach the mid-point of my paygrade within five years if I was meeting the standards of my job. Since hired, I have consistently exceeded the performance standards expected for my job, yet my compensation is not at the mid-point. I am told there is a State-wide employee shortage due to continual turnover of Clinicians and Social Workers at Health and Welfare. I am dedicated to this profession and work extremely hard and long hours for my department and my clients. However, I can't sufficiently express how depressing and unappreciated I feel when I see State job postings for the same position, that I hold advertising a starting salary higher than I currently make... I have over 6 years' experience in the same job but am not even to the mid-point of the salary range. This scenario might be contributing to the State's turnover problem not to mention how demoralizing this is for its current employees. We need and deserve to be rewarded for our continued dedication and hard work.

In order for me to understand this incongruity, I have researched Idaho Code and spoken with State Compensation experts who explained that when the Hay Compensation System was approved by the legislature and implemented in the mid-eighties, Hay consultants underscored that the cornerstone of this

new system must always maintain its competitiveness with the labor market averages; warning that anything to the contrary would result in system's failure to the detriment of every employee it was designed to compensate under this methodology. It's my understanding that while data is gathered annually to conduct market comparison analysis, the funds have not been committed to support this component for numerous years. I am deeply troubled that the State purchased a compensation system, but has chosen not to maintain it through lack of funding. I have been told that this lack of funding was a legislative decision because past legislatures were uncomfortable committing future funding for the next legislature; however, this could be remedied through a funding mandate for State agencies.

Attached are the Idaho Code references reinforcing the consultant's instructions and warning on how to maintain a vital workforce and compensation system for its employees. Because the State has surplus funds this year, I implore you to take measures to support and recommit resources to fairly compensate the State's most valuable resources, its employees. The Hay Compensation System consultant advised the State to fund this program, but it never happened. I sincerely and respectfully ask for your support and action to reverse this mistake, to fund this system and make it viable and meaningful program that will give agencies the opportunity to reward its employees. I truly want to continue to live in Boise and I also truly believe I deserve to be fairly compensated.

Most respectfully yours,



Emily Alvord Nutting, LMSW, Clinician
Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
Developmental Disabilities
Crisis Prevention and Court Services

enclosure

cc: Senator Janie Ward-Engkelking
Rep Ilana Rubel
Rep Brook Green.

JWardEngelking@senate.idaho.gov
IRubel@house.idaho.gov
BGreen@house.idaho.gov

Idaho Code Reference Citations

67-5309A. STATE EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION PHILOSOPHY. (1) It is hereby declared to be the intent of the legislature of the state of Idaho that the goal of a total compensation system for state employees shall be to fund a competitive employee compensation and benefit package that will attract qualified applicants to the work force; retain employees who have a commitment to public service excellence; motivate employees to maintain high standards of productivity; and reward employees for outstanding performance.

(2) The foundation for this philosophy recognizes that state government is a service enterprise in which the state work force provides the most critical role for Idaho citizens. Maintaining a competitive compensation system is an integral, necessary and expected cost of providing the delivery of state services and is based on the following compensation standards:

- (a) The state's overall compensation system, which includes both a salary and a benefit component, when taken as a whole shall be competitive with relevant labor market averages.
- (b) Advancement in pay shall be based on job performance and market changes.
- (c) Pay for performance shall provide faster salary advancement for higher performers based on a merit increase matrix developed by the division of human resources.
- (d) All employees below the state's midpoint market average in a salary range who are meeting expectations in the performance of their jobs shall move through the pay range toward the midpoint market average.

(3) It is hereby declared to be legislative intent that regardless of specific budgetary conditions from year to year, it is vital to fund necessary compensation adjustments each year to maintain market competitiveness in the compensation system. In order to provide this funding commitment in difficult fiscal conditions, it may be necessary to increase revenues, or to prioritize and eliminate certain functions or programs in state government, or to reduce the overall number of state employees in a given year, or any combination of such methods.

Dear Senators and Representatives of the 2022 CEC Committee:

My name is Mike Mooney, I am a 20-year employee and a management level supervisor for the State of Idaho. The views and opinions expressed in this letter are my own and do not necessarily represent the official policy or opinion of my employer or any state agency.

I am compelled to write to you because I feel one of our finest state organizations is at a crossroads. The Idaho State Police is considered by many to be the premier law enforcement agency in the State of Idaho, yet salaries for these valuable employees have not kept up with the cost of living and have fallen behind industry standards. As a result, the remarkable individuals who work for ISP find that their paychecks just don't stretch as far as they used to with many struggling to make ends meet. Additionally, recruiting and retaining the quality individuals necessary to maintain a professional police force has become quite difficult.

The 2019 median household income in Idaho was \$60,990¹. Starting Trooper pay is currently \$22.81 per hour, about \$47,444 per year. The starting wage for an Idaho State Police Trooper is approximately 22% less than the median household income.

When I got hired by ISP 20 years ago the starting pay for a Trooper was \$15.50 per hour. In that time the starting pay has only increased by \$7.31 per hour; that is a 47.16% increase. By comparison, the US inflation rate over the same period was 57.0%.² While various attempts have been made over the years to increase state police employee pay, you can see that wages have nevertheless fallen behind the cost of living by around 10%. The net effect is that Idaho State Police employee income continues to decline year after year.

This is not just a problem for Troopers, the wages of our outstanding ISP support staff have been stagnant for many years as well. I know that every agency, department, and division within the State of Idaho has support staff such as Administrative Assistants, Technical Records Specialists, and the like, however, the administrative support staff in the Idaho State Police are very different and have many unique and stringent requirements. For instance, how many Administrative Assistants in other agencies are required to handle, process, catalog, and secure evidence collected by Troopers and Detectives? How many Technical Records Specialists are required to pass extensive background investigations and maintain certifications in sensitive Idaho and National Law Enforcement databases? How many support staff may be required to testify at trial or interact with violent felons who come to the office requesting property or paperwork. Support and Administrative staff within the Idaho State Police have very unique and challenging jobs which set them apart from their

¹ Idaho | Data USA. (n.d.). Retrieved January 11, 2022, from <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/idaho>

² Inflation Calculator | Find US Dollar's Value from 1913-2021. (2021, December 10). <https://www.usinflationcalculator.com/>

counterparts in most other state agencies. As minimum wages in low-skill/low-stress jobs skyrocket it becomes harder to recruit and retain the quality individuals we need to perform this important work. Additionally, I have watched morale deteriorate as year after year CEC increases failed to keep up with the rising cost of health care, housing, and other necessary living expenses. Idaho State Police support staff are not thriving when they barely earn more than fast-food workers.

As Governor Little mentioned during the State of the State address, we are living in unprecedented times financially. We may never have another opportunity like we do today to rectify this problem with the Idaho State Police's pay. I implore you to demonstrate the value you place on the amazing employees of the Idaho State Police by making a recommendation to increase all Idaho State Police pay by 10% or more. Furthermore, I ask that this pay increase not be based on "merit." Every employee in good standing deserves a liveable wage and the opportunity for their families to thrive in today's economy.

Please show Idaho State Police employees that their hard work and sacrifice do not go unnoticed. Their efforts can and should be rewarded through significant pay increases designed to defeat the ravages of inflation and to keep in step with other premier law enforcement agencies around the state.

Thank you for your willingness to sit on this important committee and for soliciting testimony on such a vital topic.

Respectfully,



Lt. Mike Mooney
Idaho State Police
District 2 Investigations

CEC COMMITTEE,

JAN 11, 2022

RE: STATE EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION

I APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO TESTIFY. I BELIEVE WE STATE EMPLOYEES HAVE EXCELLENT BENEFITS, HOWEVER OUR PAY IS NOT COMPETITIVE FOR THE RESPONSIBILITIES PLACED. MY DEPARTMENT, AGRICULTURE FF¹/_V INSECTIONS, IS A SELF SUPPORTED AGENCY, YET WE ARE LOWEST PAID. I BELIEVE AN EMPLOYEES WORTH, LENGTH OF TIME WORKED, ABILITIES AND PERFORMANCE SHOULD ALL BE APPLICABLE. COST OF LIVING INCREASES SEEM TO BE THE MAJORITY RAISES GIVEN, WHICH USUALLY COVER INSURANCES INCREASES. THERE HASN'T BEEN APPRECIATION FOR THE VALUE AN EMPLOYEE HAS TO THE COMPANY IMPLEMENTED SINCE THE STATE DID AWAY WITH COST OF LIVING, MERIT, AND LONGEVITY INCREASES MANY YEARS AGO. I FEEL THOSE INCREASES AS WELL AS HIGHER SET PAY WOULD HELP US GET AND KEEP EXCELLENT PROUD STATE EMPLOYEES.

Thank You

Sincerely,
Lightme
Senseback

For your consideration,

With inflation, gas prices, and the rising pay rate around the valley; employee pay here is at a standstill. As I go driving around, I can't help but see signs, "Hiring Seasonal work starting at \$17/hr"(Costplus), "Now hiring starting \$15/hr"(McDonalds), "Hiring Delivery drivers \$18-21/hr"(Dominos) , "Pay starting at \$18.50/hr" (Hobby Lobby). I hear my fellow employees talk about having to move if their landlords raise their rent and not knowing what they will do because rent prices far exceed income rates. I received a promotion and a pay raise last year, but I make equal or less than teenagers getting their first jobs, I can't imagine how other employees below my pay grade must feel like. I can tell you personally that without my husband's pay contributing, I would not be able to afford my mortgage and be able to support my family. There are a lot of single income employees that are truly struggling. Without a substantial pay raise non-commission state employee will be forced to leave and find employment elsewhere just to be able to afford rent.

Kara Kelley TRS2

Alcohol Beverage Control
Idaho State Police
700 S. Stratford Dr., Ste. 115
Meridian, ID 83642-6251
Phone: [REDACTED]
Fax: 208-884-7096

I am K9 Handler Cpl. Seth Green with the Idaho State Police. I received an email requesting our input on the upcoming years CEC. Unfortunately due to mass increase in living expenses in Idaho as well as being well below the other Law Enforcement pay and salary in the area has caused a massive stress on the Idaho State Police. I have watched many friends of mine leave the agency due to being unable to live in the Coeur D. Alene and Boise areas because of the lack of competitive wages. I have watched as my agency has had to lower hiring standards, and we now don't even have any sort of physical fitness test that one must perform to stay on the road. Due to our lack of competitive wages and fewer people wanting to enter law enforcement because of the current environment of law enforcement across the country, I have watched as we have numerous openings to fill and we barely have anyone even applying which is naturally going to lower the quality of people we are obtaining. One suggestion I have that would save the state and its employees money is rather than a massive raise, allot a housing allowance just like the military did. Do it according to zip code and housing costs in that area. The other option would be a 15 percent raise to bring us up within a few dollars an hour of the agencies around us. If neither of these options occur, I am gravely concerned for the longevity of my agency. We are depleting quickly and it is only a matter of time before it does irreparable damage. The overall morale is low in Law Enforcement in general due to the political events over the past few years. Some of the events that occurred in the past few years by law enforcement were very unfortunate and in some cases wrong. If we cannot attract the highest qualified candidates, these events are guaranteed to increase, not decrease. Worse yet, It might just cause us to purely be a reactive police force in Idaho which would soon follow with the environment (criminally) that has occurred in Washington, California, and Oregon. Thank you for your time.

Hey Christine,

I just wanted to mention what I had been thinking about recently. McDonalds is raising their minimum wage to \$15/hr, and I have heard that the state of Idaho is having a very difficult time hiring new employees. I wonder if that is due to a lack of adequate compensation compared to other private employers. If companies follow in the footsteps of large private businesses like McDonalds, the issue will only continue to grow.

V/R



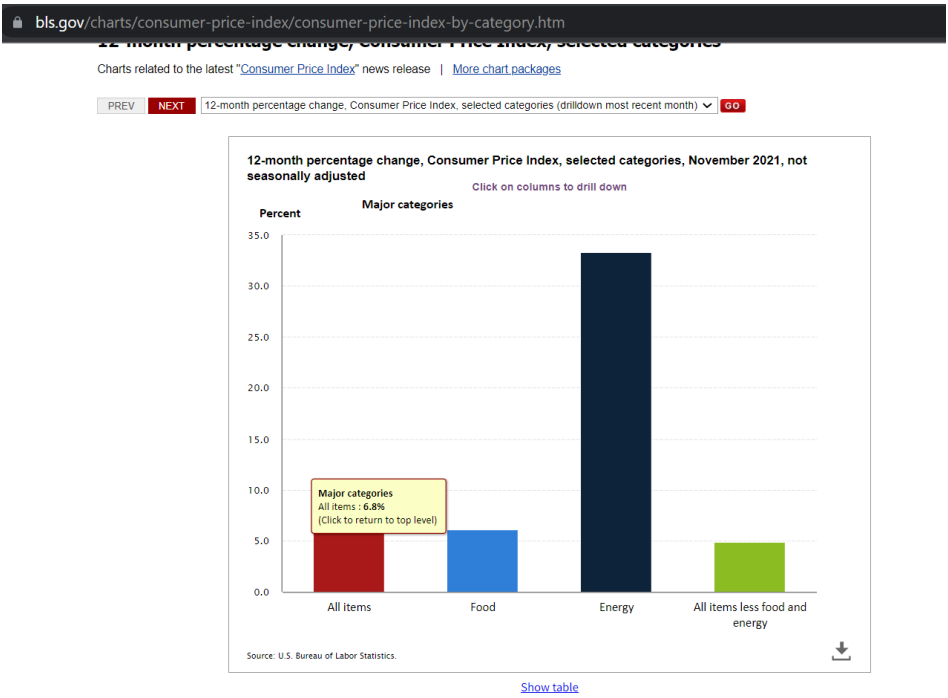
Chance Sassaman - Network Operations Center

Idaho State Police - IT Department - IT Ops and Support
700 Stratford Drive, Meridian ID 83642 - 0700
ILETS NOC 24/7: (208) 884-7150
Email: chance.sassaman@isp.idaho.gov
<http://www.isp.idaho.gov>

Good morning Christine,

I received an email this morning requesting people share their thoughts to our representatives regarding CEC. While there is a lot that I would like to share, I can boil it down to this:

If the CEC does not give state employees a 6.8% increase in pay, state employees are effectively receiving a pay cut when inflation is considered. (<https://www.bls.gov/charts/consumer-price-index/consumer-price-index-by-category.htm>)



Joel Lange - Infrastructure Engineer III

Idaho Department of Health & Welfare - ITSD

450 West State Street - 8th Floor

Boise, ID. 83702-0036

Cell: [REDACTED]

Monday-Friday 8:00AM – 5:00PM MST

Joel.Lange@dhw.idaho.gov

Please do not decrease my vacation/sick time in exchange for paying overtime. I am healthy and sane, so I like to take my vacation time instead of burning myself out. Maybe that is why I have been with the State since 2009.

I am with the Central Intake Unit right now, and I felt a bit slighted when safety and case managers got pay increases but not me. We in CIU staff a 24/7/365 unit which means we work Christmas and New Years and 3 am and 5 am and ALL the rest. But apparently that is not terrible enough to warrant a pay increase to match our counterparts in the field. Even though most of us in CIU worked in safety and case first, and worked our way into the CIU after BEING BURNED OUT FROM THE OVERTIME of the field.

Paying a few more dollars on a paycheck for some is NOT the solution to the problems in the field. And overlooking the people who have stayed in CPS for many years and found their way to licensing or intake is NOT helping (from my perspective.)

Thanks for listening.

Hi Christine,

I would like to provide a few comments regarding next fiscal year's CEC.

As a hiring manager, I can attest to the struggles we are having to fill state jobs, as recently reported in a KTVB article. The article states we have over 2,500 unfilled jobs and are currently battling a 12% vacancy rate. According to the Fiscal Year 2023 Change in Employee Compensation and Benefits Report, state employee salaries remain 9% below market rates and total compensation is 12% below the private sector.

Additionally, CPI inflation is the highest it has been in almost 40 years, measuring in at 6.8%. What's even worse is that CPI is well understood to underestimate true inflation. A normal CEC of 2% is nothing more than a pay decrease compared to previous years. In order for the state to not only recruit new staff but also retain the talent we currently have, wages must increase across the board to be more competitive.

Thanks,

Jason Brizendine

Financial Manager

Division of Management Services

Desk: 208-334-6665

Jason.Brizendine@dhw.idaho.gov

Thank you Ms. Otto for receiving comments regarding employee compensation.

I have one question for the committee:

If the State continually runs a surplus and that surplus is increasing, why is it that the majority of State Employees are considered unworthy of pay at least equal to that of other public sector positions and wages that will keep up with the rising cost of living in Boise?

If we were to be brought up to pay commensurate with other public sector positions, we would need to have base salary ranges increased by 7 percent just to bring us to what other public sector positions are currently paying. Merit raises would then be added to that 7% minimum. We are constantly told that our service matters. It is hard to believe that statement when our compensation does not match the rhetoric. Thank you.

Lynne Given

Technical Records Specialist 2
Bureau of Facilities Standards
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0009
(208)334-6626, Option 5

Hi,

I work in Central Intake as a CWSW 2. I would prefer to keep my all vacation and not have some of it taken away. In Intake, we do not get much (if any) overtime and so we would only be losing vacation. I'm sure there are other groups in the workforce who are not working overtime as well.

Hiring more people would be the best way to help the field workers. I was in the field previously (2012) and it was awful then.

Thank you!

Rebecca A. Balli, LSW
Idaho Central Intake Unit
Child abuse reporting line:
855-552-5437 (KIDS)

Hi Christine Otto,

My name is Ashley, and I am working for the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare as a COVID-19 Investigator. Additionally, I am a full-time graduate student obtaining a Master's in Public Health from Boise State University. A few roles in the Department of Health and Welfare currently offer student loan forgiveness programs. I have not taken out any loans for either my undergraduate or master's programs; therefore, I would not benefit from these programs. However, I am unaware of any positions in the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare that offer tuition assistance or scholarships. Several other students in my cohort at Boise State are also state employees (for the IDHW) who would benefit from State-funded tuition assistance. I believe a program for tuition assistance would be especially helpful for state employees who are currently enrolled in graduate programs that actively contribute to the competency and capability of their role as state employees.

Please let me know if you have any further questions.

thank you,
Ashley Harris
COVID-19 Investigator
Epidemiology Section
Bureau of Communicable Disease Prevention
Division of Public Health

Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
T: 208-617-9429
E: Ashley.Harris@dhw.idaho.gov

I would like to say during the interim of this current President we are uncertain of the massive inflation that is just beginning to be felt through out the country's economy. No doubt we all work hard but I would suggest that a freeze be put on employee compensation until the economy is in a more predictable and secure state. Let's use plain common sense.

Ms. Rene' McSherry-Bray
[REDACTED]
Meridian 83646

My thoughts for the CEC.
Larry Payne

I want to start off by saying thank you for giving me the opportunity to provide recommendations to the state employee compensation. I have been a state employee for over 17 years. A large portion of that time I spent with Idaho Department of Corrections. I never had the opportunity to provide feedback or recommendations during my time with IDOC. I feel I have a lot to bring to the table for recommendations to maintain staffing levels at the appropriate levels to serve the wonderful citizens of Idaho. I also have a lot of ideas that could in ways serve our customers better and at the same time increase productivity.

1. The first on the list are the current hourly wages for employees. Everyone wants to make more; everyone wants to see more in their paychecks. While I was with IDOC, I experienced several years with no raise, at no fault of my own. It was crushing to see another year without a raise, especially having a young family. I stuck around for several reasons, I enjoyed what I did, the insurance is the best, and of course the retirement. I watched staff leave one after another for higher paying jobs, doing less and working less for more pay. People are motivated by money. Regular annual raises are very important, as a bonus we should be rewarded for the effort we put into our work. The additional amount that was added based off our evaluations was always nice to see. Outside of that, could the state look at quarterly bonuses, semi-annual, or annual bonuses. They could be based off of the years of service, work productivity, or being part of a special team. The final point being people want to make more. We are in the middle of a pandemic; with that we are starting see inflation with everyday goods we need. Things are costing more, but our wages are not consistence with the inflation rates.
2. Another improvement I would recommend has to do with the hours that are worked each day. Currently, many staff members appreciate the ability to work from home. That has been a welcomed change! With that, we are seeing increased productivity with staff statewide. An additional change that would be welcomed would be the ability to work 4- 10 hour days. We would be able to serve more customers every day as we would be able to stay open an extra two hours at the end of each day. This would allow us the opportunity to help those who are not able to call during normal business hours. This would fulfill a gap that I have seen while working in child support. Staff members would see schedules that run from Monday through Thursday and Tuesday through Friday. With a three-day weekend we can spend more time with our families

and for some the commute to work would be shortened. This would thus save resources for staff members, which would ultimately be an additional benefit for state staff members. It would be a win-win for a lot of the employees. If you want, I can provide numerous studies done in the US and abroad that prove that having a longer workday and longer weekends increase productivity. If a staff member cannot work a 10-hour day, they could opt to work 5 days a week. Being a flexible employer is important to a lot of staff these days!

Once again, I want to say thank you for the ability to add my recommendations. If I can help in anyway, I am flexible, dependable, and I can relate to other employees, acting as an advocate.

Thank you for your time.

University of Idaho is a great entity to earn a higher degree. U of I offers many different degrees and is a melting pot of diverse people coming from many different backgrounds, cultures, and values. I care deeply about these students, faculty, and staff, because without one of these pieces, U of I would struggle to succeed and expand. I am writing to inform you on behalf of U of I students, staff, and faculty, that we need more competitive wages to better serve this community.

Throughout the 30 years I have lived in Moscow, I have personally experienced many businesses struggle because of stagnant wages for employees. I have talked to many people that are high up in companies throughout the years, and most of them joke about how all the businesses around about not being able to keep the "good" employees because they will find something that pays them more. These initial "higher ups" do not have the opportunity to increase employee wages, because there is always 2, 3, 4, 5 people above them that must approve it. When you are at the top making six figures plus, your life is just dandy, you can afford most anything you want and do not struggle financially. A lot of leaders that can change other people lives with more competitive wages, really do not care to do so. As I have mentioned, I have personally experienced this.

The people that can change others lives by increasing wages, I think, forget about one important lesson, it takes money to make money. If we had more competitive wages, over time, we would be successful, possibly more so than we could imagine. We, the workers/staff/faculty, need to be invested into. When you invest into employees/your general workforce, in return you will receive happier, healthier, and much more productive people. Especially in a small town, decisions from such a major employer has ramifications that effect the entire community in both positive and negative ways.

There are a lot of qualified, wonderful people that would be a great asset to U of I, but do not want to work here because the pay does not come close to what the workload is. A lot of them have turned to other jobs because there are other people paying more competitive wages. Simple as that. In this argument, money does make people happier. This is because they would be able to afford living expenses such as food, electricity, rent/mortgage, and vacations. Do not overlook the word "afford". By afford, I mean that the people can keep up with skyrocketing housing prices and ever-increasing rent payments, gas prices, food costs and still have money left over for savings. Also, while still having enough left over to save up for an additional modest vacation, or to go see friends and family, or get something you have had your eye on for a while. All these things are important because it significantly affects a person's health and well-being in general.

Both going to school here and being employed here for the last 5 years. I was a non-traditional student coming into U of I. I had no clue what to expect. The first year was wonderful. So many new faces, and great professors, it really was unbelievable and enjoyable. But throughout the years, I started paying attention more to what staff/faculty were discussing in between classes/office hours. Some of them were physically exhausted because of the workload, some of them were mentally exhausted from living paycheck to paycheck for 15 plus years working here making the same wage. Most of them had one thing in common and that was the lack of respectable wages. You would think that with everything on the rise

over the last decade, that wages would also continue to grow, but they do not. How is this possible considering tuition seems to go up every year or two while student population continues to grow? Where are we allocating all those funds to? Is this a state or a U of I issue? Are some people getting paid too much? How much is too much? How much is too little? If there was a large enough population to take a poll to gather a data from, I bet we would conclude, without a doubt on what that answer is. I have worked for U of I for 5 years already. It has always been a struggle to make it with the wages I am paid. It has made me very depressed at times and wanting to leave U of I to go work fast food, which I would be making more as a manager than what I am here, and I'm technically overqualified for that. U of I push higher education in a way that encourages students that they need to get a degree to make more money. With the wages I am paid, I cannot even start repaying my loans back because I am on an income driven repayment plan and I do not make enough money...So, how does that work? After spending \$60,000 for my education to get a bachelor's degree from U of I, and yet I cannot even start paying that back, because I do not make enough money from the same place, I got my higher education and employed by? Something needs to change. The people working here that help and guide students, such as myself, deserve something better or at least something equal to inflation. It takes money to make money. Invest in us, the employees, and I guarantee you will see a positive return, probably more significant than most realize. If this continues much longer, you run the risk of breaking the student-staff relationship because the good, solid, hardworking employees that all have an incredible size workload, will continue to leave U of I to find better wages for their efforts, and it will only make things worse. Day by day does not seem too bad, but as U of I has taught me, you need to plan and look into the future, and the way I see it, if things stay idle/stagnant with wages and the ever-increasing workload, U of I will not have a strong future. If U of I wants to be great, then it needs to invest more in its employees.

January

15, 2022

Honorable members of the CEC Committee:

I can appreciate each time the Committee assembles you face a difficult task. Thank you for your service, and for your consideration.

The 2023 CEC report shows State of Idaho employee wages still lag the market. In my 27 years of Idaho service, I don't recall a CEC report that arrived at any other conclusion. Documented increases in turnover and the number of job openings which are often re-announced for lack of qualified candidates, lead me to believe we are not meeting the statutory targets as outlined in blue below. I'm sure those of you with a business background understand failure to attract and retain high performers will only lessen service to constituents.

The 2023 CEC Executive Summary shows State employee wages trail the market by 9%. With that in mind, **I simply ask you to turn statutory intent (highlighted below in yellow) into reality, by promoting a 9% increase necessary to bring Idaho employees up to market.** I understand this will require over 100 million dollars, but I also understand the current budget surplus leaves you ample room to work. I am sure Department Directors and Human Resources staff can implement a distribution plan to attract, retain, motivate, and reward hard-working employees if you can promote and secure a 9% increase to the compensation and benefit package.

TITLE 67
STATE GOVERNMENT AND STATE AFFAIRS
CHAPTER 53
PERSONNEL SYSTEM

67-5309A. STATE EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION PHILOSOPHY. (1) It is hereby declared to be the intent of the legislature of the state of Idaho that the goal of a total compensation system for state employees shall be to fund a competitive employee compensation and benefit package that will attract qualified applicants to the work force; retain employees who have a commitment to public service excellence; motivate

employees to maintain high standards of productivity; and reward employees for outstanding performance.

(2) The foundation for this philosophy recognizes that state government is a service enterprise in which the state work force provides the most critical role for Idaho citizens. Maintaining a competitive compensation system is an integral, necessary and expected cost of providing the delivery of state services and is based on the following compensation standards:

(a) The state's overall compensation system, which includes both a salary and a benefit component, when taken as a whole shall be competitive with relevant labor market averages.

(b) Advancement in pay shall be based on job performance and market changes.


(c) Pay for performance shall provide faster salary advancement for higher performers based on a merit increase matrix developed by the division of human resources.

(d) All employees below the state's midpoint market average in a salary range who are meeting expectations in the performance of their jobs shall move through the pay range toward the midpoint market average.

(3) It is hereby declared to be legislative intent that regardless of specific budgetary conditions from year to year, it is vital to fund necessary compensation adjustments each year to maintain market competitiveness in the compensation system.

In order to provide this funding commitment in difficult fiscal conditions, it may be necessary to increase revenues, or to prioritize and eliminate certain functions or programs in state government, or to reduce the overall number of state employees in a given year, or any combination of such methods.

Again, thank you for your consideration,

 (concerned citizen)

Orofino, Idaho

My name is Tara Biddle and I work for the Idaho School Safety & Security Program. I have been with the office since July 2019 working part time. I love my job and the people I work with, and I have gained so much knowledge in regards to how our state and education systems operate. It is a privilege to be a part of helping create safer learning environments for our children. I have my Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration and 23 years of progressively responsible experience as an administrative assistant. In this environment I am able to utilize my diverse skills and work experience to its fullest potential and support the vision of our office. For example: having experience with how boards operate, assisting in running meetings and providing help to board members. At the time of my hiring I thought that the \$13.70 hourly wage was on the low side but I considered Idaho's minimum hourly wage and what I would be making in comparison along with the additional benefits of being in PERSI and having access to life insurance, which was a huge benefit for me and my family. Now being under the State Board of Education I also have access to higher education at a reduced cost which is another great benefit.

I have been in this position for almost 3 years; I have had 1 evaluation that has increased my current hourly rate to \$14.04 which is only an increase of \$0.34 (2.5%). Unfortunately, this is not keeping up with how much the cost of living is increasing. In December inflation rose 7%, and is expected to continually rise. In the past 12 months gas increased 49.6%, used car prices increased 26.63%, groceries increased 6.3%, chicken 10.4%, and beef increased 13% just to name a few staple items. The average home price in Boise has rose 21% to \$510,000 in December. This has to be considered when looking at future wages. Our state wages are also not keeping up with wages in other sectors that require even less experience and education. For instance, Amazon's recent job posting for a package sorter is up to \$17.30 per hour with a signing bonus of \$3,000 and benefits that include medical, dental, vision, paid time off, disability insurance, life insurance, and a 401K. Del Taco is up to \$18.00 with benefits that include medical, dental, vision, and a matching 401k. When comparing my administrative position at other companies such as Forge Building Company in Boise the starting pay is \$20-\$24 per hour with benefits that include medical, dental, vision, paid time off and 401K. MoFi in Boise for a part time position needing less qualifications than my current position the pay is \$17.00-\$25.00 per hour with benefits that include health insurance, health savings plan,

dental, vision, life insurance, paid time off, parental leave and 401k matching. Builders Capital in Boise starts at \$22-\$26.30 per hour with less education and experience and offers benefits that include health insurance, dental insurance, 401K, and paid time off. These are just a few examples of the 357 jobs posted on Indeed in or near Boise. Very few jobs that I saw listed started with a pay level as low as our state wages for the State of Idaho Administrative Assistant 1 positions. The pay in most listings offered more money than even the highest hourly rate for a State of Idaho Administrative Assistant 2 that is from \$17.93-\$22.41 per hour.

The state ended the 2021 budget year June 30 with a surplus of \$889 million. The state revenue collections exceeded \$5 billion for the first time, representing 24.2% growth over the previous fiscal year. It is expected this budget year ending June 2022 the state will end the year with a budget surplus of \$1.6 billion. This is showing that our state has grown substantially and will continue to grow in years to come as the migration out of other states continues. Our state workers are the backbone of the state's operations and help make our state a great place to live and operate efficiently. Many loyal employees have been with the state for decades, but are not compensated as they should be considering how much the state and its revenues have grown in the past few years. I myself love serving the people in the state I live in. I want to continue my career here and help accomplish the vision and goals we have set, but I would like to be shown that I am valued and appreciated through compensation that will make it possible for me to continue to live in and work for the great state of Idaho.

I would like to thank the legislators who have been elected to represent us. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my opinions and concerns regarding our state compensation. I believe this is why the state is having challenges filling positions and having a continued high attrition rate. I think this can be fixed if changes are made to compensation in order to make the state positions more competitive.

Dear CEC committee,

Thank you for your service and your dedication to state employees and the citizens of Idaho. My husband (18 years) and I (11 years) are both employees of the state of Idaho. I have been following some of the committee conversations surrounding an annual increase in employee compensation and the possible need to get creative to recruit and retain a strong workforce. As a committed career employee, our family has been facing the challenges that many families face with two parents working full time. Our boys are 3 and 2. We love our jobs and are committed to service to the state of Idaho. However, three main challenges have us constantly re-evaluating what is best for our family.

1) The retirement and health care benefits with Idaho are good, however, when both spouses work for the state, the health care benefit (dollars paid by the state to cover health insurance) appears to be a reduction in household benefit. For a small additional fee we could put the entire family under one state employee and I am not sure what the savings to the state would be by removing that "benefit" from the other spouse and allowing a portion of that health care benefit to be used for childcare or a health care savings account. This may be fiscally impossible, but I would be interested in knowing more about the potential.

2) High cost of childcare and availability of quality childcare and pre-school early education programs is limited

(Idea 1- state match for childcare benefits or monthly stipend or reimbursement

Idea 2- more state supported childcare opportunity (Headstart style)

Idea 3- Our local hospital has a contract with a local daycare to guarantee 25 spots for children of hospital employees. This is a benefit to hospital employees and boosts the daycares ability to pay and retain better staff. Could the state of Idaho contract with private providers to have spots available to state employees?)

3) As career employees that are looking for flexibility to have more of a work/life integration and balance as we raise our children, we are challenged by the fact that most state employment positions offer little flexibility to work less than 40 hours a week. Agencies seem hesitant to allow for positions that are less

than full time because of the fear that they will lose FTEs. Our jobs often require out of town travel and it becomes more and more challenging to balance 2 full time positions and maintain family balance. Our employers have been very supportive of flexibility in daily schedules to accommodate childcare needs and schedules, but ultimately we still have 40+ hour a week jobs with no other option to stay in benefitted career positions. Because of this, as a family we are actively seeking an opportunity that would allow one of us to work 20-30 hours a week, but that may force one of us to leave state employment. I wonder if the CEC committee and the state of Idaho would have any flexibility to look into an additional benefit for "Families committed to Idaho", that would make one spouse eligible for a benefitted part time position?

I don't have the answers, just lots of questions and ideas. As a career woman and mother I face these questions everyday. I want my sons to see their mom as a woman dedicated to service, career, and family. I know that these things are all possible if we get creative. I don't want to drop out of state employment and I want better options for recruitment and retention of our future workforce as well.

Thank you for all you do and for consideration of my ideas.

Sincerely,
Windy Schoby
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
[REDACTED]

Dear CEC Committee,

My name is Monica Cobiskey and I currently am a Technical Records Specialist 2 with DHW in the Family and Children's Services program in Region 3 Caldwell. This is my own personal story as a State of Idaho employee. I am not representing DHW or the FACS program in any way. I was hesitant to submit this letter because, in the past, I felt that no one cared to hear my concerns. However, I felt this was a good time to speak up for many of us and to give you background on my own personal experiences. I truly hope you will read and consider my concerns as I have worked for the Department for several years and have a lot of history.

I have been an employee of DHW since August 1996. I have devoted over 25 years of my life to working for the State of Idaho in the Department of Health and Welfare. I have worked several years at full-time hours, part-time hours and I did even leave DHW for a short 7 months, which I will explain later. While I have extremely appreciated the benefits of working here including paid vacation and sick leave, health insurance coverage and other benefits, compensation has always been an issue. When I was hired back in 1996, my starting wage was \$9.96/hour. Then in June 2019, I was given an increase up to \$17.08/hour where it remained the exact same wage until I took a promotion in April 2021. What this means is that, after 25 years of service, my wages had only increased by \$7.12/hour. To this day, even with my current promotion and pay raise, I am still not even making Policy wages per DHW's Compensation schedule. Truthfully, this is barely a living wage with Idaho's economy today. There has been such an influx of people moving into Idaho, it has increased our expenses exponentially and increased home prices almost 300%. Quite honestly, if it were not for some of the other benefits the State offers and my sense of loyalty, I would have left DHW a long time ago, permanently.

The following is a description of my history with DHW. I was hired as a full-time employee as an Admin Assistant to the Program Manager in Region 3 (titled Senior Secretary at the time). I did this for approximately 2 years until I had my first baby. At that point, I wanted to balance my home/work life and be home with my baby as much as possible. At that point, I took a part-time position at 20 hours/week and a position demotion. The Program Manager was kind enough to ensure that I was protected by retaining my insurance coverage and also with salary protection even though I demoted to a lesser position and pay grade. I then worked part-time for the next 12 years while I had another baby and raised my two boys. In that time, there were very few raises and the raises we did receive were cancelled out by

the increase in our health benefits/premiums. Very few bonuses were offered and I can only recall maybe three in my 25 years.

Then, there came a point in 2009 where I had to raise my sons alone following a divorce. At that time, my wage was a minimal \$12.00/hour plus I had to pay health insurance premiums at the part-time scale, which was an astronomical number that took over 50% of my pay. I felt that, after 13 years of service, I was almost being pushed out as a part-time employee. I couldn't afford insurance for my children and I couldn't afford to live on my own as a single mother and take care of my own family. On top of that general stress and fear, one of my sons was born with a congenital defect that has required several surgeries and several thousands of dollars in out of pocket expenses over the years. While my decision to look outside of DHW for employment was not preferred, I felt I had no choice. Also, keep in mind that the wage I was leaving behind even included what the Program Manager had secured for me with salary protection or I would have been even worse off financially. Who knows what I actually would have been receiving as an actual wage without that help from him.

Therefore, I had no choice but to look outside of the State and DHW where I soon accepted a position with Blue Cross of Idaho with a starting wage of \$20.00/hour as a Behavioral Health Coordinator with full benefits. This was an \$8.00/hour increase that I felt was a necessity in my life as well as a respected compensation as a testament of my value for my devoted years of service and loyalty and for my professional skills and knowledge I had given to DHW. I was only in this position for 7 months as I opted to leave for several reasons. I was offered to return to DHW, which I accepted as DHW was local for me and allowed me to be closer to home and my children who were still young. In returning to DHW, I had to make several life choice decisions and major adjustments just to financially afford to return as I took a \$7.00 pay cut. This was devastating to me financially and emotionally. It was the most difficult part of my decision as I was concerned I wouldn't be able to make it financially, but I felt I really had little choice. I was offered a meager wage of \$13.00/hour which I accepted a little begrudgingly in July 2010. My previous intentions were to stay with Blue Cross as the health insurance and compensation were very rewarding and the State with DHW could not compare. I was disappointed in returning to DHW with such a low wage after all my years of service, but I did it anyway. So, over the next **10 ½ years**, with very little pay increase and little to no bonuses offered, my pay had **only increased \$4.12/hour**. I feel this is a loud and clear testament of how the public community, the Legislators and the top managers of DHW feel I am worth after all these years. Over the last 5 years, I have again considered leaving the Department to search for better compensation and where my skills and dedicated service would be appreciated and respected. At this point, I quite honestly don't feel that DHW or the State even deserves the loyalty and skills that I and others like me provide.

The point that I want to put across is that I feel extreme disappointment in how I personally, members of my Administrative Support Staff team members and others like us in the program (Client Service Techs to name one group) have been consistently overlooked, devalued and under-appreciated for the remarkable work we do and the dedication to the Department for all of the service years we have devoted. Most of us have received very minimal pay increases and no bonuses. To keep things in perspective, I understand most of us in the Administrative Support Staff pool do not have a college degree or some kind of license, we are equally important in the work that needs done for the children of Idaho. We may not merit the level of compensation as our licensed co-workers do, but we should absolutely be compensated at a rate that is reasonable and appropriate for the level of professional skills we offer and to survive in Idaho's economy. In my personal opinion, it's shameful that DHW, and the State in general, has not compensated those of us who have dedicated so many years that we have not even reached Policy level in our current pay rates. Some of us have served for 15, 20 or even 25 years! I am only personally making the current wage that I do because my supervisor advocated for me and pushed to persuade management to come up with the funds to pay me a wage that would show the gratitude for my service years, knowledge and skills. If she had not done that, then I would be taking a promotion while still making \$17.08/hour as a Technical Records Specialist 2 with the added stress of taking on a new job, learning new duties and supervising staff.

I would also like to point out some other examples of why compensation is such a frustration for me and other support staff. Truthfully, any one of us could leave DHW and obtain employment in the community

with at least the same if not better wages and even be provided health insurance all with little to no experience. According to Indeed.com, company websites and on-site posters, there are several job opportunities paying at the same or better wages in our area including these various jobs:

- Challenger School-School Secretary **\$16-\$20/hour** (includes health insurance, 401(k), PTO, etc)
- Primary Health Medical-Office Receptionist at **\$16/hour** (includes health insurance, 401(k), PTO, etc
- Amazon-package sorter up to **\$21.20/hour** (includes \$3000 sign-on bonus, health insurance, 401(k), PTO, employee discounts, life insurance, etc.);
- Panda Restaurant-Service/Kitchen Team at **\$15-\$18/hour** (includes health insurance, 401(k)/employer matching, PTO, employee discounts, retirement plan, etc.);
- Denny's-Restaurant Server up to **\$25/hour** (includes health insurance, PTO, etc)
- Fred Meyer-Retail Clerk **\$15/hour** (includes health insurance, competitive pay, retirement, tuition reimbursement, employee discounts, etc.)

I am purposely pointing these specific opportunities out because these are various jobs that require little to no experience, but still includes benefits and better starting wages. I am shocked and full of bitterness how an unskilled laborer is able to start at such a high wage in the community, while so many of us struggle while working at DHW. I don't understand why those of us that have endured and remained steadfast at DHW, why can we not be properly compensated for our hard work? For our longevity for extensive years of service? For being a consistent and constant valuable source of information? For our dedication to stay working in an office through a pandemic when others have resigned or refuse to return? Why can we not simply be compensated to even just match what community corporations are offering as they recognize the ever-increasing inflation and poor economy? Do we truly have to consider leaving our current jobs to go to work at a school, or Amazon, or a fast-food company that requires no skills just to get a fair and equitable wage?

I have often heard over the years a standard response as to why we are paid as State employees at a lower rate is because our 'compensation rate is part of the package deal combined with all the other benefits' we receive. But as you can see from my examples above, most of the corporations offer the same benefits but with higher starting wages. It took me over 20 years at DHW to even get close to the starting wage of \$15.00/hour that these companies are paying employees. So, while our "benefits" are appreciated, there are several places we could go to get those same benefits with better pay and much less stress. It takes away the incentive for us to work hard because there is no reward to show for it. The priority for me and for most all of my co-workers is not just the benefits. We want and need tangible funds in our pockets! We want to receive the benefits in our paychecks that help us to afford our daily living expenses. Idaho news media has even reported that a "living wage" in Idaho right now is **no less than \$15.00/hour**. Home prices, mortgages and rent, have increased to such an exorbitant number that it's unfathomable to Idaho residents how they will even keep their homes. People from out of state moving into Idaho have sky-rocketed the cost of living here and the State of Idaho, DHW is not paying a fair and equitable wage to us to even meet those basic daily needs at this point.

I will bring this to a close. I personally and respectfully would like to request that the CEC Committee truly represent the dire need for increased wages for our Administrative Support/Clerical Staff as a whole. While the State and DHW claims they are unable to provide us with many "bonuses" or ways to show their "appreciation" to us, I can tell you that money, through increased wages, is a crucial, significant and most gratifying course of action to truly recognize employees and prove we are appreciated, respected and valued. Paper awards and verbal "pats on the back" are actually quite cheap, empty and often insincere. The Legislature needs to recognize where we are today in this economy and truly consider compensating us appropriately, especially if they, the State of Idaho and the Department of Health and Welfare expects the same hard-work, dedication and loyalty from us in return. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this issue. If you have any follow up questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at [REDACTED] or by email at [REDACTED]

Thank you,

Monica Cobiskey

I am a local Idaho resident, proud UI alumni and UI employee. I care deeply about our Idaho students, the university, and the effect it has on the health, wellbeing, and competitiveness of our state. But while the cost of living has continually and often rapidly increased, wages for staff have stagnated. I know for many, this has made it difficult to justify their continued employment at the University of Idaho.

In the last couple of years, we have seen the cost of living in our state skyrocket. There was a time, not long ago, that university staff members could afford to fulfil the American dream of purchasing a home and raising children in Idaho. I can confidently say this is now impossible for most staff members at the University. I find myself precariously balancing modest savings goals, the increasing cost of rent on a studio apartment, groceries, and other necessary expenses with my relatively small wages and expensive benefits. Since I started advocating for better wages at UI, only a month or two ago, the situation with groceries and food security has become a larger and larger issue. The cost of Groceries is skyrocketing. Groceries have been eating into my dwindling potential savings and I often find myself balancing how much I eat and how healthy I eat with my personal and professional goals.

With our current budget, The University of Idaho is unable to meet their modest goal of paying only 80% of market rate, in addition to struggling to provide yearly raises that cover cost of living increases. Most, if not all, of my coworkers make thousands of dollars below the Universities stated target pay, and ten thousand plus dollars below the market rate for their position. Furthermore, when accounting for a year or two's worth of inflation, employees end up having dramatically decreasing purchasing power. After a year in my position, I am making a dollar less an hour than when I started due to the cost of inflation, despite taking on a growing list of responsibilities due to turnover. Turnover which is often tied to poor wages at UI. For those who have been here for 10 or more years, this difference is much more dramatic. I'm sure you agree that loyalty, merit, and experience should be rewarded, not punished.

Decreasing and stagnant wages have led to a massive loss of institutional experience. Since the start of the pandemic The Financial Aid Department alone has lost the equivalence of 65 cumulative years of institutional experience. This has led to an increasing workload for existing staff, who take these additional tasks on for their same stagnated and falling wages. These inflated responsibilities without compensation have also resulted in increased departmental turnover. At its heart, this loss leads to a worsening student experience, more difficult work conditions, and a continuous cycle of turnover.

This is all compounded by better opportunities elsewhere, both in our state and outside of it. Growing up in Idaho, the University was one of our states premier employers and attracted talented individuals from across the country. Today it is having an increasingly difficult time competing with big box stores and fast-food chains.

I hope you will take this to heart, the situation is becoming steadily more dire as we face record inflation. Idaho's government has had year over year record surpluses. Yet the good people who are creating that surplus with their hard work and labor are unable to afford homes, are having to make difficult decisions regarding food, and are having to leave the state and their communities to afford their them and their families better lives.

On a final note, I was dismayed that I wasn't able to testify in person. I hope in the future that the state employees these decisions effect can be more involved in the decision-making process. Despite our hard work and dedication, leadership has not done right by us and the only people who will properly advocate for us is ourselves. It's not right that they are the only ones allowed to speak on our behalf.

Hello, I am writing because I want to advocate for myself, my family, and other staff members at the University of Idaho. I understand that the time is coming that the Change in Employee Compensation Committee will be looking at allocating money for the 2021 fiscal year.

I am a local Idaho resident, proud University of Idaho alumni, and University of Idaho employee. I moved here for a more promising life with my family because the city I was in did not provide the life I wanted for my children. Moscow, Idaho, was ranked number one in [Livability.com](https://www.livability.com) as one of the "Best places to raise a family." However, in recent years the cost of living in our state and my small town have increased rapidly. I am in a family of

four with two working adults with higher educational goals, but we cannot afford to purchase a starter home with our combined income. There are no homes in Moscow, Coeur d'Alene, or Pullman within our joint income bracket (zero). There was a time that campus staff members could afford to fulfill the American dream of purchasing a home and raising children in Moscow. Further, rentals in our area are dilapidated and lack the policy to turn over hospitable homes, and apartments have not expanded to accommodate a family of four comfortably, that is not in a dorm-like setting.

I was a nontraditional student in the automotive field and returned to school for a better career, only to acknowledge that more education does not equal better pay. While I enjoy working in my department, the highlights of my position are socializing with the students and my co-workers. Co-workers and Students alike often discuss how the cost of living is constantly increasing, but wages for staff have paused. In my efforts to make for an enjoyable work environment by socializing I was able to understand why the staffed departments frequent employee turnover.

I can confidently say this is now impossible for most staff members to balance modest savings goals due to the increasing cost of rent or starter homes and other everyday life necessities. This is due to a combination of effects, but the low wages, even with my education and work experience does not allow me to purchase a home within 30 minutes of work. The University of Idaho is unable to meet its modest goal of paying 80% of the market rate, in addition to struggling to provide yearly raises that cover the cost of living in our area or funds to cover the absorbed positions due to budget cuts. Most, if not all, of my coworkers make well below the market value of their position, and their compensation does not match the income requirements for the cost of living in the area.

Decreasing or dormant wages have led to a massive loss of institutional experience. Since before the pandemic started, the Financial Aid Department alone has lost the equivalence of 65 cumulative years of institutional knowledge. This has led to growing workloads for existing staff, who take these additional tasks without wage compensation. Sadly, the quick turnovers worsen student experience, make for challenging work conditions, and weaken employee morale.

I hope you will take this to heart because the situation is becoming steadily more dire as we face record inflation in a town away from the city lights. I would like for the university to provide a monthly home stipend to live within city limits. I would also like it if the University of Idaho could offer competitive wages and provide raises when absorbing duties from vacant positions. By doing this for the employees it would help the working relationships and hopefully reduce the staff turnover.

I was hesitant about getting involved in anything 'political' within the University of Idaho because I am a new hire, but this issue is too important to sit on the sidelines. I am reaching out to the committee to express a few of my own salary qualms as a 2021 U of I graduate and now employee, living in downtown Moscow.

My experience as a University of Idaho employee began as an 18-year-old undergrad with a Work Study position as the Office Assistant for Financial Aid in August of 2018. I saw turnover throughout my three years as the assistant, but I was uninvolved in the financial reasonings and politics behind the departures, so when a position became available during my final semester, I decided to apply to have a plan lined up post-grad. Flash-forward, I was hired at \$18.38 and began work June 14th, 2021. This hourly rate was quite an increase from the \$10 and some odd change I was making (after my multiple raises) as a senior work study but, as time has elapsed and I am responsible for all my own bills and basic expenses: housing, electric, food, phone, car, academic loans etc., I am realizing in this economy, my current wage is unrealistic long-term.

When I found out many of my counterparts were making the same hourly wage as I was, \$18.38, I was baffled. How can their years of dedication and experience equal monetarily the same as my own when they are training me and answering all my questions? Sharing the wealth of their accumulated wisdom should be more highly valued, especially within this niche field. The truth is, even after a year or two of experience in Financial Aid there will always be new questions and situations that I, and others with minimal experience, have no idea how to deal with. We need those employees that have "been around the block" to guide us. Just during my time here, I have

seen our office lose so much significant experience in the form of long-term employees. One of my coworkers did the math and just during my time here, we have lost over 95 cumulative years of knowledge and expertise.

Honestly, I had no idea what 'target rate' was but after learning more and seeing my own, I've realized that I am making over \$11,000 LESS than the Market Rate of my job. On top of this, inflation and price increases on basic needs like transportation and groceries has added extra stress to my life. Being paid closer to what I'm worth in this market would allow me to have a higher quality of life and be more productive at my job. When I see other establishments around town that do not require a degree, offering more than my counterparts and I make, I question the value of my education and pursuit of a professional career. Making the Target Annual Pay would be a significant step up. Most of my colleagues do not meet this and are in the 70% range. We need higher standards for university employee wages, because we will continue to lose valuable knowledge and experience if there is no reasonable compensation to encourage retention.

Once I learned of the Compensation Task Force set up to investigate the Classified Staff salaries at U of I, I wanted to reach out and detail my experiences, and I think you will find that there are common issues with compensation for Classified Staff.

I was hired on November 15, 2018, as a Technical Records Specialist II in Student Financial Aid Services earning \$16.48 per hour. In February 2021, my position was changed to Financial Aid Counselor. As of July 1, 2021, my hourly wage was raised to \$18.38, based on the entry level for the new position. I specifically asked our director whether I would be getting retroactive pay, back to February 2021, to account for the new job duties that I took on, and I was told it was not going to happen. Looking back, I was making at least 2 dollars less an hour than my counterparts, including the other TRS2s who had also been made Financial Aid Counselors, despite my experience. This was an extremely hard pill to swallow.

Before my raise to \$18.38 per hour, three Financial Aid Counselors had been hired at the same hourly rate. Being that I have now been employed for the past three years in SFAS, it is extremely discouraging that my hourly wage is the same as these fresh hires. In addition, I recently learned that one of those three new hires is being paid more than I am, at \$18.50 per hour. Why am I not being paid more than a brand-new hire? My two plus years of experience on the job should mean something. The fact that I do not make the market rate (I am making 78% of my target annual pay) for my current position is truly disturbing but not unexpected, since the U of I has treated its Classified Staff the same way for decades. I was employed at U of I back in the early 90's, and things have NOT changed when it comes to Classified Staff salaries.

When I have taken my concerns to the SFAS Director, I have been told that I am welcome to apply for the new positions in our office as they come open. As it happens, I like my job, and what I do, thus I do not want to have to apply for the same position (Financial Aid Counselor), and I do not think I should have to, just to get a higher hourly rate.

It is past time for a new salary model to be considered. I think part of the justification for our atrophied model is due to Classified Staff being considered State of Idaho employees. The State of Idaho is using an outdated, stale compensation model and all of us considered State employees suffer because of it.

The reason U of I loses so many employees to WSU is obviously that they pay much better in Washington. I am a U of I alum and would like to stay employed here. I really like my job, and the difference I can make in student's time here. Previously I had worked in private industry, and while the pay can be better, the job here is much more rewarding.

With COVID and budget cuts over the past three years, our office has lost a combined 65+ years of institutional experience. This means everyone in our office has had increasing workloads, for the same below market rate wages. The increased workload, without compensation, means an increased employee turnover, and that translates to a poor student experience, with our office, as well as university wide.

Commented [F(1)]: I changed this sentence to grammatically flow a bit better but am not sure if I have changed the meaning. Is this accurate?

Commented [F(2R1)]:

I am advocating for better compensation for ALL Classified Staff. Pay equity, as well as pay equality, is vital for job satisfaction, employee engagement, and retention. Cost of living increases should be made mandatory and loyalty, as well as experience should be rewarded at U of I.

Bryan Durkin
[REDACTED]
Caldwell, ID 83605

TO: Change in Employee Compensation Committee

Senators, Representatives, Members of the Committee,

Thank you for seeking written testimony regarding the state's personnel system and employee compensation. I have had the great pleasure of working for the State of Idaho as a state employee for almost five years. The purpose of my testimony is not to request a pay raise as a state employee. Rather, it is to provide you with some hard numbers from my own experience to assist you in making sound decisions.

When my wife and I first moved to Idaho in 2017, we both worked. I worked for the State of Idaho as a seasonal employee, and she worked for a private small business. Combined, we made approximately \$45,000 for the year. Although our budget was tight, given the cost of living in the Boise area at the time, we made ends meet.

Fast forward to 2021. For the entirety of the year, I now provided the sole income for our family, as we'd had a child in 2020. Unlike in 2017, I was a full-time, year-round employee for the State.

In January of 2021, my base annual wage was the equivalent of just under \$41,000. Even as the sole provider and now with a child, we still made ends meet - but only by moving out of Boise to the less expensive Caldwell area. It did not matter how we crunched the numbers, we could not stay in Boise with that income.

Throughout 2021, due to the annual CEC and moving from an Underfill to a Senior position, I increased my base annual wage to just under \$50,000. That equates to an annual increase of about \$9,000. After working 300+ hours of overtime, my actual salary for the year came to just over \$57,000. You would think if we made ends meet before, we would now be very comfortable with that kind of wage increase.

However, due to rapidly rising inflation and cost of living, we have barely made ends meet. In fact, in December of 2021, for the first time since moving to Idaho, we withdrew money from our savings account to pay our mortgage. We have always been fiscally conservative, and have no other debts; I can only imagine how people with debt are faring.

As you can see, we have a

problem. Very Respectfully,


Bryan Durkin

Good Morning,

With regarding to the rising cost of rent, utilities, gas, food, etc. I believe it is imperative this joint committee review to make a significant increase to the state employee compensation.

Employees are having to rents rooms or find roommates at even 1 bedroom apartments are out of their financial reach.

I am not going to go into how stressful our job is as we speak directly to the public and have a good pulse on the daily stressors that exist in our communities here in Idaho, coupling that of our own, I believe we do our best to manage.

Another option this committee may want to review to move to a 4 – 10 hour shift work week as MT, WA, CO, and other CSS agencies have done. The public adjusts accordingly to these hours without issue.

Another option is to provide an additional paid allotted mental health days for the employee, as our job is stressful which may help.

These are just ideas that might help if there are limited or no monies to increase the state employee compensation.

Warmest regards,

Mollie Bauder

Child Support Services Self Reliance Specialist
Idaho Department of Health & Welfare

[Idaho Child Support Website](#)

[Make a Payment](#)

Phone 1(800)356-9868

Fax 1(855)349-2408



Hello Employee Compensation Committee;

Thank you for taking the time to read this email. My name is Christine Parker, I was born and raise here in Idaho. I am a second generation stats of Idaho employee. I work for DHW as registered nurse. I am a single mother, I work to support me and my children. I know the state of Idaho wages are extremely low and I make more than most state employees. This is extremely hard for me to support myself and children. I struggle to pay my bills, buy food and clothes for myself and children. We have to go without most months. I have a special needs child, it is very costly to care for him. He has to go without essential therapies ECT due to lack of income and the cost. As my family continues to go without I have been considering to seek employment outside the state. So I can provide my children's needs and not have them go without. This should not be the case...I am educated in a field where I should be able to afford these simple things but I cannot.

It is clear to see the state of Idaho is grown a LOT, in doing so the cost of living has gone way up. The state of Idaho wages has failed to keep up with this...in doing so the state of Idaho as an employer is not competitive. The state benefits are good, not great. Most other employers in the state of Idaho are offering better benefits than the state of Idaho employees have. There is no incentive to work for or stay with the state of Idaho as an a employee. As a state we have too many job openings and the current employees are working there job and someone else to compensate. These are the same employees that support the legislators, help them be successful and the state of Idaho. Please help us be successful. I pray the legislators hear the state of Idaho employees cry to be competitive with the rest of the state of Idaho. Thank you for your time.

Christine Parker RN

Southwest treatment center

1660 11th street

Nampa ID 83687

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Fax: (208) 467-0965

Email: Christine.Parker@dhw.idaho.gov



Know what's all over the news? The soaring vacancies in state government ([Idaho Press, KTVB](#)). With over 2,500 vacancies paying 7-12% below the private sector, it's a real struggle to attract and retain qualified candidates. At my agency, I know employees on the lower end of the pay scale, such as AA1 and AA2 positions, feel discouraged when they see a fast food joint is paying \$15-\$17 an hour plus a \$1,000 sign-on bonus. Yes, our benefits are excellent, but many of them—including PERSI—don't help employees get by day-to-day. I'm grateful we have such a well-managed pension fund, but the golden carrot of retirement doesn't help me put gas in my car at almost \$4 per gallon today.

Our inability to attract and fill positions means the employees we retain have to work harder and take on additional job responsibilities to ensure we're meeting our organization's mission and serving Idahoans. With everyone spread so thin, morale suffers, as does the level of service we're able to provide our constituents.

It's very discouraging to see the state's record budget surplus of \$1.6 billion, yet we're unwilling to help our state employees keep up with the highest inflation we've seen in 30 years. The standard 2-4% CEC is appreciated, but the current rate of inflation—6.81%—means we're falling even further behind. A larger than average CEC (ideally 7-10%) would keep pace with inflation and do wonders for morale, quality of service, and employee retention.

We have good medical benefits, but I would like to address some weaknesses with our coverage. My 6-year-old son needs speech therapy and occupational therapy. He receives some speech services through school but would benefit from additional services. He goes to private OT once a week, but insurance only covers 20 sessions per year. I make too much money to qualify for Medicaid, so I pay \$144 per week out of pocket after he's used his services (and about \$52 per week while he has coverage). Please renegotiate the contract to provide at least one session per week for this critical service.

Another problem with insurance is coverage for dermatology. I'm very healthy, so I have minimal medical expenses, but I do suffer from rosacea. Blue Cross barely covers my medication because dermatology is considered cosmetic. I have an oral antibiotic that costs \$105 per month and a topical cream that costs \$125 every three months. How your skin looks affects your self-esteem and how you feel about yourself; additionally, skin is your largest organ. Insurance will cover medication for blood pressure, obesity, or Type II diabetes, all of which can be improved with diet and exercise, yet there is

nothing I can do about this skin condition. Please renegotiate with Blue Cross to provide better coverage for dermatology prescriptions.

I'm a single mom, so things are pretty tight between my son's special needs, my rosacea, and the cost of inflation. I'm more fortunate than most state employees, but I still feel the pinch.

Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to provide our input to the committee.

Megan O'Rourke, B.A., M.A.

Director | Communications
208-429-5503



We prepare Idaho's youth and adults for high-skill, in-demand careers.

The current state compensation levels are far below that of private industry. Not only do low wages negatively impact employee retention, it also prevents the State from hiring good quality team members or filling open positions. State of Idaho salaries need to be increased to match those of the current private sector rates. This needs to be an across the board adjustment for all current and future State of Idaho employees.

Kevin Chester

Materials Manager
Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, State Hospital West

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(208) [REDACTED]

January 10, 2022

To the Joint Committee on Change in Compensation:

I am writing in support of *at least* a 6% employee compensation increase for fiscal year 2023. I am a board appointed staff employee at the University of Idaho and have worked here for six years, and I am feeling the squeeze of inflation and stagnant wages. The U of I needs the support of the Idaho State Legislature to increase wages to make up for the staggering rate of inflation. Anything less than 6% and I will effectively be making less than I was a year ago.

Beyond the U of I, I am a wife and mother to a 15-month-old son. When planning for my son's arrival we budgeted for the cost of daycare, the cost of health insurance, and the cost of clothing and food. What we couldn't budget for was how much more expensive everything would be a mere year (less, really) after he was born. Housing in this state is becoming increasingly more expensive, and so are groceries. Our plan has always been to have two children close in age, but with the current rate of

inflation and my current wages, it seems completely unattainable to have a second child as we originally planned. It has been devastating to me and my husband to make this decision.

The University of Idaho and other state employers are made up of Idahoans who love this state and work as public employees to make this place better for all its residents. How can you expect to retain hardworking, intelligent, and driven public employees if they are receiving poverty wages that do not keep up with the rate of inflation? People are leaving in droves, and one sure-fire way to keep employees is to pay them a living wage. By raising employee compensation by *at least 6%* for FY23, the State of Idaho will be saying: We care about our employees and residents, and we are here to help you and your families succeed.

Sincerely,



Laurel Meyer
Education Abroad Advisor & Outreach/Marketing Coordinator
University of Idaho
Moscow, Idaho

Hello,

I would like to testify for the CEC committee on why we are worthy of pay increases this year in Department of Health and welfare because of rising costs of basic living necessities such as groceries which have increased nearly 5% and gas has increased with no end in sight. Also landlords are increasing rents to keep up with current market when they are not selling their homes. This has happened to us personally and we also lost 1/3 of our income when we lost a family member. A lot of people are losing family members due to current virus's and I am sure everyone is feeling the impact of that in all facets. The job market is also very competitive and employers offering higher wages because the work force is short of employees for numerous reasons.

Thank you for your consideration

Flower McGuire
Self Reliance Specialist
Department of Health and Welfare Region 4
Flower.McGuire@dhw.idaho.gov
www.healthandwelfare.idaho.gov



Hello Christine,

My testimony for the CEC Committee.

I was thinking about the State CEC coming up this year. We really do need to keep more inline with other public and private companies per category. We have lost several good employees to other public and private companies, but only because the pay was much better. Being an AA2, I see the City of Boise pays their AA2's \$22-\$26 an hour. I currently am making \$19.27 an hour and I believe the highest paid AA2 in Health and Welfare is at \$22.71. With an average of \$19.42. It just seem that we are way off on pay.

ADMIN ASST 2 HEALTH AND WELFARE, DEPARTMENT OF

17.71 HOURLY

ADMIN ASST 2	HEALTH AND WELFARE, DEPARTMENT OF	18.00	HOURLY
ADMIN ASST 2	HEALTH AND WELFARE, DEPARTMENT OF	18.21	HOURLY
ADMIN ASST 2	HEALTH AND WELFARE, DEPARTMENT OF	18.35	HOURLY
ADMIN ASST 2	HEALTH AND WELFARE, DEPARTMENT OF	19.27	HOURLY
ADMIN ASST 2	HEALTH AND WELFARE, DEPARTMENT OF	19.46	HOURLY
ADMIN ASST 2	HEALTH AND WELFARE, DEPARTMENT OF	19.60	HOURLY
ADMIN ASST 2	HEALTH AND WELFARE, DEPARTMENT OF	19.93	HOURLY
ADMIN ASST 2	HEALTH AND WELFARE, DEPARTMENT OF	20.03	HOURLY
ADMIN ASST 2	HEALTH AND WELFARE, DEPARTMENT OF	20.33	HOURLY
ADMIN ASST 2	HEALTH AND WELFARE, DEPARTMENT OF	22.71	HOURLY

Thank you,
Dea

Dea Johnson

Administrative Assistant to James Aydelotte
Idaho Bureau of Vital Records and Health Statistics
Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, Division of Public Health
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Hello Christine,

I am a Licensed Social Worker for FACS. I am currently performing as a case manager and a permanency worker. Approximately 1.5 years ago I accepted a position in Permanency. During this 1.5 years I have continued to act as a case manager, continuing to perform roles for both positions due to the significant increase in cases and turnover rate of workers in this field. This field is incredibly demanding not only in time (most workers accruing 5+ hours of comp time per week) but on mental and physical health due to the nature of the work. The workers in Child Welfare are passionate about the children and families we serve, but have been pushed to the limit and not fairly compensated for the degree of commitment that it takes to be successful in this line of work. Neighboring states start Case Managers off at the rate of pay I am currently making

with my 2.5 years in CPS and don't require you to be a licensed social worker. Being licensed in the state of Idaho as a LSW requires 20 hours of continued education each year in addition to licensing renewal fees. Idaho is growing and the cost of living has gone up significantly. In order to maintain seasoned workers and attract new workers, I believe that an increase in compensation is necessary.

Thank you for your time.

Whitney Garrett, LSW

Permanency Social Worker

Idaho Department of Health and Welfare

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Hello Christine,

My name is Samantha Dunsmore. I am an Office Specialist for the Idaho Department of Lands. I have worked for the agency for 1 year tomorrow.

When I took this job I moved from working in a bank where I was paid well but I was stuck in one position. I chose to put in my application with the state because I thought that it would be a good move for myself and my family. I sat down and calculated the difference in pay and benefits and quickly decided that the move was financially lateral and emotional a step up.

One year later, the covid pandemic and the political agendas of the country have shifted our economy. Now, I find myself in a position of constant financial stress. Even if I were still at my old job, I would be having to search for a second job or a career change all together.

I love my job with the Department of Lands. I enjoy the people I work with and the environment that I am in on a daily basis. But it seems as though the only way for me to grow from here will be to leave my area or to leave IDL. Neither of which I want to do.

Idaho is in the lowest end of the income spectrum. However, we are no longer on the lowest end of the cost of living spectrum. That being said, there is a drastic difference in the percentage to the national average made from the executive staff level, down to the administrative staff level.

Our HR department for example makes 80-105% of policy whereas the office specialists make around 75% of policy. For the most part, this is regardless of time at the agency or prior experience. We also see a

difference between the percentage in which people are hired at, based on where they are located. This does not make sense, because I may work in Shoshone county, but I live in Kootenai county where things are farther away and more expensive. There is also a much higher difference between executive maximum wage over their policy wage, compared to that of admins and lower level staff. This leading to the question of, why is there a maximum wage above the policy wage anyway? And why are the highest paid individuals the ones making such high % rates above policy? It would literally cost the agency less to give myself and my manager a raise of 5%, then it will to give that same raise to one person making \$30/hour or more.

In order to bring a more fair wage differential to our economy, maybe our state should look at raises for lower income employees only or perhaps those who are making less than 85% of policy. This would save our state money, those who are making enough would still feel financially secure and those who are not would not have to spend their days in jealous desire over the ability of others to grow and not ourselves. Also, it would reflect on the pride that our state has in blue collar workers who were not fortunate enough to get their education in a classroom, but instead had to gain it in the real world.

Below are some statistics I have pulled off of multiple websites.

Idaho comes closer to hitting 100% of the national cost of living index every year, and 2021 did not slow that trend down. The third quarter report showing us as 97% of the National Cost of Living Index.

Still, we have an average income rate of 73% of the national average.

For administrative staff the percentage gets lower, putting us around the 8% below the national average for other admins, 6% below the national all around average income, and 6% below the Idaho average Admins pay.

		Idaho Cost of Living Scale						
Rank	State	Index	Grocery	Housing	Utilities	Transportation	Health	Misc.
25	Idaho	97.1	92.1	97.3	82.3	117.4	94.7	98
Cost of Living Data Series Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (mo.gov)								
		Idaho Pay Scale						
Rank	% of National Average	2019 Median US wage	Avg Idaho Income					
42	0.73	65,712	\$48,591					
Average Income by State 2021 (worldpopulationreview.com)								
		Average Administrative Salary						
	\$15.29/hr	8% below national average	31,803.20	6% below Idaho average income				
Administrative Assistant salary in Idaho (indeed.com)								

I will reiterate that I LOVE MY JOB! I LOVE THIS STATE! But if we continue to deliver the across the board CEC raises, the wealthy will continue to grow while the poor continue to struggle. We will continue to

have increasing turn over rates, and we will never gain the consistency and cohesiveness that IDL is constantly striving for around the state.

Thank you for taking the time to accept our opinions.

Best Regards,
Samantha Dunsmore

Samantha Dunsmore
Office Specialist 2
Idaho Department of Lands
208-682-4611 / 208-682-4602
sdunsmore@idl.idaho.gov

Good afternoon,

I received the email that the committee is soliciting employee input regarding compensation and I'd like to provide input on two topics; state-employed nursing wages, and state Crime Lab scientist wages.

Regarding nursing wages, I'd like to see a managerial level nursing job description created, or a separate job description created for the Idaho SANE/SART Coordinator position as a nursing director. I am currently in this position, however, I am not concerned for my current compensation, but for recruitment of my replacement as I near retirement.

I have been an RN for over 44 years and have over 25 years of managerial experience; the only reason I accepted this position (taking a 40% cut in pay) is that my husband had recently died and I wanted to return to Boise to be near family (and widows in the first year often don't make wise decisions!!) If not for that, I would not have considered taking such a cut in pay, nor, I suspect, will other highly-experienced nurse director/managers (which may be the reason this position was open for so long).

I'd like to see:

- ❖ Creation of a nursing Manager/Director level job description for those who direct programs
- ❖ Bring pay into line with what nursing directors in the Boise area are being paid
 - I have attached a 'spreadsheet' with the most current nursing management salaries, average nursing salaries and cost of living comparisons
 - average Boise nursing director salaries range from \$97,200 - \$117,500
 - we are paying \$73,091, which is only 68.2% of the median director salary and is significantly less than the bottom of the range
 - as just a comparison, I was making over \$133,000 in Oregon before I returned to Idaho
 - Salary needs to consider payment for certification, especially as we will likely be requiring double certification soon
 - SANE-A and SANE-P (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner – Adults/Adolescents and Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner – Pediatrics/Adolescents)
 - This is NOT bedside nursing, which is what our current salary is closest to (although even at that, it is low)

- ❖ Nurses with the years of experience needed for director/manager level are often nearing retirement, making the state retirement package less attractive, since less time is available to build a large retirement fund – meaning the wage needs to bump up.

Regarding the forensic scientists at the State Crime Lab – PLEASE consider bringing wages to a level that will give these positions “destination employer” status – give highly educated scientists a reason to want to work for the state! These scientists have paid a LOT of money to become highly educated and deserve to have their wages reflect that.

We need (and should be able) to recruit and retain the brightest minds in the disciplines in the State Crime Lab. Instead, what I have seen is that we are simply a training ground – young scientists come in, are trained, and then very quickly leave for much better-paying jobs. Recruitment and orientation are high costs and we could save most of the costs of higher wages simply by not having to replace scientists so frequently. Our mission to serve is negatively impacted by the revolving door of scientists.

Scientists are not in the same category as employees who enter data, complete payroll, etc. Not that those positions aren’t valuable, but they do not require the education, dedication, and intellectual performance that the scientists must consistently demonstrate.

Additionally, we require all scientists to become certified (and kudos to us for doing so, as it definitely shows commitment to excellence), which deserves compensation.

Yes, the state has good retirement (and other benefits) but the younger generation is much more “now” focused, and waiting for a great retirement simply does not outweigh a low-paying job in the here-and-now for them.

Average Director of Nursing salaries in Idaho **management level nurses**

The average Nursing Manager salary in Boise is \$106,800 as of 12-27-2021; with a range between \$97,200 and \$117,500. (salary.com); this means ISP pays their nurses at less than 10% of the median salary (10% is \$88,460) for nursing managers. (salary.com) The role of the Idaho SANE/SART Coordinator needs the experience of a nursing manager/director to ensure program development and growth.

The Coordinator role requires certification as a SANE-A (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner – Adults/Adolescents); and the role will soon also require certification as a SANE-P (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner – Pediatrics/Adolescents); most organizations increase the rate of pay by \$2,080 - \$8,320 annually for certification.

Highest Paying States for Registered Nurses in 2022 **Non-management nurses**
December 2, 2021

Rank	State	Wage	COLI*	Rank	State	Wage	COLI*
1	CA	\$113,240 (\$54.44)	146.99	27	ME	\$69,760 (\$33.54)	113.96
2	HI	\$104,060 (\$50.03)	195.80	28	GA	\$69,590 (\$33.46)	96.86
3	DC	\$94,820 (\$45.59)	157.70	29	ID	\$69,480 (\$33.40)	94.75
4	MA	\$93,160 (\$44.79)	124.45	30	MT	\$69,340 (\$33.34)	97.46
5	OR	\$92,960 (\$44.69)	131.43	31	WY	\$68,690 (\$33.03)	93.11
6	AK	\$90,500 (\$43.51)	124.09	32	OH	\$68,220 (\$32.80)	91.02
7	NV	\$88,380 (\$42.49)	107.50	33	UT	\$67,970 (\$32.68)	96.81
8	NY	\$87,840 (\$42.24)	152.56	34	FL	\$67,610 (\$32.50)	104.33

9	WA	\$86,170 (\$41.43)	1231.78	35	NE	\$66,640 (\$32.04)	93.08
10	NJ	\$84,170 (\$41.43)	114.03	36	IN	\$66,560 (\$32.00)	90.68
11	CT	\$83,440 (440.12)	119.11	37	NC	\$66,440 (\$31.94)	93.53
12	RI	\$82,310 (\$39.57)	119.39	38	ND	\$66,290 (\$31.86)	97.91
13	MN	\$80,130 (\$38.52)	103.08	39	LA	\$65,850 (\$31.66)	99.08
14	AZ	\$78,330 (\$37.66)	99.51	40	SC	\$64,840 (\$31.17)	94.12
15	MD	\$77,910 (\$37.46)	121.01	41	OK	\$64,800 (\$31.15)	89.78
16	CO	\$76,230 (\$36.65)	109.20	42	MS	\$64,160 (\$30.85)	90.57
17	TX	\$74,540 (\$35.84)	95.10	43	KY	\$63,750 (\$30.65)	93.49
18	DE	\$74,100 (\$35.63)	107.03	44	WV	\$63,220 (\$30.39)	100.68
19	NH	\$73,880 (\$35.52)	111.25	45	TN	\$62,570 (\$30.08)	90.53
20	IL	\$73,510 (\$35.34)	93.78	46	KS	\$62,450 (\$30.02)	91.47
21	NM	\$73,300 (\$35.24)	88.86	47	AR	\$61,330 (\$29.49)	88.53
22	MI	\$73,200 (\$35.19)	100.47	48	IA	\$60,590 (\$29.13)	91.62
23	WI	\$72,610 (\$34.91)	97.51	49	AL	\$60,230 (\$28.96)	90.67
24	VA	\$71,870 (\$34.56)	104.86	50	MO	\$59,750 (\$28.73)	90.57
25	PA	\$71,410 (\$43.33)	105.73	51	SD	\$59,540 (\$28.63)	98.38
26	VT	\$70,240 (\$33.77)	115.56				

*COLI – Cost of Living Index (Insure.com)

[RN Salaries By State 2022 | Nurse.org](#)

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to offer my opinion on the issues of employee compensation.
Deb

Deb Wetherelt, RN, SANE-A
Idaho SANE/SART Coordinator
Idaho State Police
700 S. Stratford Drive
Meridian, ID 83642
(208) 884-7286
Cell: [REDACTED]

Hi CEC Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to express my appreciation for the compensation I receive working for DHW. I always look at the entire benefit package not just the hourly or monthly salary. I appreciate the State paying a large portion of the Health/dental premium, provides Life Insurance, STD and LTD as well as funding to PERSI Retirement. There are so many other benefits from working for State of Idaho.

Thank you, truly I appreciate Idaho State as my employer.

Thank you,

Karen Pflasterer
Self Reliance Specialist
Coeur D'Alene Field Office
Department of Health & Welfare
Phone: 877-456-1233 Fax: 866-434-8278
Email: MyBenefits@dhw.idaho.gov

Hello,

I am a current employee for the State of Idaho. I have some thoughts about the last time there was a increase in employee pay.

Last year in 2021, employees were given a 4% (2% for 2020 2% for 2021) pay increase. This increase was across the board regardless of employee performance. This style of increase can cause high-performing employees to feel underappreciated. It can also encourage underperforming employees to continue to contribute minimum effort to their positions. Also, the base pay (starting pay) was increased for most positions among my Department. This increase was implemented after performance raises. If an employee wasn't making the new base pay rate, their wage was moved up to the base pay level. Completely dissolving their performance raise. For example, I know an employee that has worked very hard for the State for five years, and he makes base pay. He makes the starting pay for new hires in his position. A simple search on Transparent Idaho, an online tool that shows employee pay and history, can show many similar examples. I have searched employee pay history for employees with the same position as me. I have found that employees that have worked one day up to five years, make the same wage. Base pay. As a hard working employee for the State, this alarms me and makes me wonder if I will be making the same hourly wage as new hires in five years.

This example of employee compensation history can make an employee reevaluate their worth to the Department.

I'd appreciate no negative retaliation for my asked for thoughts regarding this matter, thank you.

Ben Meiers

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Idaho Department of Agriculture
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To whom it may concern,

Thank you for soliciting testimony. This testimony is from me as a state employee and does not represent DHW. My name is Jada Lemus, I am an Office Specialist for the Department of Health and Welfare, Family and Community Services. I make \$13 an hour, 40 hours a week. I am the first face many families see in our department. Most of the time when families come in they are in one of the most stressful and often hardest times in their lives. I listen to them cry, scream, curse, and voice their frustrations. I do this while trying to be as understanding as I can be to their situation. This is not easy. I take on the back

up roles for many of those on my team and help when they are overwhelmed. Lately that has been a regular occurrence. I, myself, am overwhelmed at times trying to make sure everything is done. I have 2 college degrees and have worked hard to put myself through school. I make less than \$1500 a month. Everything is going up in prices. Rent is more than I make in a month. How am I supposed to afford a roof over my head, car payments, food, insurance, gas, etc.. if I do not get compensated fairly? I am a full time state employee. I do not make a livable wage. Fast food restaurant's starting pay is higher then my wage. A 15 year old at McDonalds makes more then a full time, state employee with 2 college degrees. The support staff in the department have handled every curve thrown at us but we are struggling to even pay rent in this economy. WE NEED A RAISE. I don't know how much longer I can justify working for the state. My savings are spent. I don't even know how I am going to make rent this month. I am going to have to take on a second job just to do so. I have health problems that would make that extremely difficult but what choice do I have? I love working for the state. I just feel the system is failing us right now. Please hear my voice, hear the many voices that plead with you to raise the employee compensation to a livable wage. We need it. It is not about greed at this point. WE NEED A LIVABLE WAGE or we are not going to make it through these hard times. I need a roof over my head. I need food in my stomach. I need a car to come to work, and I need gas to fill that car. I need help. I am willing to work for it. Many of us already are working harder, more stressed out, more overwhelmed. I invite anyone to try out our jobs for one day and tell me that we don't deserve higher pay for what we go through. There are days we just want to cry from the stories we hear/read about. This job is traumatic. There are times I worry for our safety. We deserve to be compensated fairly.

Thank you for your time and for reading my comments. Take the time to consider my request and understand that this is a need.

Jada Lemus

Office Specialist II
Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
Child and Family Services
Direct: 208.455.7018
Fax: 208.455.7211
Jada.Lemus@dhw.idaho.gov

Hi Christine,

I am writing on behalf of the CEC meeting that will occur on January 19th. I wanted to voice my concerns about the way Idaho state employees are compensated.

As someone with a degree for my current position, I am making 14% less an hour than the national average of \$23.79. I do not feel that the Department of Agriculture fairly compensates its laboratory employees. Compared to the factory workers in the area, they make on average \$2.50 more an hour than my current wage without needing any kind of college education. There are other Idaho state laboratories that offer on average \$5.56 – \$18.84 an hour more than what I am currently making, and they require the same college degree and workload of what I do on a daily basis.

With the large surplus that Idaho had this year, I feel that it should be given to the state employees. We have had to work through the pandemic without any sort of hazard pay. Because we were considered “essential” we were forced to come into work even when we did not have any samples coming into our laboratory, due to our other employees not being allowed to go into facilities to sample products. Other “essential” state agencies were rewarded with hazard pay, but we were not.

Also the last raise we were given of 4% was only because we did not receive a raise at all in 2020. This “bump” of pay was not at all an increase considering that we only receive 2% at **maximum** every year. All that did was put us up to the menial raise we would have already received if we had stayed on track with our typical CEC increase. I felt that this was kind of a slap in the face as we had worked hard helping out other fellow employees with their miscellaneous tasks since we could not perform our regular duties. With the current inflation percentage at 6.8% according to the NY Times, if we receive the same **maximum** 2% CEC as we have in the past, we are actually taking a pay decrease because we cannot afford to live on the wages we currently have.

I hope you take this information into consideration in the next CEC meeting. Your state employees have been working hard for a long time and I think it is time we are all fairly compensated for our part in allowing the state to have such a large surplus this last year.

**Thank you,
Danielle Kirkpatrick**

**Chemist
Feed & Fertilizer Laboratory
Idaho State Department of Agriculture**



I am writing regarding the invitation to testify submitted by the 2022 Change in Employee Compensation Committee. I am currently an employee of the State of Idaho, more specifically a Technical Records Specialist 1 for the Idaho State Police located at the Meridian HQ. In the time I have worked this position, I have seen many shifts in the employee dynamic and the situation around us.

To begin, I believe that it would be highly beneficial to reapproach the cost of living for current residents and employees of the State of Idaho. Being a nearly life-long resident of the state, I have watched it boom from my childhood to a tech industry building from the ground up in Boise, a series of celebrities and investors moving to Sun Valley, and a mad-dash for property from all over. This has left those of us who grew up here in a unique situation where we are unable to afford housing in our hometowns. Many of my coworkers have faced a similar situation, leaving them to be forced to find roommates, live in small and non-ideal situations, or remain living at home with family.

We are often unable to afford purchasing our own homes, keeping us in tight and sometimes hostile renting situations due to the exodus of residents from more affluent areas such as California and Texas. With this influx, everything has slowly begun to hike in prices, rentals are increasing to be unrealistic costs for the areas and conditions that employees are living in, and our housing market is out of reach for the average state employee.

I propose an increase in employee pay, to follow the trend of cost of living, rather than just a small stipend increase. While this is appreciated, an increase of 30c does not help when the low-end cost of living is \$3/hour more than wages.

In addition to the cost-of-living issue, I believe it would be worthwhile to approach the angle of sick time for the employee's family, as well. For example, a dear friend and coworker was unable to use her sick time when her aunt was hospitalized for nearly a month, the aunt she has lived with for years and years, who is a close friend and more to her. I would be unable to use sick time for my partner because we aren't to a point that we are ready for marriage. Despite that, we have committed to signing a lease together, adopting pets, and purchasing further assets together. It is unfair that I cannot use my sick time to be with him if he needs me just because we have not sealed our relationship with a certificate.

Following this, it is becoming increasingly popular for couples to adopt pets before having children, or in lieu of children. I believe that this is a feasible and realistic use of sick time for a pet parent to take their fur-babies to the vet. Speaking from experience, it does feel cruel to be told to use vacation time when your pet must undergo emergency surgery.

In summary, while employment for the State of Idaho does offer fantastic benefits, there is always room for improvement, beginning with the cost of living and reworking of familial benefits. I appreciate your taking the time to reach out for the testimony of your constituents at this time.

Best regards,

Krys Moysard


ISP BCI TRS1

To whom it may concern,

1/10/2022

My name is Todd Orr and I'm a Sergeant employed by the Idaho State Police. I have been in law enforcement for over 18 years and with the Idaho State Police since 2010. I mentioned this to give a point of reference, I don't know about all the other jobs in the State of Idaho, but I do know police work.

Over the last few years I have seen multiple troopers, hardworking troopers, leave the Idaho State Police for higher pay with other agencies. If these positions were simple to fill that's one thing, but they are not.

When we lose a trooper, it will take at least a year to get that trooper replaced and back on the

road. In the district that I work, we had a trooper leave for higher pay in November of 2021. With the length of hiring and training to be a trooper, we will be lucky to have that position filled by March of 2023. We have two other positions that were vacated in 2020 and have yet to be filled.

So lets say we fill our open patrol positions by March of 2023 and nobody else leaves. What have we lost? If we lose a trooper that has 10 years of road experience, that can't simply be replaced. If we lose a trooper that's a trained phlebotomist, that can't simply be replaced. If we lose a trooper that's an instructor, that capability and experience can't simply be replaced.

So where does that leave the patrol divisions? In District 5 (Pocatello) we are 35% down in staffing. That's seven troopers that aren't on the roadways to assist the public and respond to emergencies. What about the hardworking troopers that are on the road currently? They are doing everything they can, but we are seeing troopers starting to get burnt out. Police work is not your average career field, on days off they have to recover. They aren't the spouse or parent they should be. As a supervisor, this is one of my biggest concerns about our staffing levels.

So what about hiring officers with prior experience to shorten the training and bring experience back to the Idaho State Police? Two lateral troopers that have come to ISP in District 5 over the last few years have taken a pay cut to come here. When I try recruiting lateral hires, I rarely get past the discussion of pay.

So what's the solution? I would argue that a substantial pay increase for patrol and investigations would help to keep troopers working for ISP and not leaving for higher pay elsewhere. It would also assist when talking to lateral hires from other agencies. By stopping the loss of ISP troopers we stabilize the future safety on the roadways in Idaho by keeping the experience, training and professionalism in the ranks of the Idaho State Police.

Respectful /,



Todd Orr

Thank you for soliciting testimony. This testimony is for me as a state employee; I do not represent my agency. As I am sure you are aware Boise is booming and the cost of living has increased dramatically. The pace of growth in Idaho is difficult for many workers, but state workers are suffering with stagnant wages. We are losing great employees because they simply can't afford to work for the state anymore. I have found myself thinking about leaving for higher wages that would allow my family to keep up with rising prices on everything from food, gas and housing. I have an incredible employee who has been with the state for 5 years, she is an extremely high performer and does the work of at least 2 people. She is a single mom and the rent on her apartment has increased twice in the last 18 months. She loves this work but is facing the reality of not being able to afford to work here anymore. Her story is not unique, and many employees are facing this same reality.

The Fiscal Year 2023 Change in Employee Compensation and Benefits Report shows state employee salaries overall remain 9% below market rates and total compensation is 12% below the private sector, the phrase "the benefits make up for the low salary" is just not true anymore. A real, substantial increase, a minimum of 6%, in state wages needs to happen this year.

I work in the public health sector and the last two years has been incredibly difficult, we have been asked to take on additional responsibilities yet still maintain the work we already needed to do. The emotional stress of working on pandemic related activities has taken a toll. Yet, many state employees have taken on the task and have done it with incredible efficiency. Employees in public health do it because of a calling to help Idaho citizens but at some point when you simply can't afford to live off a state wage you have to give up on your passion and look elsewhere.

The state has an enormous surplus right now and this is the time to show the dedicated public servants that the work they do is important and appreciated. If wages are not significantly increased, by at least 6%, we will lose great people and the cost to hire and train new employees in a constant cycle of turnover is far greater than increasing wages.

Thank you for your consideration on this extremely important topic.

Sincerely,
Melissa Ball

My name is Angela Shumway and I currently work for the Idaho State Police as the Office Services Supervisor for District 3 Patrol. When I began working for ISP in 2011 I was hired as an Office Specialist 1 for \$11.00 per hour. Over the years, I did get raises for cost of living and performance. It took eight years for me to get to \$16.74 per hour which stayed the same through 2019 and 2020. I worked hard to get a bump in pay in 2021 and was promoted to the Office Services Supervisor position in late 2021 at \$22.00 per hour.

The Idaho State Police requires a polygraph and background check for all employees. No other state agency requires that. I feel the pay scale for administrative support positions should be higher because of the poly and background that is required.

I have seen over 10 troopers leave District 3 Patrol in the last year. Of course, a few were retirees. The others moved to other law enforcement agencies or outside employment because they could make so much more money. Our troopers go through much more training and put themselves on the interstate day after day making Idaho roads safer and they make less than most local police departments.

Thank you for you time.

Angie Shumway

Angie Shumway
Idaho State Police
District 3 Patrol
Office Services Supervisor
[REDACTED]

Good Morning Christine Otto,

Thank you for taking the time to read all the emails you will receive from the state employees. First I want to say I understand that we are only allowed so much money in the budget as there are many other areas that need money for very important things. That being said, I believe the most important item in the budget should be the state employees pay. We are living in time of a biggest inflation in history. Governor Little said it in his State of the State address speech that Idahoans are paying more for everyday essential items like groceries, gas and utilities. The median home price in Ada County is around \$535,000. I bought my house at the end of 2019. Today it is worthy twice as much and there would be no way I could afford it. Even rent in Ada County for a one bedroom is around \$1,000. An article on our new KTVB said Idaho has 2,500 openings for the state. We are on a third round of applicants to fill a position in our unit that has been open since May. We don't want just anyone as the unit I am in is not for everyone as well as we want the best applicant possible. ISP and the rest of the state departments expect the best employees. You want the best employees, you have to pay for the best. ISP does offer great benefits and I love the department I work for, however it is not going to help me pay my bills. Please give the state employees the best possible compensation you can.

Suzanne Lillehaug
Technical Records Specialist 2
Idaho State Police
Sex Offender Registry
Phone:208-884-7269
Fax:208-884-7193

Greetings,

As manager of a team that cannot work remotely I would like to address the lack of monetary incentives for state employees that cannot work remotely. Those that are working remotely have already been given a substantial indirect pay increase (including but not limited to no commuting expenses, no clothes expenses, reduced child care expenses, extra personal time (time = money)).

As we approach two years of teleworking for many state employees there must be significant cost savings that the state can quantify. Portions of those saving should be passed on to employees that cannot work remotely, perhaps consider at a minimum a transportation stipend.

Thank you!

Michele Carreras
Program Manager, Bureau of EMS and Preparedness
State Communications
Division of Public Health
Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
Ph. (208) 846-7621
Fax (208) 846-7620
Michele.Carreras@dhw.idaho.gov



Hello Ms. Otto,

Thank you for taking comments regarding the CEC status.

As a current state employee, I see my co-workers leaving (for retirement or other positions) and their work is divided between remaining employees because the state doesn't offer pay and other benefits that are available in the private sector and in other states. The cost of living in the Boise area has jumped by astronomical amounts.

Currently, the average rent in Boise is \$1,554.00 per month.

<https://www.rentcafe.com/average-rent-market-trends/us/id/ada-county/boise-city/>

The median Boise house is listed as \$515,000.

<https://www.weknowboise.com/blog/real-estate-market-trends/>

Monthly mortgage payments for a \$515,000 home would be about \$2,513.00. Traditionally, mortgage payments are limited to 28% of monthly income. Which would be an annual income of about \$120,000.00. The math works out to almost \$58.00 per hour. My personal 2021 gross income was only \$37,707.38. **I couldn't afford to move across the street.** It's no wonder why people don't want to work for the State of Idaho.

I'm not asking for an increase in pay to \$58.00 an hour, but a large increase is necessary because those of us who are left are feeling overworked, burned out and need help.

Thank you for your time,
~ Shari Ferree ~
Technical Records Specialist 2
Idaho State Dept of Agriculture
Division of Plant Industries
2270 Old Penitentiary Rd
PO Box 7249
Boise, ID 83707
(208) 332-8621
Shari.Ferree@ISDA.Idaho.gov

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Thank you for your time,
~ Shari Ferree ~
Technical Records Specialist 2
Idaho State Dept of Agriculture
Division of Plant Industries
2270 Old Penitentiary Rd
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(208) 332-8621
Shari.Ferree@ISDA.Idaho.gov

To Whom It May Concern,

I am an Office Specialist II and I make \$12.50 an hour. I love my job. I have had varied jobs in my 40 plus years of customer service and this one is my favorite. The people I work with are helpful and kind and I often have the opportunity to learn new things.

The only drawback is the amount of money I make. I am a .67 FTE so my paychecks are less than \$600 every two weeks. I find it frustrating that the state does not compensate us better, considering that places like McDonald's and Taco Bell are starting north of \$15.00 an hour. The benefits from the State are terrific, so that helps, but I do find myself searching for other jobs that pay more. I have not applied for any yet because I DON'T want to leave IDL but for my family's financial health I may be forced to.

Thank you,

-Alex



Alex Erickson
Office Specialist II
Idaho Department of Lands
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<https://www.idl.idaho.gov>

To Whom it May Concern,

I have been an employee with the State of Idaho since February 24, 2006, almost 16 years. In the first part of my career, I saw compensation practices that were, in my opinion, unethical. For example, when I first started, my compensation rate was \$12.00 per hour as a 'Communications Specialist'. Initially, I did not see this as too bad, until about 1 1/2 years into my position when they started hiring new employees. These new employee's coming in off the street, some with little to no experience, were starting with a pay of \$14.00 per hour. There was no effort at the time to bring those of us who had tenure within the agency up to the current rate of pay. When upper management at IDHW was asked, we were simply told, "if you don't like it, you are free to find work elsewhere." Some of us decided to stick it out and some did not.

I considered myself fortunate, as I was soon promoted to a supervisor position. This was all well and good, until I saw the same process beginning again, new supervisors were replacing others who had retired or taken other jobs. Again, the new supervisors were going to be making more per hour than those of us who had tenure in position. Again, I spoke up, this time my voice fell on ears willing to listen to the issue and understood the position. And adjustments were made to try to be equal and give those with some tenure and a history of favorable reviews some gap between newer people in position.

Now, as the country is being hit with an inflation rate that continues to grow daily, wages for state employees are not keeping up with lower skilled jobs in the open market, and that is disrespectful for all state employees. What is the state going to do, when an employee, especially an entry level position, and even some tenured positions, can quit their job with the State; go to work in a warehouse for a large online retail company and start their pay at \$20.00 per hour? Sure, we have one of the best retirement systems in the country with PERSI; but what good does that do for an employee RIGHT NOW? With the cost of living going through the roof, daily expenses for gas, groceries and the daily necessities increasing to points we've never seen, yet the State of Idaho, offers pay incentives of 2.5% across the board, with an additional .5% possible based upon merit? That doesn't even come close to covering the percentage of increase due to inflation. And the RIGHT NOW is important to help cover those expenses.

Our Great State of Idaho has become a destination for those moving out of states where people don't want to raise their families. On one hand that's great...maybe. On the other hand, it only hurts those of us whose families have been in Idaho for generations. These people come in from areas where they can sell their homes for hundreds of thousands or even millions of dollars; move to Idaho, working remotely for the company they've been with, still making the wages they enjoyed in their home state. All this does is drive the prices up so much that the typical state employee can no longer afford to upgrade their homes if they would like to, without a huge impact to their personal finances.

Idaho is going to continue to grow, there is no doubt about that. It's a great place to live. But, unless the State of Idaho decides to value their employees and provide them with a fair and livable wage, we are only going to continue to move backwards and lose employees. I've seen it happen, and I think it is only going to continue. People who contribute their knowledge and expertise to Idaho citizens are going to realize they can't keep up with the inflation. The State will continue to lose employees to other employers, whether that be to a city or county agency, or to a similar position with a private employer.

So, in closing, let's take care of the employees of the State of Idaho. Let's be the model state for others. Let's not lose more great employees to the private sector. Let's have the State of Idaho be one of the greatest employers. Show us, those employees who have dedicated years of service to the State of Idaho and its citizens, that you do care about us and you are truly proud of the work we do.

Sincerely,
Jeremy Elliott

To whom this may concern,

My name is Michael Tolle, I have worked for Department of Health and Welfare for over a year now. I work at State Hospital North, as a Maintenance Supervisor. We do it all here, from snow plowing, lights, sinks, from the ground to the sky. Before coming to work here, I worked for the City of Lewiston, as a public service employee.

In the year that I have been established at SHN, there have been a few positions open. Once filled they don't stay long. Employees move on from SHN for higher wages elsewhere. Open positions stay open, while current employees distribute the workload, it is an endless endeavor. I know the state health

insurance is a big key to any position, but the reality is every job has insurance in the 21st century. Insurance is a big plus, but its not wages, money pays the bills.

In this legislative session I would hope they would do a wage study and increase wages for all employees throughout the state. Its very hard to recruited employees for less than \$20 an hour, when non-career jobs are paying more than \$15 an hour. Hypothetical thinking, If the state must jump base pay to \$20 an hour than the current employees must get the offset of the difference added to their pay. It would not be beneficial to have a current employee that has dedicated 20 years of service and is only making \$22 an hour, to have a new coworker hired for the same position for \$2 less. I have seen new employees hired for more than the current supervisors' wage.

It's sad we live in a nation that is never going to be debt free. My only solution to this situation, is compensate state employees accordingly. If their position is classified as exempt, non-exempt, and open, they all are under compensated . For instance, If I work overtime, it is converted to a payout eligible status after 6 months. Why not just pay it out on the next pay period? My current position is a rotating on call, I am compensated for time off, why not have a cap of 80 hours of comp time, after that it automatically converts to pay after achieving 80 hours of comp time. Both situations are money paid from one account to another.

I know the bank account looks good when money is gaining interest, but when positions are not being filled and current staff are not being compensated with increased wages. It makes it very hard to hire career employees. Until wages are more competitive and the current cost of inflation are taken into consideration, this will always be an ongoing endeavor. I ask this legislation session to increase wages for current employees before it's too late, and the employee to job ratio increases to the point of no return.

Thank you for your time.

Michael Tolle

State Hospital North
300 Hospital Drive
Orofino, Idaho 83544

Phone: Desk 208-476-4511 ex 20026
Cell [REDACTED]

Dear Committee Members,

I have worked for the Idaho State Police for over 14 years. I am imploring you to consider raising state employee pay rates by a considerable amount. We are asking entry level, but still career type positions, to start at the same amount you can make at a fast food job (and there is no shame in that, as many of us have worked food or retail jobs in the past). However, we need employees with the education and experience to handle the work that we do. To attract quality candidates we need to offer fair and competitive wages. The employees that I supervise struggle to find affordable housing, and express great concern over the rising cost of food, gas, and child care. We also need to address the issue of compression. While attracting quality employees is imperative, so too is retaining great employees. Their wages should keep pace with the market changes. In our unit we devote a considerable amount of time to training and developing new employees. Being a unit that employs several entry level positions, I expect there to be a certain steady level of turnover. But the last several years have left us chronically

understaffed. I have been interviewing employees for over eight years, and we normally have a full roster (40+ candidates) to choose from to interview. Now we are lucky to even get 5-10 candidates to apply for the job. Working in law enforcement, where an extensive background check is required, narrows our possibilities even more. The market has changed. To create and sustain a happy, healthy workforce we need to make considerable changes to our compensation, especially for those employees on the low end of the pay scale. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Amy Campbell
Criminal Records Supervisor - SOR
Idaho Central Sex Offender Registry
Idaho State Police

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Hello,

I am a self reliance specialist with the division of child support and I would like to have your committee review as I do not believe our current wages align with the growing costs we are now experiencing being an Idaho resident. I will have worked at the department for 16 years as of 7/06/2022 and currently am only earning \$22.41/hour. The last couple times we have gotten any sort of raise they also increased our medical premiums so therefore the raise was pretty much nonexistent on our paychecks. Also, to try to get new employees the current hiring rate for my position is \$19.71/hr. This equates to my almost 16 years of service only being worth an additional \$2.70/hr and unfortunately several of my coworkers who have been here almost as long as me are making even less than that. I understand the need to offer a competitive wage to get people to apply but you also need to consider paying to retain your existing employees.

As it currently stands now I am supporting myself and have no dependents however even without a family to think about my finances have been a struggle so I am unsure how other state employees with families are able to survive. We have rising property and utility taxes as well as increased fuel and food prices to deal with every day and they show no signs of letting up.

I think the hardest thing to accept while this is going on is that we are constantly told how "flush" with money the state of Idaho is now however the state of Idaho employees cannot afford to even live in Idaho anymore.

I would also like to point out that when I first started here our staffing was more than double what it is now so there should be no excuse as to why we should not be getting paid more. If there was a budget for a certain amount of workers at one time and you cut the workers drastically shouldn't that be made up for the existing employees? I am unsure why our dept has been cut so much to begin with as our caseload has exploded due to all of the people moving to Idaho.

Please consider giving existing State of Idaho employees a substantial raise based on years of services and merit at least so that we can be able to afford to live in Idaho.

Shannon Eberhard
Self Reliance Specialist
Division of Child Support
208-334-5854

Shannon.Eberhard@dhw.idaho.gov

Thank you for soliciting testimony. My name is Victoria Somoza, I am an Office Specialist 2, with Children and Family Services. This testimony is from me as a state employee; I am not speaking on behalf of my agency. Again, I appreciate the opportunity to testify and speak on my own behalf. I have worked for the state of Idaho for over 15 years (20 years as most has been in a part time position). As an employee that has dedicated many years of hard work and loyalty to serve the needs of the people of Idaho and as an essential worker these past two years have been difficult, especially since there has been no appreciation shown to me compensation wise for my work. These past couple of years have been brutal working in my current department; as I've seen a lot of great workers leave because of no feeling of support or appreciation. That has taken a toll on me, honestly, questioning if it's worth working for the state. With that said, I myself do not feel appreciated nor valued when I see new people hired starting at a higher rate than when I started. Knowing this makes me feel insulted and unappreciated. It's also insulting to see that employees working at McDonald's or Target are getting paid what I make or more right when they start. Yet, I've shown loyalty and dedication in my work with the state with no real value shown in my compensation. With the local economy the way it is, I am living from pay check to pay check. I feel like Idaho recently has a lifestyle of California, in respects to living expenses, but with Idaho wages. I really hope that you can see my frustration and disappointment in the lack of appreciation and value placed in the retention of employees of the state. In the beginning of my career with the state; I felt honored to work for the state of Idaho and help people, but I have seen that it's not been noted on the state's end. Thank you for your attention to how I feel in terms of my view on compensation for me, as an employee of the state of Idaho. I really appreciate you taking the time to read my comments on the matter.

Thank You,
Victoria Somoza
Child Welfare-OS2
208-455-7004
Victoria.Somoza@dhw.idaho.gov

I was raised with the belief that if you work hard, get a good education, and save as much as you can, then you can one day buy a house and live a generally comfortable life finance-wise. That is not the case today in Boise and many other cities in Idaho. I scrimp and save, but at the end of the day I still make a little less than \$14 an hour working full time for the state with a Bachelors degree. That is no longer a livable wage in Boise, and everyday costs like rent, groceries, and transportation are a balancing act for me.

I'm grateful for my job and the benefits I receive, but it's not enough for me to want to stay with the State. I've been actively applying to marginally higher paying jobs within the State (\$1-2 more an hour). I have received similar feedback in my applications that more education and experience is needed on my

part. The issue is the pay doesn't align with what is required of the employee. For \$1 more an hour, one position required a Masters and a couple years' experience in the field. That is an insult to the financial burden and commitment a Masters degree requires of someone, and I personally don't know anyone who would accept such a low income unless they were desperate.

This past year, I've also noticed a pattern of co-workers and acquaintances moving on from State jobs or moving away from Idaho in general because of how significantly lower the pay is in relation to the skyrocketing housing prices. In the past year at the agency I work for, we've had around 16 people move on for higher paying work (almost 1/3rd of our staff). High turnover and resignation is currently a national trend, but from speaking with previous coworkers I know that pay was one of the main reasons they left working for the State.

I've lived in Boise since I was three years old, and it's heartbreaking that I feel like I can't afford to live in my hometown anymore. I hope the Legislature takes these testimonies to heart and do their best to work for the people of Idaho who are struggling to get by on what is now considered meager pay.

Micah Hetherington

Hello,

My name is Karly and I'm an employee for Vital Records and Health Statistics. I've been an Office Specialist II for two years, and noticed from my last raise that I don't earn much more than employees that are hired in the same position, despite my length of time working it. I just find it slightly unfair that this is a fact, as the pay should depend on the length of time working at the position, and the score you are graded from the annual employee performance review. Please consider using these comments for the testimony, as I feel I need a higher position in order to feel I have the proper pay for the work I do for my office and Idahoans alike.

Thank you!

Karly Eastridge
Office Specialist II - Registration
Idaho Bureau of Vital Records and Health Statistics
Idaho Department of Health and Welfare Division of Public Health
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karly.eastridge@dhw.idaho.gov

To whom it may concern:

Wages are going up much faster in the private sector. It will be important to stay competitive with base pay and merit raises in these next few years to retain high quality employees. As a nurse, I am constantly being recruited with compelling job offers. It's my worry that if the state falls behind with compensation they will end up retaining underperforming employees and losing their top talent.

Thanks for your consideration,

Michaelina Page, RN
DEPT. OF HEALTH & WELFARE REG. 7
-ADULT MENTAL HEALTH-

Fax: 208-528-5747
Phone: 208-528-5719

Hours: Week 1: 7:30-6 Tues-Fri
Week 2: 7:30-6 Mon-Thurs
Lunch: 12-12:30 daily.

Good morning Ms. Otto,

I would like to comment on the upcoming state CEC deliberations. I am a manager and our office has had an open AA1 since the end of January last year. We did fill it for about 6 weeks at the end of the summer but the new hire moved to Montana for her husband's job. We have opened the position four times during the year and have had very little interest in the wage offered. A good portion of those who do apply, request \$3-8 more per hour than we are able to offer. Our office has also had a more difficult time recruiting for open TRS1 positions. We had two open in one unit for almost six months and one remains open in another unit. The most recent announcement garnered 3 applicants, two of whom did not even meet the minimum qualifications. These are all entry level positions and it is becoming more and more difficult to recruit and retain qualified employees at the wage level currently available. Last year we had 4 employees (out of 34 in the department) leave state service to find more lucrative positions in private industry.

Our office is located in the Boise valley. It is exceptionally difficult to recruit staff to live in an area where the costs of housing have skyrocketed and \$15/hr is not sufficient to support a household, even if it is only one person. Current employees who have been at our agency for less than five years are also struggling. They either have a spouse or significant other that they share bills with or they have one or more roommates to make living in the area affordable. They would not be able to survive on their current wages on their own. While I don't expect all positions to be able to support living in an area where costs of living are so high, I do see that there is an imbalance in wages versus cost of living.

I appreciate any increase that the legislature deems appropriate. I do think we are lagging way behind in state salaries and I appreciate the opportunity to provide input.

Thank you.

Leila McNeill

[REDACTED], Kuna

For your consideration:

Would you consider a flat dollar amount raise? With a percentage raise, the people that make the most get the most and the people at the bottom, who NEED it the most, get the least. Please consider a flat dollar amount raise across the board to make for a fair and equal raise opportunity. If you were to issue a (for example) \$3/hr raise or even a \$1-\$3/hr based on merit, then everyone would get a raise to be happy about, a raise that will actually help people in the economy right now. Please reference these statements from various news articles/agencies:

“The consumer price index rose 7% in December from a year ago, according to a new Labor Department report released Wednesday, marking the fastest increase since June 1982, when inflation hit 7.1%. The CPI – which measures a bevy of goods ranging from gasoline and health care to groceries and rents – jumped 0.5% in the one-month period from November.” “Gasoline, on average, costs 49.6% than it did last year. Food prices have also climbed 6.3% higher over the year, while used car and truck prices – a major component of the inflation increase – are up 37.3%. Shelter costs, which make up nearly one-third of the total increase, jumped 0.4% for the month and 4.1% year-over-year, the fastest pace since February 2007.”- Fox News

“Idaho’s overall state employee pay continues to lag behind market levels. The Fiscal Year 2023 Change in Employee Compensation and Benefits Report shows that despite some gains, state employee salaries overall remain 9% below market rates and total compensation is 12% below the private sector, though it’s improved to 7% below market for public-sector pay.” – KTVB

“ According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, 35% of low-income households in Idaho are burdened by the cost of their rent, meaning over 30% of their income goes straight to their monthly housing costs. Boise rent has gone up 16% since March 2020, according to a study done by Apartment List.” -Ktvb

“The City of Trees has seen the highest jump in rent prices among U.S. cities during the pandemic, according to a new study. Rents in Boise jumped 12.4% from January 2020 to January 2021, according to a study released last month by Apartment List, a listing site and market researcher. Boise’s median rents increased from \$931 to \$1,047 year-over-year, while median rents climbed to \$863 for a one-bedroom and \$1,024 for a two-bedroom. It was the largest hike, percentagewise, in the nation, followed by Fresno, California, (10.8%); Gilbert, Arizona, and Chesapeake, Virginia, (8.4%); and Bakersfield, California, (8.3%).” – Idaho Press

Kara Kelley TRS2
Alcohol Beverage Control
Idaho State Police
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January 10, 2022

Rebecca Frey

[REDACTED], Boise, ID 83713

Dear CEC Committee,

I want to thank you for the opportunity to write this letter today regarding the Change in Employee Compensation (CEC) for the coming year's fiscal year. I have worked with the ISDA for four years in my current role based in Boise. As we have all witnessed, there is an influx of new occupants to the great state of Idaho. With this influx, housing and rent prices throughout our state have increased dramatically. I love working for the state in my position, but with increasing prices, it is placing added stress on my family and I to meet these rising costs.

In my time working for the state, I know the hard work that my peers and I put into regulating and keeping the state of Idaho moving forward. We need to provide for our state workers and ensure that we are keeping salaries in line with the current cost of living. This is also essential in employee retention. I have witnessed too many great employees leave their jobs with the state due to salary differences in the private sector, and to curb this the state needs salaries that are competitive with private industry. I hope that with these facts in mind, that the CEC committee will consider the importance of a CEC increase especially with current economic conditions in the state of Idaho.

Warm regards,

Rebecca Frey
Organic Ag. Investigator, Sr.

CEC Committee:

I started working for the state January 11, 2016 as a TRS1 and promoted in 2018 to a TRS2. In both positions my compa ratio has been 70-80% during my career at the state. I am thankful for the health insurance and the PERSI that the state offers. My insurance premium continues to increase each year at a steady rate, yet my paycheck does not keep up with at the same rate. In other words, I really am not receiving much of a cost of living raise at all because my insurance is eating up the difference in pay. Unfortunately, this is not just my story, but thousands of state employees. Our leaders state that they understand the circumstances, but I disagree. Have they been forced to choose medical bills over rent? Have they looked at their bank account and found only a hundred dollars to pay for all utilities, groceries, etc. because the majority was spent on housing? If employees like me want a career at the state, we will need a second job to get by. We are not uneducated employees; we are employees with Bachelor and Master's degrees. I love my job, but when the private sector pays nearly 30% more, I must look at what is best for myself and my family. I do not want to live to work but work to live.

According to KTVB: *Just over 700 state employees earn \$15 an hour or less, the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee was told at an October meeting. With about 25,000 employees, Idaho's state government is the state's largest employer. Turnover this year has risen to 19%, according to October presentations to JFAC. This past year, the governor recommended, and the Legislature approved 2% merit raises for state employees; the figure was an increase in the salary funding to agencies, meaning individual workers could see higher, lower, or no raises based on their performance. In the previous fiscal year, FY 2021, a 2% appropriation also was approved, but it was held and not given to most state employees due to budget holdbacks during the coronavirus pandemic. Then, in many cases, it was added to FY 2022's 2% allocation for a total of 4% in merit increases in '22, and none the year before. <https://www.ktvb.com/article/news/local/idaho-press/boise-idaho-struggles-fill-state-jobs-2500-openings/277-59999dea-0672-45a5-9eb4-2578698250d9>*

My raise in FY 2022 was \$0.85, which was for both '21 & '22. This does not close the gap for my health insurance premium and inflation.

In FY 2023 the state employees need at least 10% CEC to live. I am sure health insurance will continue to increase and inflation at 7% doesn't help.

According to Kiplinger.com:

Prices jumped 0.8% in November from the prior month, the second consecutive large rise. Energy prices surged yet again, with gasoline prices up 6.1% for the second month. Food prices are rising at a 6% yearly rate, and new cars at 11%. Used cars bounced up again, and are 31% higher than a year ago. They look likely to stay high until more new cars are being produced. Housing cost increases have been higher than usual, especially as rents pick up after the pandemic.

Higher inflation in the near term is likely to get the Federal Reserve to start raising short-term interest rates in June 2022, instead of waiting until the fall. Fed Chair Powell recently accelerated the Fed's timetable for reducing its purchases of bond market securities, which will now end in March. After these have finished, Chair Powell will likely start to raise short-term interest rates gradually. <https://www.kiplinger.com/economic-forecasts/inflation>

According to U.S. Bureau of Labor:

Consumer Price Index, West Region — November 2021

Area prices were up 0.5 percent over the past month, up 6.5 percent from a year ago
Prices in the West Region, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), increased 0.5 percent in November, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. The November increase was influenced by higher prices for shelter, new and used motor vehicles, and gasoline. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, month-to-month changes may reflect seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U increased 6.5 percent. Food prices advanced 6.5 percent. Energy prices jumped 31.6 percent, largely the result of an increase in the price of gasoline. The index for all items less food and energy increased 4.8 percent over the year. https://www.bls.gov/regions/west/news-release/consumerpriceindex_west.htm

Please consider the livelihood of state employees as well as the \$1.8 billion surplus that the state has stored away. To retain and attract quality and educated leaders in the state they have to be paid a livable wage. Keep in mind the private sector is paying workers more, offering health insurance as well as retirement plans.

Respectfully,

Melissa Owens
Technical Records Specialist II
Idaho State Police
Sex Offender Registry
700 S. Stratford Dr., Ste. 120

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Christine,

I am writing in regards to the opportunity to have a say in our employee compensation. I thank you for giving us the time to share. I currently work as a Storekeeper with the Idaho State Police and I currently make \$15.90hr after 4yrs in this position.

Between Deductions, Mortgage, Property Taxes, Utilities and Gas Prices, etc. some months it's paycheck to paycheck, which I'm grateful to make my bills every month and take care of my responsibilities. As I look at the wage of other similar jobs to mine the pay is most definitely lower then those positions. An example a Job in AZ doing the exact same functions but for Fire and Medical started out at \$17.61hr and depending on experience paid up to \$26hr with benefits and state pension.

Here are some examples in Idaho.

Receiving Clerk – Hart and Cooley in Nampa	\$17.53 - \$21.03 an hour Plus \$1000 sign on bonus
Warehouse Clerk - Capitol Distributing in Caldwell	\$17 - \$20 an hour Plus \$500 retention bonus
Shipping & Receiving Associate - RM Mechanical Inc in Boise	\$18 - \$22 an hour
Warehouse Worker - Albertsons in Meridian	\$18.28 an hour

We as Storekeepers do, Purchasing, Shipping, Receiving, Inventory Control and provide Customer Service. I will say that I love working for Idaho and LOVE taking care of, Supporting and Supplying our Troopers with what they need to do the job and be safe. Hopefully the above will give you some incite of the wage difference we get paid and might be an influence in some changes in State Employee Compensation.

Thank you again for the opportunity to share with you and may you have a wonderful day and week.

Thank You,

Stephen Srodawa
Storekeeper



Idaho State Police
700 S Stratford Dr. Bld 5
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stephen.srodawa@isp.idaho.gov
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Too Blessed to be Stressed!

Good Morning Christine,

Although the United States and particularly the State of Idaho, has experienced a series of events effecting our way of living, I would like to provide my thoughts regarding pay and compensation while working for the State of Idaho.

I devoted nearly eleven years to working at the Boise Police Department establishing a law enforcement background. I have worked for the Idaho State Police for three and a half years now. I believe that having a previous law enforcement background helped me attain my present job with the Idaho State Police. When I decided to return to the workforce, I wanted to continue working in law enforcement. An opportunity came up and I decided to apply for my present job but had started at a lower set rate of pay as compared to my previous job. I know there is value when it comes to benefits such as PERSI and health benefits; however, these benefits do not pay the bills or keep up with the cost of living.

I see and hear folks struggling. Wages do not keep pace with the cost of living. We have less disposable income due to increases in health benefits, etc. annually. To qualify as a candidate for employment with the Idaho State Police, you must be the best of the best. You must go through a complete background check and polygraph exam. The process can be very stressful, tedious, and drawn out. I do not believe that pay scales for these positions are reasonable. With some duties, we are not compensated appropriately for such as legal work. To hire and retain employees, we must compensate them appropriately. I recently learned from a family member that according to a temporary agency, the average job in Idaho pays \$15.00 hourly. Our Unit recently posted a position with a beginning hourly wage of \$15.35. I make \$0.36 more than that today, after working three and a half years. My wage today reflects any past wage increase, meeting goals and going one year without a raise. I cannot imagine what my wage would be had I not even met my goals. Something feels so wrong that a new hire could potentially make more than I considering the past and present experience that I possess.

Our agency will spend a minimum of six months to train an employee. There is a cost to training a new hire. We continue to invest time and money with terrific new hires. It is difficult to retain these employees and I feel it would be very beneficial for the State of Idaho to really consider approving higher compensation and wages to retain qualified employees. It's almost to a point that McDonalds and other industries have a more competitive wage with less responsibilities. I am not exaggerating. These are real conversations taking place today.

Thank you in advance for any consideration,



Mona Lee Wells
Technical Records Specialist I
Idaho State Police
Sex Offender Registry
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mona.wells@isp.idaho.gov

Hello Sir / Ma'am,

Thanks for taking the time to review my concerns regarding ISP/POST compensation. Let me start by providing some personnel background. I came to POST in 2015 with over 25 years of law enforcement, military, DoD contractor experience. I have been training police and military personnel my entire adult

live. I also served in The United States Marine Corps 1988-1992. The cost of living has skyrocketed along with real-estate within the Treasure Valley. If not for my wife being a nurse for the past 25 years I would not be able to retain my position at ISP/POST doing what I love. However, by staying at ISP/POST I **have not** been able to contribute to my savings/retirement because that money must go towards living i.e. food, fuel, mortgage etc. I should also advise that my wife and I live debt free. We own everything except our house.

I currently serve as the Idaho POST Region II Training Coordinator in Meridian, ID. My current wage is \$29.38 hr. This wage is embarrassing and not appropriate for what this position requires. I supervise five additional personnel and responsible for seven satellite academies and 25 LEO agencies. I work between 40-60 hours each week during certain times and I don't get paid overtime. I earn comp time, hour for hour. I have discussed this with HR in the past and was told to figure it out on my own. We are trying to hire a second person to assist but that position has not been approved yet. Once approved, who will we be able to hire at this wage? Transferring to an equivalent position at Ada County SO, Boise PD, or Meridian PD would increase my salary more than 20% ...

If I had a crystal ball, I would have remained in Washington and continued as a military contractor. However, I desperately wanted to return home to Idaho and be with my wife and kids after being separated for 10 years.

You might be wondering why I chose to leave Idaho in the first place. The wages in Idaho have always been low. After several failed attempts to improve my Idaho wage as an LEO, I looked towards military contracting. I deployed in 2005 and remained gone until 2015. Before you judge me too harshly I should advise my salary went from \$52,000 to \$280,000 a year. I'm in no way recommending or suggesting that POST/ISP pay be compared to that. However, my wages are at **least** 20% below market value within the Treasure Valley. With inflation and failing to get appropriate raises we are falling further behind each year.

Ironically, the only people we can get to accept the wages being offered by ISP/POST is retired officers from out of state. They are only working for insurance because they have a six figure retirement that they live on. We/POST have seriously lucked out because the four coordinators we did get are truly outstanding. However, because the wages are so low we can't attract any Idaho LEO that should be teaching Idaho recruits. Instead we have a huge learning curve from out of state officers that are trying to train Idaho LEO. It makes absolutely zero sense to me that an ISP training coordinator makes \$10.00 hour more than a POST Training coordinator. **We do the exact same job!**

I truly love my job and believe I'm making a huge difference in the LEO community. I also represent POST/ISP in the most professional way possible and will continue to do so no matter the outcome. Most employees at POST feel extremely unappreciated for all they do because the wages are drastically low and the disparity between ISP and POST only makes it worse. I can tell you this for a fact. If not for the outstanding leadership at POST many people would have left already. I don't know how much longer people are willing to hang on. People are seriously struggling financially, especially the younger personnel.

Thank You for taking the time to hear me out.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeffrey A. Sklar
Region II Training Coordinator

Idaho Peace Officer Standards and Training
Cell: 208-509-2797
Desk: 208-884-7252
Fax: 208-884-7295
Jeff.sklar@post.idaho.gov



Dear Ms. Christine Otto,

ISSUE

I am a specialist at Idaho State Police Sex Offender Registry. I join this unit at the hourly wage that is only 35 cents more than a “team member” working at Panda Express and 2-3 dollars less than the kitchen worker at Panda Express. I pointed this out not to compare the work value they put in for their fast food establishment. It is to say, even if I work for the State Police out of my passion and belief in the system, I am very disheartened and discouraged when I am constantly reminded that I make less than anyone working at a kitchen at a fast food chain. And, I will NOT be able to afford my rent, (which is \$1500 a month for a one-bedroom apartment in Nampa) *had I not* have a spouse who works for a private company that gets paid more than I do.

*I am also a taxpayer, and I contribute tax dollars to the state. Yet, working for the State, my wages do not reflect my value.

WHAT I DO

I am a very valuable worker that the State doesn’t just come by easily—This is not a brag, but a fact. First, I passed extensive background check, lie-detector test, 23-pages of personal history which an assigned detective looked into, and 2-hour testing/interview in order to be qualified for this position. Second, I have to be trained for 6 months to fully carry out each task of my job. Finally, all of the tasks contain sensitive materials that not ordinary people are qualified to read. Often, those materials have sexual criminal details that no one would like to read. Every day, I process registrations and reports from sex offenders and Sheriff’s offices from across the state. Without us working here, the records will not be filed timely nor properly that fits FBI system. The police will not have information when they pull the offenders over.

MY WORTH

The reason I am describing all of this is that my work is fundamental to the safety of our state. My work supports law enforcement. When any law enforcement members encounter a sex offender, the records the police see is from what I meticulously maintain and research.

PLEA

All I am asking is that the wages of employees like me REFLECT what we do. An hourly rate of 15.35 dollars is very disheartening and not competitive to other workers out there. Please help convey my testimony, and give us a fair raise.

Sincerely,

Taxpayer and Employee of the State

Chiu-yi Lin
Technical Records Specialist I
Sex Offender Registry
Idaho State Police
Phone: 208.884.7305 | Fax: 208.884.7193
700 S. Stratford Dr. Meridian, ID 83642

From: Allen, Eileen
Sent: Wednesday, January 12, 2022 10:49 AM
To: cotto@iso.idaho.gov
Subject: CEC compensation

Christine,

I wanted to reach out to just give you a few thoughts on this based on what is going on for me with hiring.

This past year I had two positions and at times 3 open from February until late October. It was difficult to get anyone interested in our opening based on the starting wage. When we did get applicants they wanted way above the posting starting wage. Those that did apply were not qualified for the position based on the experience and/or they could not pass our background check.

Because of this my staff was working overtime hours that could only be used as comp time. Many of them are at the top of their accumulation of vacation pay so this made it difficult for them to work overtime. Because overtime is paid off as comp time (I suppose due to agency budgets) it was a vicious circle. They would need to get the comp time off the books and could not accumulate more than 40 hours. When they did... They took time off only to result in us getting further behind in our workload.

When I first started at ISP we were on a pay freeze (many years ago). I think I worked for 5 years before I got my first raise. 22 years ago that starting wage was less than \$10 an hour. At \$15 it sure doesn't seem like we have progressed as we should.

The comments that I hear from my staff when I talk about the multiple benefits:
Yes the benefit package is good but we can't afford the cost of an apartment unless we have roommates
The benefit package is good but it doesn't help you out when you can't pay for the rising cost of groceries or the cost of gasoline.
The benefits package is good but our CEC often doesn't even cover the rising cost of our health insurance
The 3% raise does not go far because the year end evaluation is so off kilter. Many of the upper management feel that you can't get the highest rating because you don't walk on water and that seems to be what it is based on. (I understand this as I myself after 22 years have never gotten a high rating on my yearly eval despite attending and completing the Certified Public Manager program and showing that I did a cost savings project that is still in place today and saves my agency \$\$.

I'm personally married to a self employed farmer so I understand both of these as I carry the benefit package for my family. My commute is 52 miles daily. It puts a strain on the budget. I understand that living where I do is my choice.

It's time that we care about our state employees and trying to keep these employees rather than lose them to businesses that are paying a fair wage for the work that is being done. My staff has been overworked for several years and we have a difficult time having the powers that be seem to see that we need more people to do the work than we have in years past. More population coming into the state = more background checks that need to be ran yet we are doing it with the same amount of staff.

They are burned out and feel underappreciated.

Please fight the cause for us to have the wages that we truly deserve and don't have to be attained by "walking on water" and an evaluation system that really is broken. Years of service for these folks should be rewarded!

Thank you!

Eileen Allen, CPM
Criminal Records Supervisor
Bureau of Criminal Identification
Idaho State Police
208-884-7159
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eileen.allen@isp.idaho.gov
<http://www.isp.idaho.gov>

My current work schedule is Tuesday through Friday

To All that will Listen,

Hello,

I work for the Great State of Idaho. I feel very blessed to say that. I am very thankful to have a job that I can honestly say. I have never once woken up and thought..... I don't want to go to work today. The environment and people I work with are my family. The work I do is challenging.

Everyday is different. I learn and am fulfilled throughout my work day.

I am 52 and female. I was a stay-at-home mom for 25 years. Through some unfortunate events. I had to start my life over. I am single, so I have to rely on myself for income. I have 5 older children. I work 3 jobs to make it. I also cater and am a supervisor for an assisted living on the weekends. The last two years have been hard on everyone. My children sometimes need some help. I try to be able to help them with the little I can, when they are struggling.... like so many. I work for The State of Idaho but cannot in any way buy a home in the State I work for and call home.

My time is filled with working. As Governor Little states in his State of the State address. Family is EVERYTHING! That is so true. I would love to spend more time with mine. Our wages at the State are far under the private sector. I would like to be able to work my State job and have the weekend to spend time with my family. Who as of now.....may not be able to stay in the State they call home and were raised in.?

We have a surplus of funds in the State of Idaho. Don't the people who look after the State deserve a pay that affords them to live in the State.

The DOC gave their employees a raise straight across to bring them up to a competitive wage. Don't Idaho State employees deserve at least that. There are 2500 positions at the State. Do you think people will apply for those positions when they can go to places such as "Hobby Lobby" and make a considerable amount more? How are the State employees going to live with this happening in our State?

'Incredibly competitive:' Median home price hits \$546,000 in Ada County

The average rent for a 1-bedroom [apartment in Boise City, ID](#) is currently \$1,500. This is a 28% increase compared to the previous year.

The 208 for Dec. 10, 2021: Inflation highest in decades, Idaho's 'ugliest city'

Boise

– The Idaho Department of Correction is giving its officers pay increases and bonuses. The pay bump comes amid a severe staffing shortage and after a staffer was recently attacked by an inmate. New correctional officers will be hired at **\$19 an hour**, an increase from \$16.75.

BOISE – The Idaho Department of Correction is giving its officers pay increases and bonuses. The pay bump comes amid a severe staffing shortage and after a staffer was recently attacked by an inmate.

New correctional officers will be hired at \$19 an hour, an increase from \$16.75. New hires will also receive a \$1,500 sign-on bonus and be eligible for a \$1,500 yearly retention bonus during their first five years of employment, totaling \$9,000 worth of incentives.

Current employees will receive a boost, as well. Ten positions will receive raises, ranging from \$0.75 hourly for wardens and \$2.25 hourly for correctional officers. The raises take effect Sept. 5.

Additionally, on Oct. 15, all current correctional officers will receive a one-time \$1,500 retention bonus “in recognition of their dedication and service during this truly challenging time,” said Jeff Ray, the department’s public information officer.

“Attracting and hiring the right people to our security ranks is only one part of the equation,” Ray said in an email. “We’re putting an equal amount of emphasis on retaining the staff who have and continue to admirably serve the people of Idaho.”

As a State employee I worked through the pandemic. Our Office at Idaho State Police-Alcohol Beverage Control, did not close. We worked everyday. Did we get a hazard bonus or was it just expected? It was expected.

Though I was very thankful to have a job, as some in our community did not. I also feel we were taken for granted. With no incentive or thank you for a job well done. We also came up with very incredible ways to serve the people of Idaho safely and efficiently. It was a team effort and we worked through the problems that came up with inventive ways to do our daily work.

Please listen closely to the State employees. As I am sure I am not the only one voicing concerns for a LIVING WAGE.

Thank you for your time and stay well,

Elizabeth Lindsay

Administrative and Litigation Specialist

Alcohol Beverage Control

Idaho State Police

208-884-7065

Please listen to the additional information to my email that was sent on 1/12/2022,

In a matter of hours of sending this email, I went home. My daughter from Los Angeles California called me. She has been trying to come back to Idaho where she was raised and where her family resides. She had 2 phone/zoom interviews this week with Panera on Usick Road in Meridian. They offered her a job for \$20 dollars an hour with a \$3000 bonus to be paid \$1500 on her first paycheck and \$1500 on her first week in her third month paycheck. They also asked her if she needed help with moving expenses. Because they would like her to start work the week of February 14th, 2022. This is just an example of the private sector jobs. I will be with the State 4 years this February. She will be making over \$4 dollars more than me. She is 22.

I am an Administrative Assistant 1. I am a litigation specialist, managers assistant, Captain's assistant, detective's assistant and office administrator to make sure our office has all that is needed to function. I also balance the books at the end of each day. I have been asked to help in special projects when the Major's need another Administrative Assistant called in. This is just a few things I do in my position. By the way! Having my daughter back in Idaho could make this mommas heart burst!

Thank you for you listening ear,

Elizabeth Lindsay

Administrative and Litigation Specialist

Alcohol Beverage Control
Idaho State Police
208-884-7065

Dear Senators and Representatives of the Change in Employee Compensation Committee,

I am a current employee at the Idaho State Tax Commission. In my time as a state employee, I have been very disheartened by what previous committees have chosen to do for its' employees. With all the surplus the state keeps having the past couple years and the cost of living going up, a tiny 2% raise won't do much to help at all, especially if you live in a major city. It has pretty much said the legislature does not care about us or what we are sacrificing for our state.

I work where one needs to handle very secure information and protect that information at all costs, but the employee's information is not protected.

I work with all types of taxpayers and some who try to belittle us and call us names, but we are not guarded.

I work to bring in taxpayer dollars, not a dollar more than is required, on their hard-earned money but our hard-earned money working full-time for the state is not enough to survive on, so most need to have multiple jobs.

I make sure everyone pays their taxes fairly, but we are considered horrible people for doing that.

I work with great people, but they are leaving in droves and taking valuable knowledge with them, some even retiring early, but we cannot get that knowledge passed on.

I work at an agency that has no federal funding, so we lose people to other agencies who can pay more with the federal funding.

I work at an agency that the legislature hates, but we provide important service to our state.

I work at an agency that the legislature hates, but they do not want to take care of any of the employees in this agency.

I work under commissioners who say, "you know you will make less, that's why you work for state", yet they are making six figures and only fight for their pay.

I work where I go out in the field and put my life at risk, but I don't get anything to help cover me or my colleagues.

I went to college and got a job to use my degree, but I'm not making enough to even pay back any loans.

I work in an area and city that I am being priced out of, but nothing is being done to help those who reside in those areas.

I elected individuals to represent me, but they are not representing us when we need them to.

I chose a job of public service, but I didn't choose to be in poverty.

I love my state, but my state doesn't love me back.

I know I am not the only one who feels this way. Most of us have been overworked, underpaid, understaffed, and stressed but we have given blood, sweat, tears, stressed, and 110% to our state. I implore you to consider and give us something back that we give our great state, a way to live and enjoy our state. As the state's biggest employer, I implore you to take care of all your employees, especially those who must have more training, work with sensitive and secure information, put their lives at risk, and those who must deal highly volatile taxpayers. Please do more than your previous colleagues, dig deeper and see more of the information of what we, your employees, are telling you. We are not asking for a handout or to be a millionaire; we are asking to be paid fairly so we can thrive and help our state thrive.

Thank you for your time.

I am a licensed pharmacist with over 30 years of experience working in the Department of Health and Welfare, division of Medicaid. I have a doctorate degree in pharmacy (PharmD) as well as having completed a clinical residency program.

I would request that you review salaries for pharmacists in my position in other states as well as for other pharmacist positions within the State of Idaho. My co-worker and supervisor, who are also licensed pharmacists, did get a raise last year but we are still the lowest paid full-time pharmacists employed by the State of Idaho, including other pharmacists working for Health and Welfare in other divisions.

When I switched from the private sector to working for the State of Idaho in 2008, I took a substantial pay cut which demonstrates my commitment to my current role helping Idahoans. The primary reason that I have considered making a switch back to the private sector is the low salary.

When the Pharmacy Unit at Idaho Medicaid hired two contract pharmacists through grant money last year, their hourly salary had to be increased substantially over what my co-worker and I make in order to get any pharmacist to even consider the positions. These two contract pharmacists are taking over some of the duties that my co-worker and I were performing but were unable to keep up with the workload due to Idaho Medicaid expansion.

Final point – as a medical professional, the majority of my salary is paid for with federal money rather than state money. Therefore, the fiscal impact to the state budget would be minimal.

Jane Gennrich PharmD
Pharmacy Services Specialist – Idaho Medicaid
jane.gennrich@dhw.idaho.gov

Greetings CEC Committee,

My name is Leslie Lehman, and I am a twenty-three-year trooper with the Idaho State Police (ISP) currently serving as a detective in District One, Coeur d'Alene. I wanted to take this opportunity to speak to you about the financial issues directly affecting me over the course of the last two years.

I am aware my choice to be a public servant comes with a lower income than those who are employed in the private sector; However, the financial strain over the last several months has left me looking forward to my remaining couple of years as an ISP trooper. In years past, I considered working well past my "Rule of 80," continuing to serve the citizens of Idaho and using the training and experience I have been blessed with. With the current state of my family's finances, I am no longer able to entertain this possibility. I need to retire into private sector employment so my husband and I can recover financially.

I want to give you a glance of the increased costs the Lehman family is

enduring: Increased grocery costs

Increased car insurance due to living in an area with a higher crash

rating Increased property taxes

Increased homeowners' insurance

Increased propane costs

Increased costs to maintain and service

vehicles Increased costs to maintain a home

Here are some examples of what we are having to deal with just in the last few months. Our water

well pump broke a couple of months ago. The cost to fix the issue was \$7000. Our well technician told us the cost to fix the pump three years ago would have been \$4000, but with increases in labor costs and parts, \$7000 is the going rate.

Fixing car radiators, buying winter tires and changing brakes is costing twice as much as it did just a few years ago thanks to labor and parts costs.

My husband and I are no longer able to keep up. We have drained our savings. Something we have not done in twenty-three years of marriage. We have always been able to add to our savings every year.

I was struck by the recent State-of-the-State address by the Governor. Governor Little was so proud of the amount of money the state brought in. Governor Little boasted about the state's rainy-day fund being as strong as it has ever been.

Not for the Lehman family. We are in the process of refinancing our home to acquire cash to help pay for everyday costs and try to fund a couple of small trips before our kids leave the house.

I have a husband who is a detective for the local Sheriff's department. We have served as Little League coaches and board members, in the school PTA and we help with youth fundraisers whenever asked. We love our community and have engrained ourselves in it.

I have three teenage boys. Idaho born and bred. Proud to be Sandpoint Bulldogs. All scholar athletes.

The oldest, Tyler, is in College in Washington. As of today, his goal, and the goal of all three boys is to leave Idaho and not return. They know they cannot afford to live here, so why stick around.

Tyler and I had a conversation about the Idaho State Police last spring. Tyler told me he does not know another mom who works so hard to earn so little. Additionally, he left me with the impression he would never want to be an Idaho State Trooper.

It was hard for me to hear that my kids do not want to consider following my footsteps. If they do, they will not be able to work for ISP. They just cannot afford it.

The Lehman family makes the situation work for now. I “side hustle” to be able to help a little. But I’m getting tired. For the first time in my career, I am looking forward to my retirement date and working towards leaving early.

It sounds like our Colonel is going to request a 5% total CEC. It has come to my attention; other Idaho Agency Directors are requesting pay increases for their employees exceeding 10%. I would ask the CECCommittee to take a higher rate into consideration than the one presented by Colonel Wills.

Thank you for your attention to these matters. Please call if you have any questions. Leslie
[REDACTED]



Dear Members of the CEC Committee:

Thank you for reviewing public testimony regarding Change in Employee Compensation (CEC). I am a Senior Research Analyst at the Idaho Council on Domestic Violence and Victim Assistance. I have been in this role about six months, and previously spent one year at the Commission of Pardons and Parole. I hold a Bachelor’s and Master’s degree from Boise State University.

Substantial, meaningful CEC changes are needed in our State. State employees will continue to rapidly retire, as discussed by Director Wolff on January 12th, and it is my millennial generation that will continue to fill these roles. I am a young single woman living in the Treasure Valley, and it is becoming harder to afford housing. State compensation packages have not kept pace with the rising housing costs. I am a proud employee of Idaho but must seriously consider if this employment can sustain me. Private companies, located in the Treasure Valley AND elsewhere with remote working options, offer the same competitive benefit packages. While that used to be what made State employment desirable, those benefits are longer unique. I choose to remain working for the State because I am proud of my Agency and the work we do. But with rising housing costs and competitive benefit packages, I will face a point where I must make hard choices. We need CEC increases to remain working for the State. While it is true that CEC increases will not solve the almost 2,500 unfilled jobs, it will significantly help those of us who have chosen to stay in our roles. I urge you to reflect on Director Wolff’s testimony from January 12th regarding

rewarding employees who stay. As discussed, most of us are not even at the mid-point of our compensation line and have not been for almost five years.
Please accept the Governor's CEC recommendation and help me, and my fellow hard working State employees, remain in State employment.

Good afternoon, Ms. Otto:

Having moved to State service a year and half ago, I do have some thoughts on the State's personnel system and employee compensation.

Specifically, being laid-off during the COVID pandemic on 3/23/2020 after being with a privately owned physician group for more than five years, I did not want to "enjoy" the generous increase being offered to unemployed workers and immediately applied employment, ultimately being hired by the Office of Group Insurance, and starting my position on 5/19/2020. Keeping in mind that had I accepted the increase in compensation being offered by being unemployed due to the pandemic, I would have ultimately received the approximately the same compensation at my previous place of employment. (Keep in mind that I have over a 20-year history of health care administration, HR, billing, contracting, and a myriad of other skills gained from my work experience, training, and academics) but I digress.

The personnel system of applying for and being contacted by someone for a position you have applied for is somewhat lengthy at best. It takes several months, in some cases, to be contacted for an interview or even some acknowledgement that you are being considered for a position. When someone is looking for gainful employment, a response of intent is necessary, as the incumbent will assume that there is no interest and move on quite quickly to find a position. Especially, if their financial circumstances are dire. I have heard stories of several employees indicating it took months for them to get an interview, and even longer to start. (In my current position, I did not have that experience).

In addition, compensation is a big deterrent to the younger generation. The compensation "package" is touted to be generous. However, benefits unfortunately do not pay the bills and while the cost of living in Idaho is dramatically increasing, the actual net pay is not keeping up with that trend. I have personally taken a large reduction in net pay and was not able to be hired in at even the "median" wage for my position, even with the experience that I have. Again, personal circumstances allowed me to weigh all things and for me personally it was the potential of PERSI. However, looking down the road a few years, a thought on my mind is that if I am stagnant in my position as far as compensation, then the trend for factoring your last three years of compensation in calculating your retirement stipend, brings rise to new thoughts.

Don't get me wrong, I appreciate my position and am grateful for the opportunity when so many do not want to work but when asked about my thoughts on the matter and given my background as a HR officer for many previous positions and the fact that that State of Idaho has @ 2500 positions available, maybe my input will shed some light on generating interest for the younger generation to make the move to state employment and give a middle aged perspective on things.

One last thought is how can we utilize skilled workers to their best and highest use other than doing what I have heard is called the "state shuffle"?

Thank you,

5-Second Customer Satisfaction Survey: [Rate Us!](#)

Sherry L. Anghel

Employee Benefits Specialist, Office of Group Insurance



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Web: www.ogi.idaho.gov

Ms. Otto,

I appreciate the opportunity to provide comment on this very important subject.

I'm a 15-year state employee who has genuinely enjoyed the various positions I have held, however with each position held, I have had one common complaint, the pay. Our agency's pay rate policy is not fair or just. We currently have commissioned and non-commissioned employees who have over 10 years of service making a wage comparable to five-year employees. For example, I am one of three Management Assistants (MA) at ISP and have achieved a "solid sustained performer" or higher evaluations each year of my employment. The other MA's make \$4.10 and \$9.80 more than I do with one of those employees only having two years additional time with the agency than I have.

There are other administrative staff in lesser positions than me making more money. There are Troopers making more money than Sergeants. The ISP pay scale is not fair or equitable.

I recommend following the pay scale that the federal system uses. It's proven to be effective and fair with *over 1.5 million employees worldwide. It rewards staff for loyalty (longevity/seniority) and allows for merit-based performance increases.

Currently, non-commissioned staff have no incentive to improve or remain in their positions. Each year, we perform well and hope the legislature approves a pay increase. There is no guarantee our pay will increase with inflation. And if there is an increase, it is never tied to the rate of inflation.

I work two additional part-time jobs to cover the cost of living for my family. There are ISP employees living in travel trailers on our campus parking lot because they cannot afford housing. Staff are leaving for better paying jobs in the fast food or retail industry. State jobs are no longer considered an elite or coveted job as they once were.

Our responsibility to the citizens of Idaho is to protect them and that cannot be accomplished when we are bleeding staff. This is a state-wide problem. I suggest adopting the federal GS pay schedule that will apply a fair and consistently equitable pay schedule.

Again, I sincerely appreciate the opportunity for input, and I hope my suggestion will help start a much-needed conversation about State employees, their livelihoods and wellbeing.

Respectfully,



KELSEY WOODWARD
MANAGEMENT ASSISTANT
Idaho Peace Officer Standards & Training
Idaho State Police
700 S. Stratford Dr.
Meridian, ID 83642-6202

208-884-7253 desk
www.post.idaho.gov

Good Morning Christine,

Although the United States and particularly the State of Idaho, has experienced a series of events effecting our way of living, I would like to provide my thoughts regarding pay and compensation while working for the State of Idaho.

I devoted nearly eleven years to working at the Boise Police Department establishing a law enforcement background. I have worked for the Idaho State Police for three and a half years now. I believe that having a previous law enforcement background helped me attain my present job with the Idaho State Police. When I decided to return to the workforce, I wanted to continue working in law enforcement. An opportunity came up and I decided to apply for my present job but had started at a lower set rate of pay as compared to my previous job. I know there is value when it comes to benefits such as PERSI and health benefits; however, these benefits do not pay the bills or keep up with the cost of living.

I see and hear folks struggling. Wages do not keep pace with the cost of living. We have less disposable income due to increases in health benefits, etc. annually. To qualify as a candidate for employment with the Idaho State Police, you must be the best of the best. You must go through a complete background check and polygraph exam. The process can be very stressful, tedious, and drawn out. I do not believe that pay scales for these positions are reasonable. With some duties, we are not compensated appropriately for such as legal work. To hire and retain employees, we must compensate them appropriately. I recently learned from a family member that according to a temporary agency, the average job in Idaho pays \$15.00 hourly. Our Unit recently posted a position with a beginning hourly wage of \$15.35. I make \$0.36 more than that today, after working three and a half years. My wage today reflects any past wage increase, meeting goals and going one year without a raise. I cannot imagine what my wage would be had I not even met my goals. Something feels so wrong that a new hire could potentially make more than I considering the past and present experience that I possess.

Our agency will spend a minimum of six months to train an employee. There is a cost to training a new hire. We continue to invest time and money with terrific new hires. It is difficult to retain these employees and I feel it would be very beneficial for the State of Idaho to really consider approving higher compensation and wages to retain qualified employees. It's almost to a point that McDonalds and other industries have a more competitive wage with less responsibilities. I am not exaggerating. These are real conversations taking place today.

Thank you in advance for any consideration,



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My name is Angela Shumway and I currently work for the Idaho State Police as the Office Services Supervisor for District 3 Patrol. When I began working for ISP in 2011 I was hired as an Office Specialist 1 for \$11.00 per hour. Over the years, I did get raises for cost of living and performance. It took eight years for me to get to \$16.74 per hour which stayed the same through 2019 and 2020. I worked hard to get a bump in pay in 2021 and was promoted to the Office Services Supervisor position in late 2021 at \$22.00 per hour. The Idaho State Police requires a polygraph and background check for all employees. No other state agency requires that. I feel the pay scale for administrative support positions should be higher because of the poly and background that is required.

If something were to happen to my husband, I would lose our house. Living paycheck to paycheck is normal now and very stressful.

I have seen over 10 troopers leave District 3 Patrol in the last year. Of course, a few were retirees. The others moved to other law enforcement agencies or outside employment because they could make so much more money. Our troopers go through much more training and put themselves on the interstate day after day making Idaho roads safer and they make less than most local police departments.

Thank you for your time.

Angie Shumway

Angie Shumway

Idaho State Police
District 3 Patrol
Office Services Supervisor
208-884-7376

Dear Committee Members,

I am taking this opportunity to provide comments regarding State employee compensation. I have been employed by the Idaho State Police since June of 2001. I had three years of prior law enforcement experience with another agency prior to joining ISP. I came to the State Police because I recognized the agency as the premier law enforcement organization within the State. I still feel that way however, we are faced with an unprecedented struggle to fill our trooper positions. I will keep my comments brief and to the point.

I supervise the patrol division in District 5. We are currently 7 trooper positions down. As a result, my division struggles to provide the coverage needed for the 7 Southeast Idaho Counties that we serve. This translates into longer response times and an increase in citizen complaints with respect to traffic related issues. My troopers are getting burned out and there is no relief in sight. We have struggled to recruit

qualified candidates largely due to our starting pay. With inflation and the increase in home prices throughout the State, it is very difficult to recruit candidates who want to work in such a demanding profession for 21 dollars an hour starting out.

I respectfully ask for serious consideration be given to a more substantial CEC.

Lieutenant – Michael Winans - 566
Idaho State Police D5 Patrol
5255 South 5th Avenue, Pocatello, Idaho 83204
(208) 239-9811
Michael.Winans@isp.idaho.gov



Thank you for soliciting testimony. This testimony is for me as a state employee; I do not represent my agency. I would like to provide my opinion about the change in employee compensation with hope that you would genuinely take it into consideration. I have been employed by the state for 5 years as a Program Specialist for Medicaid and Public Health. My background is in Respiratory Therapy. I greatly enjoy serving and helping the people in Idaho, which I have done most of my career. My position as a Program Specialist allows me to participate with improving the health of Idahoans and to engage with healthcare providers throughout the state. I am proud to say that the work I do with my co-workers is not only important and satisfying but has also produced impactful results for Idahoans. I believe that state employees, such as myself, are well deserving of an increase in compensation to be above market level. This will not only help to retain employees who are viewed as valuable, but it will also recruit the most appropriate people for open positions. The increase in wages at other organizations, for example, fast food restaurants, demonstrates that it is reasonable to increase pay for positions at the state level; not only to remain competitive, but to also recognize the worth of the employees, especially for people who have earned degrees and have worked hard to be where there are today. It raises the bar and expands the gap of pay differential. The cost of living is also a large concern with the need to earn higher wages in order to afford where we live.

The Increase in pay for someone like myself should also be reasonable so that a person who is already employed (and has been for years) will receive higher pay than a new, oncoming employee. As of right now, new employees have the possibility of receiving a higher salary than employees who have been committed to their job for many years.

I thank you for your time and hope that you consider increasing wages for state employees to be competitive with the market as it would be greatly appreciated by those who are dedicated to their jobs with the state and who work endlessly for the people of Idaho.

Respectfully,

Stacy Connolly
Program Specialist, Time Sensitive Emergency (TSE)
Program Manager, EMS for Children (EMSC)
Bureau of EMS & Preparedness, Division of Public Health
Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
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Stacy.Connolly@dhw.idaho.gov



**IDAHO TIME SENSITIVE
EMERGENCY SYSTEM**
TRAUMA | STROKE | STEMI



Emergency Medical
Services for Children
IDAHO

Dear Legislators,

I am an employee with the State of Idaho. Over the last three (3) year of service with the state, the pay increases have not exceeded the starting wage for the position I hold. Not only have the pay increase not created a gap from a new hire to my three (3) plus years of service, but they have not allowed for a gap from a new hire to an individual with seven (7) plus years of service. Explanation, I have had (2) workplan reviews that have exceeded expectations and the pay increases have not exceeded base pay, my hourly rate with over three (3) years of service and great reviews is the same as a person starting without experience or years of positive reviews.

The average pay increase for annual inflation and cost of living is three (3) % percent. I have not had a CEC/performance-based increase of 3% not including cost of living increase, to keep my position above the curve of cost, growth and inflation. With the growth of our state, cost of living 3% annually along with a performance increase would be logical. A salary gap needs to be created for experienced, seasoned employees over new hires. An aggressive base line increase with a competitive annual increase to help retain existing employees. Of the five new employees I started with, within a six-month time frame, only two remain, including myself.

My division within the Department of Agriculture has no room for growth unless I am willing to relocate to the Treasure Valley. My current home I own, in the Lewiston area is a five-bedroom two bath 2700 square foot brick home. The home is valued at \$280000. Thankfully I own my home as the cost of rent is substantially greater than my home cost. A similar home in the Treasure Valley would be double if not triple the value. There is not a position that would allow me to uproot my family, sell my home, and relocate to the Treasure Valley and still be equitable. I feel it would be beneficial to created positions throughout the states regions, Northern, south western and south eastern areas to allow individuals to grow with in the Department without relocating. Possibly training or supervisory positions.

I hope my testimony is valued and not viewed as disgruntled employee, I truly love my position and have many wonderful people I work with.

Kind regards,
Nick Kampf

To the Change in Employee Compensation (CEC) Committee:

Thank you for the invitation to provide testimony. This testimony is for me as an individual state employee, I am not representing my agency (DHW). The primary reason I have chosen to continue in my position is that I can see the people in my program are making a positive difference in the lives of the children & families in my community. It is a privilege to be part of our team, and although it is financially challenging for me to make the ends meet, and believe me I do everything possible to economize, it has been worth it to stay. However, some things are not in my control, most of all the cost of housing which has more than doubled for me since I began working for the State of Idaho (it will be 10 years this spring!). This past November the increase in rent was \$100 per month which is about 11.24 % of my net pay (and there is no guarantee it will not rise again in May). So, I implore you please to look favorably upon the Division of Human Resources recommendation for an increase in wages. It would mean a great deal to me.

P.S. Just want to let you know I am so very grateful for our state health insurance coverage, I am a cancer patient and would not be surviving without it.

Sincerely,

Laura Strunk

Administrative Assistant 1
Infant Toddler Program-North Hub
Phone: (208) 769-2750
Fax: (208) 769-1430

CEC Committee,

My name is Clint Skinner and I have worked for the Idaho State Police for the last 18 years. I have served as a Trooper, Detective, Patrol Sergeant, Detective Sergeant and I am currently the Investigations Lieutenant for District 5 in Pocatello. Over the last 18 years, this is the most difficult time I have seen with the Idaho State Police.

Law Enforcement has never been a more dangerous, difficult or scrutinized profession than it is right now. Good, honest, hardworking cops are leaving the profession they love and have given their entire lives to, due to a real or perceived lack of support by the media, law makers, the public, and administrators. With the rapid population growth throughout Idaho, rise in violent crime, rise in gun crimes, rise in dangerous drug use and overdose deaths, it is more important than ever to be able to hire and retain qualified Troopers and Detectives.

With the unprecedented rise in housing costs, food, and the general cost of living in the state of Idaho, the ISP is seeing problems that need to be addressed immediately. The wages of the Idaho State Police have not kept up with inflation and as a result, we are finding it is more difficult than ever before to hire and retain employees. We have experienced Troopers that are quitting because they can make more money as a security guard or working at Costco. We are losing excellent and well trained Troopers to other Law Enforcement agencies in Idaho because they pay significantly more. We have qualified and interested candidates that don't apply because they can't afford to buy a house and support their families on the wages that we pay. Every single day I hear someone talk about applying for other agencies, leaving law enforcement completely, or looking for a second job in order to make ends meet. I have personally never seen a whole agencies moral be lower than it is in the Idaho State Police right now.

The Idaho State Police prides themselves on being well trained, courteous, respectful, unbiased and fair, while upholding the laws of Idaho. In order to get the right and most qualified people, we require employees to pass very strict background checks and polygraph tests. Most people are not able to pass these requirements, which limits our potential candidates more than any other state agency. If we want to be able to hire and retain the type of Troopers that the citizens of Idaho deserve, we have to pay them more and give them a reason to choose the ISP as a career.

Thank you,

Lieutenant Clint Skinner
Idaho State Police
D5 Investigations
Office 208-239-9851
Cell [REDACTED]

Good morning,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on my own behalf for State Employee Compensation. I have been employed by the Department of Health and Welfare for 18, going on 19, years. I am currently a Program Specialist and oversee our Independent Living and Child Well-being programs; however, I have been temporarily “on loan” to Region 4 and am a Case Management Supervisor. The opinions below are my own as a State employee and not representative of the Department for which I work.

Throughout my time, I have held various positions but all have been under the Child Welfare umbrella. To say these past two years in our agency have been disheartening and difficult is an understatement. We are losing people left and right. Some of this, I believe, can be attributed to life changes through COVID; however, some changes are systemic issues. I’m adding a link to an article I was recently forwarded that resonated with me and, I believe, many of the folks who have left our agency. https://www.mysocialworknews.com/article/the-day-i-burnt-out?fbclid=IwAR2vCp8pvV7LEBO5FsNWWy4n7bRZc7_7kBIKAiJTyzII_uaTJOTwsrCSEwc In addition, I’d like to share with you a link to another article that highlights the increased complexity of the clients with whom we work. This is difficult, stress-filled work that is not for everyone but for those of us who remain, we need support. https://www.wrex.com/news/crime/illinois-dcfs-social-worker-stabbed-to-death-during-visit-with-children/article_f8a92458-6e89-11ec-83a8-db3a192b3afd.html

I’m fully aware that increasing a social worker’s pay cannot take away the secondary trauma we experience or the risks of the job. It can, however, boost morale and help people feel valued. I fully support the retention and sign-on bonuses that are currently in place for case managers and safety assessors. However, I also know these bonuses caused quite a rift between all staff and have resulted in some who did not receive the bonus finding employment opportunities elsewhere. We have many support staff who make less than the starting wage at fast food restaurants. We have staff who have made this their life’s work but barely make more than folks who have been on the job for less than a year. For these reasons, I would ask that the proposed 7% increase in pay be allocated to ALL Child Welfare staff (including those who work on our Central Office policy team). If this is not possible, I would ask that the 7% increase not happen as this would further perpetuate the rift or divide amongst staff.

I would respectfully ask that my name not be used in any testimony. If this is not possible, please let me know. Thank you for your time and consideration.

██████████

██████████

Good morning, Christine and members of the committee,

I know many of us working for the state of Idaho do so knowing that compensation is lower than in the private sector. However, in this past year, my department alone has experienced significant turnover and instability, largely due to the fact that our private sector equivalents make significantly more money, and a majority of comparable positions are remote jobs now. While we make about \$46k annually, equivalent remote positions start from \$56k - \$70k. With the appeal of a higher paying, work from home job, we have lost 2 employees and the program manager to comparable companies. (We are a team of 5 investigators, 1 specialist, and 1 manager). The turnover has resulted in overtime, weeks on end out of town covering the jobs of people who live in different cities across the state, and stress. With all this, it's no surprise that this turnover will continue for the foreseeable future.

I'm writing today to tell you this brief story of a small team of organic certifiers working for the state, who have truly struggled through this great resignation we are all impacted by, with no end in sight. I will never hold the expectation that our compensation will be comparable to the private sector, but I also strongly believe it shouldn't be laughable. And that's where I feel we're at today.

Thank you for your time.

Best,

Ms. Lee Barritt

Agriculture Investigator, Sr.

Organic Program

Idaho State Department of Agriculture

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Phone: (208) 332-8680

Fax: (208) 334-2170

Email: organics@isda.idaho.gov

Direct Email: lee.barritt@isda.idaho.gov

Mrs. Otto,

Thank you for taking the time to review my comment regarding state employee compensation. I'm sure you have many comments to review, so I will keep my comments brief.

I am thankful to work for the state of Idaho. I believe I am fairly compensated for my time and work; the CEC increases are always welcome to help stave off the effects of inflation. Unfortunately, as I'm sure everyone is aware, these effects have becoming increasingly drastic in recent months. I am also very thankful for the benefits package we have. I believe it is fair and adequate.

I do not know how much the composition of the state workforce falls under the purview of the CEC committee. But just in case, I do have comments to direct to this end. During my time in state employ the population of our state has increased nearly 20%. Despite this, the number of people employed in my work unit has not changed to match suit. As a result, the employees in my work unit have much higher work loads than I've seen in the past 15 years. This has many potential effects, not the least of which are decreased efficiency, degraded work products, and increased attrition. I believe it would be helpful for our state to conduct a thorough analysis of the work being completed by work units in each state agency, and to either increase personnel to match the increasing demands and alleviate the increased strain on our government's resources, or to explain why that is not necessary for a particular work unit.

Thank you again for you time and attention, as well as your service to our great State! Have a great day!

Sergeant Michael Wendler
Idaho State Police - District 4 Patrol
218 West Yakima, Jerome, Idaho 83338
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Cell: [REDACTED]
Fax: (208)324-7897

Good morning Christine,

As a manager of facilities who hires in trades such as electricians, HVAC, maintenance personnel, it has been extremely difficult to get applicants to respond to the job posting(s) as the starting wages are well below what the valley is paying. Part of the draw for these trades is a regular schedule rather than traveling all over the state with a private sector company. I have been fortunate to have four employees who were able to accept lower wages due to selling their homes for a profit in other states.

I try to make the work environment as positive and pleasant as it can be as plunging and snaking clogged toilets for \$16.75 an hour isn't pleasant. 😊

I won't be telling you anything you haven't already been told or already know, however with the ever climbing cost of living averaging above the 3-5 percent "cec" state employees MAY get is not enough. Half of my crew works a second job just to make ends meet. We hear about places like SIF that get more than 5%..... we hear from others in our trades that they received 10% raises these last two years, and it is becoming increasingly hard to retain staff.

As facilities, we are considered one of the "bottom of the bucket" groups, yet we keep power on, temperatures comfortable, and toilets working, etc, and really is a job that goes unnoticed until there is an issue. Facilities does all that being one of the least paid / compensated groups. It is our pleasure to serve, and we understand everyone has a choice of where they choose to work, however Idaho has always been behind other Idahoan's when it comes to pay and compensation. We want to serve the public and the state, however money is a driver in retention and quality of employees that choose to work for the State.

It would be nice to see the State of Idaho at least get a little closer in pay to get us a fighting chance with the inflation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

5-Second Customer Satisfaction Survey: [Rate Us!](#)

April Rice

Chinden Campus Facilities Services Manager, DPW



Office: (208) 332 - 1926
Mobile: (208) 805 - 0185
Web: www.adm.idaho.gov

To: Change in Employee Compensation Committee

01/15/2021

I would first like to mention the Hay system that is currently used throughout the state. This system is extremely antiquated and is hindering the hiring and promotion of good people. It has never been properly funded and keeps the pay at a level that makes it hard to pay people for the experience they have. There must be a better system that allows agencies to hire and retain people based on their training and experience.

The Governors recommended 2% plus another 3% based on merit that has been talked about, has no guidance yet, so it's hard to answer employee questions. I have been with the state for over 22 years and the problem with merit is you will have some agencies that have a ton of exceeds evaluations, some with very little, there will be no consistency of who gets the full 5%. The other part of this, it really comes down to having supervisors that will put in the work to write and defend the full merit raise.

"For the second year in a row, we have yet another record budget surplus." Governor Little.

"Hiring and retaining talented and competent employees must remain amongst our top priorities if we are to be considered a leading choice for job seekers in Idaho.

Although Idaho." CEC.

The above two quotes are the reason I'm writing to the CEC. The last couple years have been challenging for all including the state of Idaho. The state still found a way to give the employees a 2% pay raise. So, it is hard to imagine with the economy the way it is and the State having the biggest surplus in its history (that continues to grow everyday) that the state can only afford a 2% pay raise.

As stated above I have been with the State for 22 years and I have gone several years with no pay raises. had a year with a 1% bonus and others with 3%. The statements made by our governors and legislators is hang on we will take care of you when it gets better. Well, it's better and it doesn't feel like we are being taken care of.

Inflation is at 7%, SSN got a 6.9% raise and PERSI was around 3.6%. I think its time for the state to close the 12% gap between us and the private sector.

Thanks for your time.

Thank you for soliciting my testimony. This testimony is for me as a state employee; I do not represent my agency.

First, I would thank the CEC committee in their work securing pay increases in past several years. The CEC increases we have received have been greatly appreciated. I especially have appreciated not seeing the increase in insurance premiums.

I have been a state employee in North Idaho for thirteen years. I am not interested in moving or working for Washington state government, even though I could earn up to 20% more income annually. I am proud to work for the state that I was born and raised in. If I were to try and purchase the modest home that I purchased fifteen years ago in North Idaho, I would not be able to qualify for it based on my current salary. As you are aware of the cost of living in Idaho has significantly increased over the last five to ten years. The costs of inflation in Idaho continues to increase above our CEC. There are many state employees who work second jobs. My first five years working at the state I worked a second job just to make ends meet.

My hope would be that the CEC committee would also consider more than a standard CEC increase for lower paid positions. Many positions that the state recruits for start out less than minimum wage 10 miles away in Washington. A 2-3% CEC increase for an employee who makes \$14.68 per hour is much different than an employee who makes \$31.00 per hour.

I appreciate you taking the time to consider my testimony.

Angie Holick

[REDACTED]
Falls, ID 83854
[REDACTED]

Hello,

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the compensation rates for state of Idaho employees. I was recently in a meeting with other business managers and found that the Idaho Transportation Department has a projected 8 million dollars in personnel saving for FY22. My question is why? Why are those savings not used to better compensate employees that work for the state. We have a salary schedule that tells us what are pay classification is according to our position with the department. This salary schedule also tells us what that position would make if the employee was paid at 100% of the salary schedule. It has long been ITD's stance that they should bring employees in at 80% of the salary schedule, for example if a position pays \$25/hr at 100% the department will start the employee at \$20/hr which I can understand, but after that there is no mechanism for the employee to get to \$25/hr and if you do the math they would actually need a 25% raise to get back to 100%. I have worked for the department for almost 6 years and have never reached anything above 80% of my pay schedule. The other thing that is frustrating by allowing this to continue to happen, when the legislature moves the pay scale, it allows new employees to come into the department making more than employees that have been here for 20 years. I have also submitted several Salary Adjustment Requests on behalf of my employees and they have been denied by the Human Resources with very little justification, yet IDAPA rule 15.04.072.02 allows for the appointing authority to set the starting salary for a new hire, however our human resources department makes that determination as well, and it seems to be very arbitrary. As I said earlier, I have been with the department for almost 6 years and was brought into my current position at 80% of the salary schedule, another employee that was recently hired into the same position and same salary classification that has no experience with the department was brought in at 86%, which is higher than some of our business managers that have been with the department for almost 30 years. I appreciate the legislatures willingness to give employees a possible 5% increase to pay, which can make a sizeable difference for somebody that is in a higher classification, but for many of the people that are in lower classifications that start out at \$15.35/hr or similar, that equates to a \$.77/hr increase which equals about \$60 added to their paychecks every two weeks, which is not even enough to fill your car for 2 weeks because of the increase in prices across all consumer products. The state is behind the market when it comes to salary, and for this reason it is very hard to find people that are willing to work in positions such as driving a snow plow, this is a dangerous position that starts out at \$16.50/hr, which with the working conditions and liability of the position, I can understand why these vacancies are hard to fill. I appreciate your time, and the opportunity to share my thoughts.

Thank you,

Trevor Elordi
Business Operations Manager, District 6
Idaho Transportation Department
206 N. Yellowstone Hwy, Rigby ID 83442
Trevor.elordi@itd.idaho.gov
[REDACTED]

Dear Representatives,

Our state Government used to be the place you strived to obtain work, mainly because of the benefits and the opportunity to secure a job that would be around until retirement. The medical/dental/vision insurance benefits are nice to have, although those costs keep rising. While we might get a CEC "raise" (which doesn't amount to a dollar for the average employee) that "raise" doesn't cover the cost of the

benefits that just increased. So, in turn, it feels like we're going backwards instead of increasing our take home pay. Great employees are leaving and finding other opportunities that align with taking care of their families. Some employees that are staying are having to acquire a second job to make ends meet.

On a personal note, our family should've bought a house about five years ago but didn't. Now we can't afford to buy a house and our rent keeps increasing. I've been offered jobs to work from home, make well more than I make here, and would provide a benefit package comparable to the state. Having said that, I've asked myself what keeps me here. The answer is that I'm proud of where I work and what I do. My hope is that we'll be compensated for what a great job we do for the state and so it doesn't feel like we're being left behind, not seen or heard, and quickly becoming part of the lower class. It's embarrassing to admit, but as a family we're truly struggling. While I appreciate the 5% CEC recommendation because it's better than nothing, it's unfortunately not enough in the world today.

We should be able to provide a wage that competes with the private sector and the city governments around the state. We want our employees to stick around and be proud of their jobs, and we need to attract the next generation to work for the great state of Idaho.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you for representing us and allowing us to speak on this topic.

Angie Wetherelt

Alcohol Beverage Control
Idaho State Police
700 Stratford Drive
Meridian, ID 83642
(208)884-7057
www.isp.idaho.gov/abc



To whom it may concern

Thank you for being willing to hear individual employee thoughts on the topic of change in employee compensation. My name is Skyler Thompson, I have been with the Region 3 Department of Health and Welfare for 4.5 years. Primarily I have worked as a Social Worker 2- permanency caseworker, in mid-December 2021 I started a position on the licensing team. I am not speaking on behalf of the agency, but rather my own personal thoughts and opinions.

First off, I would like to see fair and equal compensation increases for all licensed social workers. In the recent months there have been bonuses and the potential of higher raises for certain social workers (specifically safety assessors and case managers.) This was announced right as I was being offered the licensing position and really made it a tough personal decision on if I wanted to move to a position that was valued less by the agency. What I think is being overlooked is that the licensing team has extremely high caseloads, has experienced significant turnover, and is equally overwhelmed as social workers in other roles. Additionally, being a part of the region 3 larger team, we are often asked to volunteer to assist with case management tasks or safety assessments while those teams are suffering from ongoing worker shortages. It is hard to continue to want to do similar hard work, or assist in areas of deficit, when as a licensing worker we are compensated less than other members of the team. The decision to only offer the bonus to select teams left those excluded feeling depreciated, and as if their piece of the work was less important.

Seeing new employees come in with starting rates comparable, or higher with the bonuses, then me really makes me feel like my dedication as a long-term employee goes unappreciated and is not valued. If the time it takes to recruit, and train, quality employees was taken into consideration I believe it would be beneficial to offer incentives for experienced workers to be retained in their roles. I would like to propose higher merit scale or merit bonuses after certain number of years. Or, has the idea of changing the Departments retirement rule of 90 to rule of 80 or 85 been considered. This would incentivize people to work and stay at the department through the harder times as opposed to taking up offers of less stressful or higher paying work. It is my opinion that the department is in a state of crisis, regarding staffing shortages and current workers taking on double their normal workloads. Now is the time to incentivize to keep the seasoned workers, who are committed and emotionally invested, in their roles within the agency.

In conclusion I would like the committee to consider the following:

- 1) Grant the \$4,000 bonuses to all licensed social workers in FACS, each role is equally important
- 2) Consider the 7% raise for all licensed social workers in FACS, each role is stepping up and doing an abundance of work above typical caseloads, additionally cost of living has skyrocket and current wages do not meet market level
- 3) When the starting wage is increased for positions, increase the merit-based wages as well
- 4) Offer merit bonuses for longevity
- 5) Consider a change to the retirement rule of 90 to a rule of 80

Thank you for taking your time to consider my personal feelings, thoughts, and ideas around CEC. I think it is important that the Department works to offer competitive wages and benefits, as well as make their employees feel valued and heard.

To: Change in Employee Compensation (CEC) Committee
Subject: Employee Compensation Recommendations – Idaho State Police

The Idaho State Police has seen a high rate of Trooper turnover and retirements in the past 10 years. It's becoming not only a public safety issue but it's also an officer safety issue when we don't have the bodies out here to back up one another. ISP troopers just are not paid enough, and we've been asking for better pay for years.

Money

ISP entry level troopers right now are basically taking home roughly between \$1,200 and \$1,350 every two weeks. Dispatchers much less and the office staff really can't afford to work for the state anymore.

Those of you who have owned or run a business know you must be competitive to draw quality candidates to your business/agency. ISP command staff keep complaining that ISP does not get a lot of applicants for the starting Trooper candidate position. They seem to be confused about competing in a profession with a very limited pool of qualified applicants and not offering a complete starting salary.

Recruitment and Retention Bonuses – (page 35, FY 2023 CEC report)

"In the past year, state agencies have experienced unprecedented difficulty in recruiting and retaining critical state positions. With the State's 19% turnover rate, it has been necessary for state agencies to provide recruitment and retention bonuses for employees in critical positions. Recruitment bonuses provide an additional incentive to prospective employees to accept state employment." Here CEC lists, among others, "maintenance craftsmen and cooks."

Eye on Boise: KTVB7 news -Idaho struggles to fill state jobs, with 2,500 openings. Idaho's overall state employee pay continues to lag behind market levels. The Fiscal Year 2023 Change in Employee Compensation and Benefits Report shows that despite some gains, state employee salaries overall remain 9% below market rates and total compensation is 12% below the private sector, though it's improved to 7% below market for public-sector pay. Idaho's been struggling to fill openings and retain state employees, state Human Resources Director Lori Wolff wrote in the report. "In state government alone, we have over 2,500 unfilled jobs and are currently battling a 12% vacancy rate across regular positions," she wrote. "There are times when not a single application is received for a job posting."

Open Pay Rolls article on Idaho Employee Salaries -page 8

The average employee salary for the State of Idaho in 2020 was \$51,181. This is 22.4 percent lower than the national average for government employees and 15.4 percent lower than other states. There are 24,100 employee records for Idaho.

Several months ago, I was working a manslaughter case out of Calder, Idaho and needed a Drone to fly over the scene for photographs. We asked CDA PD to use their Drone as our Drone was not available. CDA PD asked if they could bring along their pre-hires to watch us work with citizens in a remote rural area. I met the pre-hires, who were lateral hires out of California, (Sacramento PD and San Diego PD). While speaking with them I asked if they had considered looking at ISP. They smiled and said that the ISP starting pay was not enough to buy a house in Idaho and they had applied with agencies who were paying the highest in the area.

Right now, today, the 'resident trooper' assigned to Shoshone County cannot find a house he can afford, in a place where he would be safe to live, because housing costs have gone up so much in Shoshone County. Our new Bonner County trooper is forced to live in a camper due to housing costs. A trooper promoted to CVS (Commercial Vehicle Enforcement) lived in our Patrol parking lot in a trailer for months until he found a room to rent in a house here in CDA. Patrol has troopers still living in camper trailers in campgrounds until they find rooms to rent or houses, they can afford to buy here in D1.

Pay Equity Adjustments- (page 36 FY 2023 CEC Report) employees not being paid equitably for their work when compared to job market demands. (total Compensation Comparison by Pay Grade – Public sector, page 108 - 115 FY 2023 CEC Report)

Civilian ISP staff in our office start out at about \$14 an hour. Right now, you can make \$15 and hour working at fast food restaurants here in CDA and Post Falls (a Pita Pit shift leader makes \$16 per hour). Civilians are required to complete background checks, polygraphs, and sit behind bullet proof glass at the front counter while with dealing with an unhappy public. Coeur d'Alene City Police pay \$20 – \$23 dollars and hours for what our front office staff does for \$14.93 an hour, and that is with five years of experience.

A lot of ISP troopers (this also includes command officers) have side jobs to be able to afford to live, have their children participate in school activities etc. Some (not all) know more about their side jobs than they do about police work. Do you really want an ISP Captain doing Ubar Eats food deliveries to your front door on his days off?

In the 15+ years I have been with ISP I have seen many ISP Troopers leave the state police for other agencies. ISP troopers in D1 can, and do, apply to Coeur d'Alene PD, Spokane City, Spokane

County and Spokane Valley law enforcement agencies where they can make \$4 to \$8 dollars more an hour. The Washington State agencies allow their personnel to live in Idaho and even supply them with marked take home cars while they are on shift. Right now, Spokane City offers a \$10,000 signing bonus.

Recruitment and Retention Bonuses

ISP is having a high turnover rate of Dispatchers here at the communications center because of money. We have had injured troopers work in communications to fill in for short staffing.

It is estimated that ISP spends more than \$86,000+ to hire and train a new ISP Trooper. If you lose 10 troopers a year to other agencies that's \$860,000 a year lost. Before you realize it, you begin to become that agency who trains police officers for other agencies to hire away. That is also ten less ISP troopers on the road or being assigned at the capital.

As your more senior troopers leave the agency, your staff becomes younger and younger (translate this to mean less experienced), and these younger troopers become your Field Training Officers (FTO's) which means less experienced officers training much less experienced officers, and this can lead to mistakes being made and can, in some extreme cases, be dangerous for the public and other officers. Money and manpower.

Highway I90, between Washington State and Montana, is a major methamphetamine, fentanyl, heroin transportation corridor. District One has two troopers as an "interdiction team" for a nationwide fentanyl epidemic in the panhandle of Idaho. ISP calls two troopers a "team" and 5 a "task force". Why not ask for more troopers to be assigned to this small interdiction team? Money and manpower.

ISP Detectives in D1 have seized more than 20 pounds of fentanyl this year alone. Yet we borrow crime scene equipment from other police agencies in the area to complete some of the investigations we conduct for those agencies. Money to buy equipment.

The two additional detectives the Director asked for in this year's fiscal budget "to work narcotics" hardly scratches the surface of the fentanyl problem.

Legislators want troopers down at the capital and at the supreme court. This means that troopers across the state must leave their districts and be on TDY at the capital, leaving the District where they are assigned short of people. ISP has been bringing back retired troopers to work in uniform at the capital. This should be a red flag to any competent manager that we do not have enough people to do the basic job, let alone additional assigned tasks.

Money

ISP Detectives are required to be on stand-by without compensation. Supervisors do a 'phone around' when there is a nighttime or weekend call out for a shooting or homicide scene to see if detectives can respond to help. Not all the detectives answer their phones when they are at family events to during holidays because they are not compensated.

There are very few opportunities for ISP Detectives to make overtime at ISP. Detectives are prevented from working on the holidays. Detectives are compensated by the hour, at the hourly rate. When they do acquire overtime and "put it on the books", they can only keep or have 30

hours of comp time on the books, then they are hounded to sell the comp time back at the current rate.

Now when ISP detective positions come open across the state there are few if any trooper applicants for those positions. Troopers cannot not make overtime in the detective slots and they cannot afford to move from one end of the state to another because of the cost of housing, so, the state goes without detectives to assist other LE agencies, which is one of our mandates.

Here in D1 Kootenai County taxes keep going up, city (Post Falls) taxes keep going up. Gas prices, food prices, housing prices keep going up. My 2% pay increase has been absorbed by the 7% inflation by the time the CEC Committee will have met and published their findings.

ISP troopers have been asking for better pay and more manpower for years, and for years we have been told that the state of Idaho could not afford it. Now we are told that the State has **1.6 billion dollars** in surplus monies.

The Governor in his state of the state speech is recommending for schoolteachers 10% + \$1,000 bonus check etc. (School teachers are important but they only work for 9 months out of 12. I personally know teachers who make money on the 'off months' as carpenters and salesmen at Cabela's). IDOC is getting 13%+ pay increases this fiscal year for their guards, and the list goes on.

Quite frankly an offer of a basic 2% salary increases to ISP Troopers this year is an insult. For the civilian front desk person who makes \$14.93 an hour, that 2% raise will be 34 cents an hour. I have been a state employee long enough to see office staff move from one state agency to another just to make 20 cents an hour more. How long can we retain staff at this rate?

I have not mentioned the additional 3% (Merit Increase Component) because ISP employees know it may be almost impossible for anyone having been with the State Police more than 5 years to get the full 3%. Only troopers/employees with less than four years on, having achieved a perfect employee evaluation, would have a chance to get the 3% on top of the 2% for a total of a 5% salary increase on ISP.

In my opinion it is a lapse in judgement for not asking for a 10% to 15% raise across the board for ISP employees.

I fear the agency will suffer long term for this error when it is obvious to everyone that the State of Idaho can afford it.

Thank You

Gary L. Tolleson

Post Falls, ID

Cc: Sen. Peter Riggs – Riggs@senate.idaho.gov
Rep. Ron Mendive – Rmendive@house.idaho.gov
Rep. Tony Wisniewski – Twisniewski@house.idaho.gov

Dear CEC Committee:

I submit this testimony representing myself, only. I am a full-time, classified, “Office Services Supervisor 2” at a State agency. I have worked for the State of Idaho for ten years; nearly five years in my current position. Our main office is located in downtown Boise. Our department provides direct customer service by phone, in-person, and electronically. We provide educational opportunities and we process a large volume of customer requests using our computerized system. The information we provide to the public is very specific to our line of business, and the administrative aspect of our job is very detailed and confidential, thus accuracy and timeliness of our work is essential to provide the public service. Our agency’s ability to recruit and retain quality, dedicated, and hard-working staff is very important to our customer base. I hear about it if we aren’t meeting expectations!

My main job responsibilities are supervision, hiring/training, performance management, and professional development of the twelve FTP’s I supervise. Of the twelve allotted FTP’s, four are currently vacant. For the context of compensation, of the eight current staff members reporting to me, seven are earning under \$15.00 per hour. Vacancies are a major issue, as it is for many sectors of the economy. We have tried many recruitment strategies including using the State’s contracted temporary staffing agency, but we have been told our starting wage is unattractive for people living and working in the Treasure Valley, so our recruitment efforts have essentially stalled-out. Ethically we don’t want to hire new staff above what our incumbents take-in. In the past year, we have offered employment to nearly every person that has shown interest in our positions; we have not been picky about educational background or professional experience when it comes to probationary hiring.

Sadly, at least half of my current staff have told me that they have considered or are actively looking for other work in the private or public sector that can pay higher wages. Even before the pandemic, I had staff working a second, part-time job for supplemental income, but some have resigned from our position to join their other employer full-time - for their rising wages. On what seems like a weekly basis, I am asked why our wages do not keep up with almost every sign/billboard seen on the morning commute. My staff tells me that while the State insurance premiums and copays are low, they don’t necessarily outpace private industry any longer, and while the State retirement and job security are comforting, most industries now provide similar options with more desirable flexibility. Sense of service, loyalty, friendships, longevity, work environment, and consistent schedule keep staff motivated, but wages are a real issue. Our agency management/directors are working very hard to get ‘the fix’, because they know we are struggling to operate at a level our staff and the public has come to expect. Our current staff has done a

valiant job keeping services afloat and providing the public what is required, but as our customer base (population) grows, we need not just to survive, but intelligently grow, innovate, and lead.

It is my opinion that this year, perhaps more than in any prior year, it is vital for our State to fund necessary and significant compensation increases to maintain market competitiveness in the compensation system. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Kindly,

Jess Simonds

Dear Senators and Representatives of the 2022 CEC Committee:

My name is Hugh Powell and I am a 10-year employee for the Idaho State Police. The views and opinions expressed in this letter are my own and do not necessarily represent the official policy or opinion of my employer or any state agency.

I am compelled to write to you because I feel one of our finest state organizations is at a crossroads. The Idaho State Police is considered by many to be the premier law enforcement agency in the State of Idaho, yet salaries for these valuable employees have not kept up with the cost of living and have fallen far behind industry standards. As a result, the remarkable individuals who work for ISP find that their paychecks just don't stretch as far as they used to with many struggling to make ends meet. Additionally, recruiting and retaining the quality individuals necessary to maintain a professional police force has become quite difficult.

The 2019 median household income in Idaho was \$60,990^[1]. Starting Trooper pay is currently \$22.81 per hour, which equals just over \$47,444 per year. This means that the starting wage for an Idaho State Police Trooper is about 22% less than the median household income.

Twenty years ago the starting pay for a Trooper was \$15.50 per hour. In 20 years, the starting pay for an Idaho State Police Trooper has only increased by \$7.31 per hour; that is a 47.16% increase. By comparison, the US inflation rate over the same period was 57.0%.^[2] While various attempts have been made over the years to increase state police employee pay, you can see that starting wages for Troopers have fallen behind the cost of living by nearly 10%. The net effect is that Idaho State Police employee income continues to decline year after year.

This is not just a problem for Troopers, the wages of our outstanding ISP support staff have been stagnant for many years as well. I know that every agency, department, and division within the State of Idaho has support staff such as Administrative Assistants, Technical Records Specialists, and the like, however, the administrative support staff in the Idaho State Police are very different and have many unique and stringent requirements. For instance, how many Administrative Assistants in other agencies are required to handle, process, catalog, and secure evidence collected by Troopers and Detectives? How many Technical Records Specialists are required to pass extensive background investigations and maintain

^[1] Idaho | Data USA. (n.d.). Retrieved January 11, 2022, from <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/idaho>

^[2] Inflation Calculator | Find US Dollar's Value from 1913-2021. (2021, December 10). <https://www.usinflationcalculator.com/>

certifications in sensitive Idaho and National Law Enforcement databases? How many support staff may be required to testify at trial or interact with violent felons who come to the office requesting property or paperwork. Support and Administrative staff within the Idaho State Police have very unique and challenging jobs which set them apart from their counterparts in most other state agencies. As minimum wages in low-skill/low-stress jobs skyrocket it becomes harder to recruit and retain the quality individuals we need to perform this important work. Additionally, I have watched morale deteriorate as year after year CEC increases failed to keep up with the rising cost of health care, housing, and other necessary living expenses. Idaho State Police support staff are not thriving when they barely earn more than fast-food workers.

As Governor Little mentioned during the State of the State address, we are living in unprecedented times financially. We may never have another opportunity like we do today to create parity within the Idaho State Police's pay structure. I implore you to demonstrate the value you place on the amazing employees of the Idaho State Police by making a recommendation to increase all Idaho State Police pay by 13% or more. Furthermore, I ask that this pay increase not be based on "merit." Every employee in good standing deserves a liveable wage and the opportunity for their families to thrive in today's economy.

Please show Idaho State Police employees that their hard work and sacrifice do not go unnoticed and that their efforts can and should be rewarded through significant pay increases designed to defeat the ravages of inflation and in step with other premier law enforcement agencies around the state. Thank you for your willingness to sit on this important committee and for soliciting testimony on such a vital topic.

Respectfully,
Det. Hugh Powell
Idaho State Police
District 2 Investigations

Today I represent myself and not my employer. I work for the Idaho State Police but I do not speak for the Idaho State Police or speak in my employment role for the state of Idaho. These are my opinions and solely my opinions.

An email was distributed to Idaho State Employees that we were invited to provide written testimony as state employees about the compensation plan for the state of Idaho. First, I love working for the state of Idaho and appreciate my employment here. I love my job and the opportunity to do what I chose to do for a career. It is a great honor and privilege for me. I chose to come here when I was recruited into state government for Idaho. I also love working in state government and love state government in Idaho. I have been employed in private companies and government entities in several states. I know both private and public employment very well. I also own several private businesses in Idaho. My wife and I have raised our children here, we have engaged in the community in a positive way to build Idaho, and I believe that I have contributed to the strength of Idaho government through my employment with the state.

When I moved to Idaho, I made a decision to leave a bench level scientist position in Washington to come to Idaho. I did so with full knowledge that even though I was taking a job in Idaho several levels in management higher than I was currently working in Washington state, I would lose tens of thousands of dollars a year in salary and benefits to move from Spokane to Idaho. I agreed to the salary, and made the move for my family and to take an exciting job. I knew we could make it work due to the lower cost of living here in Idaho. However, over the last 13 years, the salary gap between Idaho and surrounding states has continued to grow, and has not been addressed in Idaho, and cost of living in Idaho has increased dramatically. While I have been promoted and been given CEC each year when it has been offered by the state, my salary has not grown commensurate with the job responsibilities, and the gap widens each year comparative to my counterparts in other states. Compared to other states and even cities and counties in

Idaho, our laboratory salaries are significantly less. While other states have had significant raises to improve their employee recruitment and retention, Idaho state has not followed suit. For example, my salary is 20% lower than the Reno Nevada Lab Director and 140% lower than the Washington State Lab Director. Montana, Wyoming, and Utah all just hired new state lab directors and significantly increased the pay for those positions. My situation is not unique in our laboratory system. I could quote all the salary disparities for every level of position in the forensic lab organization, but they are all just as significant. On all levels, they are at least 20% (or more) less than comparable other state employment at the public level, and dramatically less than private industry for the same jobs. While we have difficulty recruiting admin assistants because they make the same or less than they could make working fast food, as a bank teller, or stocking grocery store shelves, our senior scientists and managers are the most difficult to retain on current salaries and have the highest fiscal and productivity turnover cost when we lose trained staff.

It used to be that we could recruit experienced employees by relying on a low cost of living in Idaho, including housing and food. That is not the case anymore. We also used to rely on better than average benefits with low cost for those benefits. Now, many other public sector competitors offer better benefits and many of the labs (ones we compete with for employees at the Idaho city and county level) also have PERSI (so our employees can easily leave us and not lose their retirement). Private employers have also stepped up with better benefits to attract experienced employees. Both recruiting and retention have become extremely difficult for us. We had a 15% separation rate of the senior scientists at the state forensic lab last year. Half way through the fiscal year this year we are already at 10% turnover of senior scientists. This data is consistent historically. Of the 55 employees we have at the state lab, I believe 11 of them have more time with the state than I do. Meaning, most positions have turned over in the last 13 years, and many of them several times. The biggest reason is employees leaving for better pay in other surrounding counties, cities, or states. We have been a training ground for scientists in many other public labs, and it is very easy picking for private laboratories to entice away the best of the best of our trained staff. Most of our staff can leave immediately and make significantly more in nearby city, county, or state lab....and they are doing just that. Training a scientist (turning over a position) has a cost that has been estimated at \$250,000 to \$300,000, and two years of lost productivity in that position due to training. Backlogs have grown and cannot be addressed with the high turnover. Backlogs and constantly training is demoralizing to employees that stay with us through the departures of other scientists. Employees and outsiders joke about us never being fully staffed because as soon as we train them, they leave and we start training again. We have gone as far as hiring new staff as grant funded contractors so that we can replace permanent staff as quick as they are leaving. Most of our staff want to stay with us...but most cannot live on the salary we pay them. We had one senior scientist leave this year because she was not making a salary that compensated for just paying for daycare costs on a daily basis. Increasing salary would have a dramatic impact on keeping some of these staff that are leaving for other higher paying opportunities.

In order to maintain the high level of excellent services in our state laboratory system, we must retain the personnel talent. They chose to work in government and don't expect the highest pay in the industry, but it also should not be the lowest if we expect to retain the best talent to serve our citizens. I encourage the committee to look at the comparisons. That is difficult in some forensic science jobs because states do not always call the job by the same name. I encourage comparison of like with like and heavy participation in the study with subject matter experts that understand the differing structures of state labs. I believe it is a good time to take the opportunity with an increasing tax base to fix the salary issues of those public employees that have supported the state through some lean budgetary times and difficult circumstances recently. I feel the support is there from the citizens of Idaho as they recognize the vitality of excellent public services they receive. Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.

Matthew Gamette, M.S., C.P.M.



matthew.gamette@isp.idaho.gov

To the members of the CEC Committee,

Thank you for recognizing the need for input from the public on the State's employee compensation and providing a means to share our concerns.

My husband has been an Idaho State Police trooper for over 20 years. You might not know him by name but would recognize him as the trooper that jumped the jersey barrier to avoid being hit by a pickup truck. He puts his life on the line every day, along with many others in law enforcement. One of the consistent statements he makes when he gets home from a shift is, "We need more troopers!"

I've spoken to several troopers' wives recently about their concerns as well, especially regarding wages and raises (or lack thereof). To be blunt, we are frustrated! Idaho State Police are failing their troopers repeatedly! How many times has this colonel come before this committee and asked for what the troopers **actually need**? This colonel continually requests the bare minimum that the Governor tells him is recommended. He is looking out for his political future, not the troopers and detectives.


Idaho State Police continues to lose experienced troopers due to lack of compensation, especially in the Boise area. This district (District 3) was once the most sought-after assignment. Now, no one can afford to transfer here or hire on due to the cost of living. Idaho State Police pays considerably less than other local agencies and has done very little to bring salaries in line with the rest of the state. Some members of this committee and Legislature may be familiar with a letter sent October 1, 2021 from the Idaho State Police Association. The letter indicated that Idaho State Police employees are paid 22.4% below the national average while housing costs are 14.1% above the national average.

Please, please, consider what our troopers **NEED**, not what Colonel Wills asks for – minimum salary increases and unnecessary big-ticket items. Are these items truly necessary and if so, why? ***What is NEEDED is better compensation and more troopers!***

Thank you again for the opportunity to share some of the concerns I have that many other Idaho State Police troopers' families have as well. I am happy to discuss these issues and answer any questions you may have of me, either through email or in person.

Respectfully,

Marielle S. Carmack



Hello,

I respectfully request review and consideration for an increase, in the amount of sick leave that can be converted at retirement to pay insurance premiums.

Currently DHW employees that separate at retirement can only convert half of their unused sick leave to pay for insurance premiums (up to specified maximums), while educators that separate at retirement are allowed to convert all of their sick leave (up to 600 hours).

What has to happen for DHW employees to be able to convert all their sick leave the same way educators are allowed to, or even at a higher rate than just one half (1/2) ?

Health and Welfare employees are dedicated and committed to assisting families in need, and should be able to have the same benefit as educators do. Additionally, this change could be an incentive for some employees to retire from state employment, instead of finding another job with better benefits.

In part Idaho Code 67-5333 (see attached) part (2) (a) states: For an employee that separates from state employment by retirement half of unused sick leave may be used to pay for insurance premiums..... and (2) (b) (v) states: For any employees of a state educational agency.....(2) (b) (i) through (iv) of this section shall not apply, but the maximum unused sick leave which may be considered shall be six hundred (600) hours.

TITLE 67
STATE GOVERNMENT AND STATE AFFAIRS
CHAPTER 53
PERSONNEL SYSTEM

67-5333. SICK LEAVE. (1) Sick leave shall be computed as follows:

(a) The rate per hour at which sick leave shall accrue to classified officers and employees earning credited state service shall be at the rate represented by the proportion 96/2080. Sick leave shall accrue without limit and shall be transferable from department to department.

(b) Sick leave shall not accrue to any officer or employee on any kind of leave of absence without pay, suspension without pay or layoff. Sick leave shall accrue while an officer or employee is on approved leave with pay, on approved vacation leave, on approved military leave with pay, and on approved sick leave, but not when compensatory time is taken.

(c) All accrued sick leave shall be forfeited at the time of separation from state service and no officer or employee shall be reimbursed for accrued sick leave at the time of separation, except as provided in subsection (2) of this section. If such officer or employee returns to credited state service within three (3) years of such separation, all sick leave credits accrued at the time of separation shall be reinstated, except to the extent that unused sick leave was utilized for the purposes specified in subsection (2) of this section or transferred to a school district or charter district pursuant to section [33-1217](#), Idaho Code.

(d) Sick leave shall be taken on a workday basis. Regularly scheduled days off and officially designated holidays falling within a period of sick leave shall not be counted against sick leave. Sick leave shall not be taken in advance of being earned and shall only be taken in pay periods subsequent to being earned.

(e) In cases where absences for sick leave exceed three (3) consecutive working days, the appointing authority may require verification by a physician or other authorized practitioner.

(f) If an absence for illness or injury extends beyond the sick leave accrued to the credit of the officer or employee, the officer or employee may be granted leave without pay.

(g) The administrator shall prescribe additional requirements for sick leave for classified officers and employees on a part-time or irregular schedule, for maintaining sick leave records, for funeral leave and such other applicable purposes as necessary.

(2) Unused sick leave may be used as follows:

(a) Upon separation from state employment by retirement in accordance with chapter 13, title 59, or chapter 1, title 33, Idaho Code, an employee's unused sick leave shall be determined based on accumulated sick leave earned subsequent to July 1, 1976, and shall be reported by the employer to the public employee retirement system. Upon separation from state employment by retirement in accordance with chapter 20, title 1, Idaho Code, an employee's unused sick leave shall be determined based on accumulated sick leave earned subsequent to July 1, 2000, and shall be reported by the employer to the public employee retirement system. A sum equal to one-half (1/2), or the maximum amount allowed by paragraph (b) of this subsection, whichever is the lesser, of the monetary value of such unused sick leave, calculated at the rate of pay for such employee at the time of retirement, as determined by the retirement board, shall be transferred from the sick leave account provided by paragraph (c) of this subsection and shall be credited to such employee's retirement account. Such sums shall be used by the Idaho public employee retirement board to pay premiums, as permitted by and subject to applicable federal tax laws and limits, for such health, dental, vision, long-term care, prescription drug and life insurance programs as may be maintained by the state, to the extent of the funds credited to the employee's account pursuant to this section. Upon an employee's death, any unexpended sums remaining in the account shall revert to the sick leave account.

(b) For the purposes of determining the monetary value of unused sick leave, the maximum unused sick leave which may be considered shall be:

(i) During the first ten thousand four hundred (10,400) hours of credited state service, the maximum unused sick leave which may be considered shall be four hundred twenty (420) hours;

(ii) During the second ten thousand four hundred (10,400) hours of credited state service, the maximum unused sick leave which may be considered shall be four hundred eighty (480) hours;

(iii) During the third ten thousand four hundred (10,400) hours of credited state service, the maximum unused sick leave which may be considered shall be five hundred forty (540) hours;

(iv) Thereafter, the maximum unused sick leave which may be considered shall be six hundred (600) hours; and

(v) For any employees of a state educational agency with unused sick leave that includes sick leave credited pursuant to section 33-1217, Idaho Code, the credited state service requirements of subsection (2)(b)(i) through (iv) of this section shall not apply, but the maximum unused sick leave which may be considered shall be six hundred (600) hours.

(c) Each employer in state government shall contribute to a sick leave account maintained by the public employee retirement system in trust exclusively for the purpose of the provisions of this section. The retirement board shall serve as trustee of the trust and shall be indemnified to the same extent as provided in section 59-1305, Idaho Code. Assets in the trust shall not be assignable or subject to

execution, garnishment or attachment or to the operation of any bankruptcy or insolvency law. The rate of such contribution each pay period shall consist of a percentage of employees' salaries as determined by the board and such rate shall remain in effect until next determined by the board. Any excess balance in the sick leave account shall be invested, and the earnings therefrom shall accrue to the sick leave account except the amount required by the board to defray administrative expenses. Assets of the trust may be commingled for investment purposes with other assets managed by the retirement board. All moneys payable to the sick leave account are hereby perpetually appropriated to the board and shall not be included in its departmental budget. The state insurance fund and public health districts shall be considered employers in state government for purposes of participation under this section.

History:

[67-5333, added 1977, ch. 307, sec. 11, p. 870; am. 1981, ch. 133, sec. 7, p. 234; am. 1999, ch. 243, sec. 4, p. 622; am. 1999, ch. 370, sec. 16, p. 995; am. 2000, ch. 121, sec. 3, p. 267; am. 2006, ch. 380, sec. 18, p. 1194; (67-5339) am. 2006, ch. 150, sec. 2, p. 465; am. 2007, ch. 78, sec. 2, p. 206; am. 2008, ch. 196, sec. 4, p. 625; am. 2009, ch. 164, sec. 1, p. 492; am. 2014, ch. 238, sec. 2, p. 601.]

As a Medical Program Specialist for Medicaid Financial Recovery, I wrote and monitor the third-party identification and recovery contract between the State of Idaho and HMS (Health Management Systems). In the RFP for the 2014-2018 contract I restructured the cost and billing portion which resulted in saving Idaho taxpayers more than \$12 million dollars. The current contract effective 1/1/2019 continues to represent a significant cost savings to DHW and taxpayers. I thoroughly enjoy and am perfectly matched to this job, and after 29 years I'm not ready to retire quite yet.

I am committed to do my best to meet the goals of our Division and focus on promoting and protecting the health and safety of all Idahoans.

Thank you for your consideration of this change compensation for DHW employees.

Alise Eastman, Idaho Medicaid Bureau of Financial Operations
(208) 287-1152 desk; (208) 334-6515 fax Alise.Eastman@dhw.idaho.gov

Questions, Concerns? Please feel free to contact my supervisor, KayLee Leavitt at (208) 287-1175 Kaylee.Leavitt@dhw.idaho.gov

To whom it may concern:

I would like to take this opportunity to comment and suggest to the CEC committee, some of my observations and frustrations with the current pay structure for State Employees.

I recently came back to work for the State of Idaho, after a 10 year absence, during which I went to work for a local Idaho County. Upon my return, I've encountered several State employees, some of which I hired and trained when I worked here before, and they're actively looking for other jobs, more specifically PERSI based jobs (State, County, City, School Districts, or Municipalities), in order to maximize their earning potential. Most of the employees I work with are either licensed tradesman such as electricians, plumbers,

HVAC techs, carpenters and painters, or unlicensed Maintenance Craftsman that take great pride and effort to maintain and operate our State buildings. Sometimes they work with minimal supervision in remote locations, or other times they work as part of a larger team at the Capitol Mall, or the Chinden Campus.

Their overall frustration is that what once was a living wage, is now comparable to low-skill jobs in the market place, such as janitorial, food-service, hotel, or retail. When active recruiting is starting at \$15.00 per hour, a wage that they've been making for over 5 to 6 years, with little to no change in their compensation, they begin to wonder why they've been so loyal to the State for so long. It's also difficult, given the amount of responsibility placed on their shoulders, or their ongoing training required to maintain their professional licensure, knowing that they could potentially make more money by either re-entering the private sector or moving to a more lucrative County or City job where they have the ability to pay higher wages, which amplifies their ability to recruit, hire and retain talented employees – or even worse, recruit them from the State of Idaho.

As a former County employee, I had no issues finding qualified candidates as the wages were comparable to private sector jobs, and coupled with health insurance benefits, paid time off, and of course PERSI we seldom saw turnover outside of retirement. I'm very concerned about the current state of my employee base, knowing that the average low-skilled wage is surpassing their professional career choices and wages. My biggest fear is the loss of such talent, dedication, loyalty and hard working individuals because they're not paid to their true value. All too often we hear that the employees are our greatest asset, but yet, we repeatedly tend to overlook their compensation needs and the ability to make a working, competitive living wage that is a reflective appreciation for their commitment to public service.

I would urge the committee to look deep and hard, into the eyes of the working class State employee and think about the State's commitment to them, and our inability to recruit, hire and retain.....especially if we lose them to better paying jobs.

Respectfully,

Paul Navarro
Facilities Manager
State of Idaho
Capitol Mall, Chinden Campus
(208) 332-1937 office
Paul.navarro@adm.idaho.gov

January 14, 2022

To whom it may concern,

Today's inflation is at a 40-year high. The proposed 5% CEC would be nothing more than a weak COLA. Compression is nothing new to employment; however, it should be addressed. I would essentially have to leave the job I enjoy and am good at to obtain a noticeable pay increase. Please encourage your agencies to utilize equity adjustments. I understand new openings need to attract candidates with higher rates; however, it is demoralizing for the existing employees to see those starting wages. Are our years' worth of experience and loyalty really worth less?

Thank you for your consideration.

Emily Dorris

Please let me know if you need further assistance.

Emily Dorris
School and Childcare Coordinator, Idaho Immunization Program
Bureau of Communicable Disease Prevention, Division of Public Health
Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
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Immunization Program Ph: (208) 334-5931 | Fax: (208) 334-6590
Emily.Dorris@dhw.idaho.gov

Dear CEC Committee Members,

To all of us in the Dairy Bureau in the Idaho State Department of Agriculture, public safety is extremely important. From making sure that the milk processing facilities are clean and processing the milk within compliance to making sure that the product that the milk processing facilities are producing is safe. At any time, myself or my colleagues have to go in and test a pasteurizer unit in the case that a legal seal is broken to ensure that the machine is working properly. At times we have had to go out in the middle of the night to reseal a pasteurizer or gotten home late at night due to machinery complications during a pasteurizer testing. Making sure that the machinery at all of our facilities are working properly is very important to us to ensure that the milk processing facilities have the ability to operate at their peak efficiency. This has also led us to have a great relationship between us and the milk processing facilities. I believe that my colleagues and myself deserve a higher compensation for all the hard work and dedication that we put into our work. We go far and beyond to ensure that the public is getting a good product that is safe to feed to their families. At times we are shorthanded when an inspector leaves and we manage to somehow get all the monthly work done. It's very unfortunate that we're losing a lot of good talent and experience to the private sector due to the compensation differences.

Sincerely,

Gabriel Vargas

Hello Christine,

My name is Stacy Yeager I am a CST in Reg1, I have worked here for just over 3 years. Additionally, I am also a full time student at LCSC obtaining my BSW. I will begin my internship in August 2022 here at the department and plan on staying here once I graduate with my BSW. I took a \$3.00 decrease in my pay when I took my current position with the understanding that it was not going to be this low for long. My current rate of pay is not sufficient to even pay my bills let alone books for school. My husband has had open heart surgery in 2015, and on our anniversary December 30, 2021 he had a grand mal seizure preventing him from working for a period of time. Every day I see hiring sign at places such as McDonald that start at \$16.00 per hour, it is very disheartening that the work I do is so important and I do significantly more than simply CST position and am paid what is essentially poverty wage. I love working with the people that I do and helping my community and look forward to making the transition to Social worker when I graduate in June 2023, however as the prices of goods and services continue to increase so to do the wages in order to survive. I do not want to be priced out of a job upon graduation simply because the Department is unwilling or unable to pay a wage that will ensure I can pay my bills without the use of

food banks. I am worth more than that, I have maintained a 3.9-4.0 GPA while working full time and having family members pass away, I should not have to struggle to pay my bill and buy groceries. The state has a huge surplus and is offering a significant amount for new hires, people are leaving in droves because they are under valued and under paid and overloaded. I would like to have my hourly rate increased to \$16.00 I believe my performance and ability are on par with this request. Thank you for taking time to read through my concerns and advocating for all of us, I know that are a lot of us that struggle everyday to make ends meet and have to rely on other to help us do so. It serves no one if the people who are trying to help our community members are worried themselves about how they are going to pay rent, or if they themselves will have a place to sleep. We have all seen the reports that Idaho is the hottest place for people to move to and Coeur D'Alene has become so packed with people coming in with huge amounts of money driving the prices of houses up so high that those of us that were born here or have lived here more than 25 years making Idaho wages are no longer able to buy homes or rent on these wages. The wages must remain equal with the rest of goods and services to survive. Thank you, if you have any questions please feel free to reach out to me.

Thank you,
SYeager

Stacy Yeager-client service tech. Reg1

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Permanency & Independent Living Team
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Coeur d'Alene ID 83814
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Email: Stacy.Yeager@dhw.idaho.gov

Hi, our HR department put out the word to email you about providing comments to the CEC Committee for consideration.

I am definitely in favor of providing CEC to state employees to address cost of living and rising inflation considerations. Not only is this doing right by our employees but it factors into retention for our agencies (and recruitment). While many employees will tolerate their pay remaining the same for a while, eventually they will be considering other jobs if pay rates don't keep up with their privately employed counterparts, cost of living, and inflation. I am also a fiscally responsible person, so I'm not in favor of overpaying either. So for setting the amount of compensation, I would say as long as it covers those factors I mentioned, and does not go further, then the rate of CEC would be right. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.



Jonathan Luhn
LRSS - Endowment Lands Coordinator
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Good Afternoon-

As a state employee, the biggest concern I see regarding employee compensation is the gap between state wages and private sector wages in the same or similar fields. Far too many state employees leave their state positions after becoming vested in PERSI to take private sector positions in similar fields. The cost in training, time, and morale for remaining employees should be a major concern when determining state employee compensation.

Thank You,

Greg Blahato

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I'm new to the Department of Health and Welfare and I'd like to make a few comments regarding recruiting and employment with the area I am in (Ponderay/Sandpoint office in Region 1 – most north office for Children and Family Welfare). I am a PSR with a salary of 22.07/hour (about \$46,000/year). I will bullet point these things on my mind that may assist in recruiting/retention as they apply/applied to me taking the position as a PSR in this region.

- Salary for area to support a family may be too low (area is expensive compared to many other regions)
- No relocation bonus/assistance (I recently sold my house in Lewiston this last week but had been sleeping in my van for the 2.5 months while working for the Department)

Currently I am living in an RV in a trailer park in Moyie Springs – commuting 45 mins each day to work (takes 1 hour when weather is bad). I have 4 young children and my wife so there are 6 of us. The cost of apartments and property is so high that I find it difficult to get situated up here. I understood that there were staff with experience in Region 1 from Coeur D'Alene area that didn't want to relocate up here due to the higher cost of living. When I accepted the position, I was aware of the higher cost of living but wasn't aware of any options and it is an area that I wanted to move to. I think some assistance in locating affordable housing or if the government could assist in developing more affordable housing up in these parts. Another thing that might assist would be if I were able to work from an office located in Bonners Ferry that is currently only used for meetings with clients which would allow me to get into an office to work in inclement weather. I think if there were affordable housing in the area then salaries would not be so much of an issue (possibly an option of looking at a cost of living adjustment for state employees in regards to what the typical cost of living is by region adjustment added to the salary for the position?). This issue could be addressed with relocation assistance and/or improved salaries – or even more work space options?

Anyway, this is something I've noticed for this office up in the far North. I love this sort of work and I do hope I can continue in my position and at some point afford to work/live here around Ponderay, ID.

Will Younger
Family Engagement Specialist
Idaho Department of Health & Welfare

Children & Family Services
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will.younger@dhw.idaho.gov

Members of the Idaho State Senate and House:

I will present my testimony directly associated with the specific funding recommendations that are outlined in 67-5309A. As a short background position, I am a relative new hire with the Department of Agriculture as a Senior Agricultural Investigator working out of Post Falls. My testimony can be related to two functions that I have experienced. My position necessitates one of two routes to fulfill and exceed in the position. For relative labor the position often attempts to recruit from seasoned pesticide applicators who have developed the necessary skills and knowledge in private industry as managers, or as in my case a B.S. in Natural Resources with additional experience in enforcement, investigation and inspection. The average annual salary for a Pesticide Application Manager in Northern Idaho and Eastern Washington is equal or reaching nearly \$10,000 greater¹. The gap in salary between the State and private industry prevents skilled individuals from seeking government employment as well as causing retaining issues with current experienced State Investigators. Working in remote locations prevents growth from within the division for advancing positions. Attempting to secure new and skilled Agricultural Investigators in Northern Idaho, and the state in total is likely to become more difficult than it already is.

In relation to market changes the cost of living, focused specifically on housing has grown exponentially over the past few years in Northern Idaho. In Coeur d'Alene housing increased by 28.1% in 2021 alone². The growth has been similar in Post Falls with a 27.4% Growth YoY in 2021³. The massive increase in housing is unlikely to change as Northern Idaho and the region in general continue to expand. The position currently pays at 22.50 an hour, equating to around \$43,875 annually before taxes. The responsible rule of income is to allocate no more than 30% of annual income toward housing. This leaves just over \$13,000 a year for rent or mortgage in the area. I currently reside in a one bedroom apartment paying the lowest I could find at \$1530 a month not including utilities (\$18,360 p/year). The difference in salary to housing in the region has caused me to reflect on my position and acknowledge that it is not sustainable. I enjoy the position very much, I moved halfway across the country to be back here and experience the region I fell for while serving in the military. The land and the location are spectacular; even more I am able to serve the citizens of Idaho through efficient and effective enforcement. Crunching numbers is never enjoyable. Soon after followed the realization that without change to match competitive labor and aggressive action to address local market changes I factually cannot make a career out of this while trying to save for a home or maintain any sort of savings.

With Respect,
Matthew Kaufman

Good afternoon Christine,

I am contacting you to express my opinion and concern about the 2022 CEC increase. I have been with the state since 2006, with the same department since then. I have received quite a few CEC's in my 16 years of service. I would appreciate if all employees be required to be evaluated, to see where they should fall into the pool, not only classified employees. It is very frustrating to do my duties, extra duties, and another employees duties only to be informed that I only qualify for the basic increase, (the other employees that were falling behind or failing to do their duties received the same amount). I understand that due to inflation everything is going up (except our wages), it is extremely frustrating to now that a new employee starts out pretty close to where my current hourly wage is with 16 consecutive years of service. It would be

greatly appreciated if some consideration would come to play to the employees who have many years of service to receive a larger CEC Increase (as long as they are doing their required duties, and doing a good job at them). I am a classified employee and am barely above the starting wage for my position (TRS II). Please consider, there is a surplus, and some of the "underdogs" should be entitled to it (without the cost of insurance going up on top of our little CEC Increase). Thank you for taking to time to read my concerns (I know that they are mostly personal). Sincerely,

Jennifer Casey

Technical Records Specialist II

Email: Jennifer.casey@isda.idaho.gov

ISDA FF&LV Inspections

2311 Park Ave, Suite 10

Burley, ID 83318

Phone: 208-678-8168



To whom it may concern –

I moved to Idaho in October 2017 from Kansas. When I moved out here, I stayed with a friend in Nampa, while I looked for a job as I figured having Kansas on my resume/application was a holdback. I found a job for the state March 2018 starting at \$15 as a Technical Records Specialist 1. By July 2018 I was moving into my own apartment for about \$935/month, partly because driving in from Nampa and driving back every day an easy 30 minute drive without traffic but could take up to 2 hours depending on road conditions, traffic, and traffic accidents just was not something I could do 5 days a week. Plus the cost of living in Nampa though slightly cheaper would have been eaten up by the cost of gas to travel to and from work.

I received an increase in pay after my 6 month probationary period had ended with a Solid Performance rating on my probationary review. My pay increased to \$16.31, around Sept. 2018. About this time I also got hired at a local hotel as a part-time Night Auditor/Front Desk/Laundry Attendant making about \$10-\$11/hour depending on the shifts I worked. I work anywhere from 8-25 hours/week at the hotel. This supplements my income allowing me to make sure my rent and bills are paid and I have money for food and gas.

When my lease expired in December 2018, because I could only get a 6 month lease due to not making 3x the monthly rent. My rent was increased to around \$975. Fortunately, due to COVID-19 my rent froze at about \$975/month for a year. During the state shutdown, I worked from home for about 2 months, March – May 2019. Part of the staff was called back to the office in May and by Aug. most of our Division and Department were back in the office working. About May 2019 the state was granted a CEC increase and my pay got bumped to \$17.07. At annual review in September 2019, I maintained a Solid Performance rating but saw no pay increase.

At annual review Aug. 2020, I again maintained a Solid Performance rating. I switched positions in November 2020, becoming a Financial Technician for the same Division, getting another increase at \$18. In May 2020, the CEC again granted an increase in pay in which I began to making \$18.72.

In February 2021 my apartment notified me that my rent would be increasing, COVID-19 was no longer a reason to continue a freeze on rent costs. The increase would raise my rent to about \$1,100 or \$1,200. In March 2021 I moved into a new apartment getting a rate of \$835/month. Sometime over the Summer 2021 pay at the hotel increased to \$13-14/hour. Due to quitting the Night Auditor position my pay became \$13/hour. For my annual review I got a bump in pay in September 2021 to \$14.25 I work an about 5-25 hours/week depending on the hotel's need, this winter as with most winter months we have seen a decline in travel.

Within the last month my apartment complex was bought out and in the course of the next month we will be transitioned to TableRock Residential which has a minimum rent of \$1,000-\$1,400. My fear is that I will either be evicted so the apartment complex can be renovated or the company will increase rent to match the area rates which are approximately \$1,400 for a 1 bed/1bath. The apartments that are cheaper are often occupied and rarely vacant or phone numbers are difficult to find for landlords of smaller places.

The worst case scenario is that I am forced to leave my position with the state of Idaho to return to my parent's home in Kansas to figure out my next step. This would be an inconvenience to my Division and my new boss who just started a few months ago and is in his probationary period. I am the only one in my Division that does what I do as a Financial Technician. If the announcement was not put in until after I left, the training the person would get, would reflect my own training when I moved into the position which was a fast maybe 1 hour of this is what/how you do it and here is some instructions. Leaving me to figure out the majority of it on my own. That's if the position can be filled, as the *Statesman* has recently pointed out there are a number of State Agencies that are posting positions with some not receiving any applications.

I have no desire to currently move away from Idaho but the cost of apartments is too much even though I work a full-time and part-time job. And if I can't afford an apartment, I can't afford the mortgage payment that would come with a house in the current market. – Maybe the state could help with housing for qualifying employees?

5-Second Customer Satisfaction Survey: [Rate Us!](#)

Thank you,

Keri M. Fox, CPM®

Financial Technician,
Facility Services,
Division of Public Works,
Department of Administration,
State of Idaho



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Good Day CEC Committee Members,

My name is Bethany Gaddis, and I've been a State Employee since June of 2014. When I started, at 24 years old, my retirement, health, and other employer benefits were hardly something I considered. Now, seven-and-a-half years in, a mother to 2 toddlers, and the insurance carrier for my family, things have

changed. I know you're looking for facts, and not "I feels, and this makes me feel" statements, so I'll give you some background and then you'll know where I'm coming from.

My children are twins, born 5 weeks early. For those that don't know, pregnancies with more than one baby are automatically considered "high risk" and within our health system require me to see a not only my regular OBGYN, but a Maternofetal Specialist, along with numerous extra ultrasound scans to monitor growth and health of both babies; as well as my health. All told, I had 19 ultrasounds and 22 Doctor appointments from January to September 2018. At that time, I was required to stay in the hospital for a minimum of 4 days post c-section-delivery, and one of my children had a 10 day NICU stay, both suffered from juvenile asthma due to their premature birth; which came with a necessary medication for them that is \$60/ month per inhaler per child. From the time in the NICU, my child developed a flat spot on his head that required a medical helmet to correct. My other child had a gate issue and required Physical Therapy for a number of months to help with that. When I had my children, I crossed 2 fiscal years, and subsequently had to pay out of pocket \$12,500 before Insurance would cover the costs. At that time, I was earning about \$35,000/ year before taxes. And the 8 weeks paid family leave was not a thing, so I ended up taking 6 weeks of leave without pay and was forced to exhaust all my sick and vacation time; and return to work with no leave balances accrued.

Now that you have just a very basic screen shot of my life, I think you're starting to get the picture here. Yes, we all know that having children is expensive, however, I think there's a large gap of compensation that needs to be bridged for State Employees to remain in the work force, and not be driven to seek employment in the private sector. I understand that the private sector may not have the same retirement benefits that the State has, but the wages and insurance options are heads and shoulders above where the State is at. Working in State Government for nearing on a decade, I understand the need to be Fiscally Responsible and that there is budgeting to ensure that we have a reserve for when things like COVID and 2020 happen. However, the exorbitant surplus in State Funds, shows that your employees- your most valuable assets- are being left wanting.

Our Health Insurance plans and coverage continue to lag behind competitors, and while our premiums go up, the coverage stays the same or goes down. Our Vision and Dental coverage is laughable at best. If any of you have had children in glasses, then you know \$50 for frames and \$50 for lenses every 2 years, means your paying \$200-\$300 out of pocket for glasses that won't last that long. If you yourself wear glasses, you know that you better like the frames you buy, because you'll have them for 2 years, and you won't be getting new lenses if your prescription changes. Having a dental plan that basically only covers preventative care is also less than helpful when oral surgery is needed to remove wisdom teeth that weren't ready to come out as a teenager, but now as an adult MUST come out.

Now on to childcare, as I've previously mentioned, I'm the insurance carrier for my family so I **must work**, but that means I have 2 children that are in daycare full time. In Ada County, the average cost for full time child care for 1 child can range from \$471-\$780/ per child per month (data found on the Health and Welfare website here: [2018 LMR Chart 11202018 FINAL.pdf \(idaho.gov\)](#)). This means a parent of 2 children is spending a minimum of \$950/ month on child care; however; most of the families I know spend closer to \$1,500/ month for 2 children in full time child care.

You can look up my pay rate, but I'll tell you it's \$18.74/ hr. which means I make just about \$39,000 a year before taxes, but after Insurance, FSA, Taxes, and PERSI retirement are taken out of my check I'm only taking home \$27,700. With the current cost of living in Ada county, and the fact that my wages have never kept up with the insurance increases, let alone the cost of living increases; it makes it very tough to want to stay with the State of Idaho and not look for a private sector job that will pay me what I'm worth.

I personally believe that the CEC committee should not only approve a dollar amount increase for every employee, an increase to cover the cost of better health, dental, and vision care; but we should also be

paid based on where our positions are located within the state. If you live in Ada county, your cost of living is going to be higher than if you live in Custer County, and our pay rates should reflect that. Now I'm not saying that those that choose to live in a smaller or more rural county are less valuable or are any less deserving of a pay increase, I'm just saying that the cost of living in the more urban areas of the State is higher than the rural areas of the State.

If there are any questions or clarifications needed, please do not hesitate to reach out to me via the methods listed below. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Bethany Gaddis

Administrative Assistant
Idaho State Department of Agriculture
Division of Plant Industries
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Christine,

I would like to suggest the committee look into increasing the number of sick leave hours allowed to be carried over for supplemental insurance when an employee retires. The current formula is ½ of your balance not to exceed 600 hours. I believe this has been an earned part of the employee's pay package during employment and the full amount of sick leave hours should be carried through to retirement and available for the option of supplemental insurance. Sick leave is part of the employee's pay package, the State has already committed to that expense. When an employee retires with a large balance exceeding 1200 hours, the remainder is forfeited.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kevin Merritt
Idaho State Department of Agriculture

To whom it may concern:

Employees of the state of Idaho are wildly underpaid and horrendously unappreciated.

It is sickening that the legislature brags about state employees being paid 10% less than comparable positions in other states. That's not 10% less than average, that's 10% less than EVERY OTHER STATE.

Why? There's clearly enough room in the budgets to make up more than that difference.

The benefits offered to state employees are borderline abysmal. The rates employees pay for coverage have gone up at least 5% every year and the typical CEC rate increase is less than half that if they get one at all. Any pay increase that doesn't match the inflation rate is actually a pay cut because you're still not earning enough to pay for the rising cost of the goods required to support families.

A few years ago, the governor decided that there was too much of a surplus in the healthcare budget and in his benevolence, gave back about \$200 to each employee. That was a big red flag to Blue Cross of Idaho that they were being underpaid. So they turned around and raised health insurance rates by 7%. Why does

the state not use its bargaining power (being the largest employer in the state) to fight for quality benefits that are ACTUALLY useful and competitively priced?

Employee turnover for state agencies is at an all time high. Why? Because they no longer pay a livable wage. Rates were increased for new hires to the point that they are making within pennies of the rate of employees that have been with state for over a decade. Can you not recognize how big of a slap in the face that is to all current employees?

Idaho is the fastest growing state in the US which means inflation rates are especially high. Property taxes have jumped 30%+ in a single year. The cost of rent is 2-3 times what it was just a year ago. State employees went from making decent wages to not able to make ends meet. And now they're being asked to do more with less coworkers and for a pay rate that in many cases, still qualifies them for welfare and other assistance programs.

There's no excuse for not ensuring the remaining employees are well cared for and adequately paid. No entity that has put its employees first has ever suffered. Train them well enough that they could go work anywhere but treat them well enough that they'll never want to leave.

Nathan Price

To whom it may concern,

I Stevie Camacho work for the state of Idaho, Health and Welfare Child Support. I am writing this letter to give my opinion on the importance of pay raises. The cost of living is rising, and people are having a harder time being able to pay everything needed to pay daily. Being a single mom and paying bills is becoming harder and harder these days. With business all around us raising pay, like fast food restaurants starting at \$15 or more an hour. I am making less than that at my state job. I love my job and what I do. But with other places offering more an hour, it is making it hard to want to stay put. I think if we were able to have raises, we would be able to stay where we love and be able to survive. I think with better pay we would be able to hire great employees and keep them. I do not want to leave a job I love to go elsewhere, because they are paying livable wages. So, I hope mine, and other's letters will help to get higher pay for those who work for the state. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Stevie Camacho

Dear Chairmen Patrick and Holtzclaw,

Thank you for the invitation to provide testimony ahead of next week's meeting of the Change in Employee Compensation (CEC) Committee. I have worked for the Idaho State Department of Agriculture as an Agriculture Program Specialist for 4.5 years in our Kootenai County regional office. Please consider the following three recommendations based on my experiences:

1. Compensation and Employee Loyalty

The wages for our seasonal positions are no longer competitive in this job market, especially considering our proximity to Washington state. In addition, the wage for our Survey Technicians (\$13) does not match their responsibilities. For example, these employees provide oversight to contract watercraft inspectors who earn a higher wage, and they captain aquatic plant surveys that inform \$500K herbicide treatments. In addition, we do not incentivize employee retention to

promote more long-term efficiency. Please consider rewarding returning seasonal employees with an hourly wage increase and also please reevaluate the existing pay scale so that Idaho can recruit the highest performing seasonal employees.

2. Performance Evaluation Process

Our agency has an unwritten rule to constrain employees' performance ratings. For example, first year employees do not earn anything above the midground "Achieves Performance Expectations" and veteran employees are not awarded the "Exemplary Performance" rating. Consequently, employees feel disincentivized to go above and beyond because their efforts go undervalued. Please consider promoting a review process that is more transparent and reflective of the work being done.

3. Personal protective equipment (PPE) allowance

Our agency provides \$100 for a wetsuit or waders and \$50 for boots once every three years. My key responsibilities include both snorkeling and wading to survey for aquatic invasive species and noxious weeds from April to November. Occasionally, I am asked to conduct an invasive species inspection for BNSF Railway or other industry partners, where steel toe footwear is required at the work site. For the abovementioned job responsibilities, a suitable dry suit costs over \$400 and steel toe boots cost over \$100. Please consider increasing the PPE funding so State employees can conduct their work most efficiently and safely.

Thank you for taking the time to review my comments.

Very Respectfully,

--

Kim Holzer, PhD

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted contact information]

I am an employee of Idaho State Police and saw an email that requests were made for our thoughts on the cost of living. From what I understand, we will be receiving a 2 - 5% cost of living increase. Although I am thankful for this raise (and I truly am), I am under the belief that the cost of living in Idaho has raised 7%. Along with raised property taxes, our wages are not keeping up. I don't work for ISP for the money (I have been offered many different jobs throughout my 27 year career with the State of Idaho and have turned them down to be able to work with ISP). My concern is that our recruiting has been down (some of this is due to the current culture), but we are also losing skilled officers to other agencies (Boise P.D. / Spokane P.D. / etc...). It would be a blessing to have at least a 7% increase across the board of ISP employees to help keep the high standards of our agency through retention. I would also suggest that ISP would be kept in the three top salaries of the police agencies within Idaho for recruiting and retention as well.

I am close to retirement and may be going soon - it is not due to pay, for I have loved this agency and would be faithful to stay with it in spite of pay. But it would be nice for those who are following behind me not to worry about struggling to stay in ISP and not be enticed by other agencies or careers.

Thank you for offering us the ability to reply and give our thoughts.

Keith T. Thompson.

To the Change in Employee Compensation (CEC) Committee –

As state employees, we have been encouraged to provide input to the CEC Committee regarding compensation for state employees. Thank you for this opportunity. Please consider the following as you prepare your recommendations:

- We often hear the phrase, “Money can’t be our only solution.” Let us be clear that it IS the main solution and no amount of “soft investments in the human aspect of work” can make up for it. I can’t eat a gym membership. Substantial increases in pay for state employees are long overdue and critically necessary. The most important way to make work a “fulfilling experience” and communicate to employees that they are truly valued is by paying them accordingly.
- State employees feel undervalued by our legislators. The continual chipping away at benefits along with the unwillingness to provide cost of living increases or to bring pay into alignment with the private sector clearly contributes to this. If there is one thing we know, if you truly value something, you are willing to pay for it. State employees provide a wide range of services critical to maintaining services and infrastructure for Idaho citizens. We are valuable.
- Even if state employees would get the full amount of the Governor’s recommendation (5%), that doesn’t even cover the current increase of 5.9% in the cost of living. Further, this proposed increase doesn’t even touch the increase in property taxes and housing costs across the state. State employees are falling further and further behind financially, which contributes both to low morale and attrition.
- Legislators seem to think that the benefits make up for the gap in pay between the state and the private sector. They don’t. The state does offer competitive benefits, but many employers offer solid benefits packages as well as better pay and flexible working conditions.
- State employees not only have a strong work ethic, but many feel that public service is a calling and are deeply committed to making Idaho a better place to live by serving its citizens. So, why are they leaving in such numbers? In many cases, they simply can’t afford to continue in state service, and the benefits offered do not make up for this. Having health insurance and PERSI is great, but if I cannot keep up with the basic costs of food, shelter, transportation, and child care, I can’t afford to keep working for the state and continue going in the hole financially. And the remaining state employees are overworked as they pick up the slack left by all the vacated positions. Chronic understaffing also contributes to low morale and attrition.
- Boosting starting pay for new employees is crucial, but increasing the pay of experienced employees is just as crucial, including providing retention bonuses. What do you think it does for morale when new and inexperienced employees start at pay levels above experienced employees who have provided years of dedicated service? There must be a balance.

Thank you for valuing our input on the matter of state employee compensation.

Frank Powell, Rules Specialist
Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
Administrative Rules Unit (ARU)
(208) 334-5775
e-mail Frank.Powell@dhw.idaho.gov

Disclaimer: Thank you for soliciting testimony. This testimony is for me as a state employee; I do not represent my agency.

I acknowledge not every problem can be solved by throwing money at it, and I feel when I took a job with the state, I accepted lower pay in return for excellent, affordable health insurance, stability, and retirement. At the same time, raises aren't even keeping up with inflation. My father who was with the state in self-reliance for 20 years at the time of his unexpected passing had calculated that he made less than when he started once his wages were adjusted for inflation. Inflation in 2021 rose to 7%. By proposing a 2% base increase and up to 3% merit increase, you are asking even the highest performers to take an effective 2% pay cut, and the average worker to take an even larger cut. This is before even factoring in any possible increases in the cost of health insurance. Please consider an increase that will at least match inflation for all employees.

I'd also like to note that my 17 year old niece makes more working at Panda Express than our client service techs who are vital to our work with children and families. This is a travesty and I've seen great people leave because of the low pay, despite their love for the work. Love for the work does not pay the bills.

I myself voluntarily stepped down to a lower position a couple years ago. However, when I did so, I lost every raise I was given since I started at the Department almost 7 years ago. My current pay is what a new hire walking in off the street is offered, but I have been asked to keep my social work license active (not a requirement of my current role), take on interns (not a requirement of my current role) and help mentor new employees for a middle of the road, meets expectations review. It's discouraging and the state is sending the message that years of knowledge and experience have no value to the agency and its work with our clients and the people we serve. Even Walmart has a way for its employees to keep their raises across job classifications and I would like the state to implement something similar.

Thank you,

Rachel O'Hearn, LMSW
(PSR)
Department of Health and Welfare
Children and Family Services

I would like to submit a request for strong consideration for the employee compensation ranges to move upwards in accordance with many state agencies trying to properly compensate their staff but employees unable to fully realize the necessary pay adjustments. Employees have to be paid within the pay grade their job is classified but I know of several who are topped out at the max level and the only relief is with those scales being adjusted. I fear private industry could steal away our more experienced tenured employees because they can pay higher wages without similar constraints. Our long term employees should be ones they state tries to retain and making these necessary adjustments is one way you can help stem that tide of departure.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
~Denise

Denise King
Regional Communications Center Coordinator
ISP - RCCS
Meridian, ID
208.846.7512
denise.king@isp.idaho.gov

I have worked for the State of Idaho for over seven years. I love what I do and helping the citizens of Idaho. However, employee compensation is majorly flawed. I love the benefits, but benefits don't always pay the bills.

Even though policies allow it, my agency doesn't pay staff based on their area's living cost. That means a person in the same position in Boise and Idaho Falls gets paid the same, even though Ada County is more expensive to live in.

Pay also isn't based on experience, education, or years at the department. Instead, it's based on a small raise you got in your current position. I have had situations where the base wage of my position increased so the department increased my wage to match the new minimum. However, that also meant that someone hired the next day would make the same as myself, even though I had multiple years in that position. Those situations are demoralizing and frustrating because in most industries if the new starting wage goes up, the rest of the staff get an increase to match the difference. We should be compensating our experienced staff for their experience because they are the agency's backbone. A 2-3% yearly wage increase doesn't cut it when the base wage of the position usually goes up 1-2% a year.

The pay rate increases are also low. If you want to receive a decent wage in a state job, you must move to a new position. However, those positions are limited, which encourages constant turnover in the agency. We need experienced staff at all job levels. The current compensation rate causes a revolving door for the inspectors and admin staff who either quit working for the State of Idaho or jump to a new position. Someone should be able to make a career at the lower tiers based on their experience and still get paid like a professional. Even the Federal Government has compensation tiers that reward staff for their years of service. If we implemented a tiered system based on education levels and years of services and the yearly wage increases, we would see an increase in staff retention.

To summarize, here are my suggestions:

1. Add a mandatory cost of living increase based on your work area.
2. Create a tiered compensation system that rewards your education level and years of service.
3. Make it a requirement that if the minimum starting wage increases above a current staff's salary, give the staff a rate increase that would still put them above the new starting minimum.
4. An across-the-board increase to staff wages, especially at the lower levels, to encourage staff retention.

To Whom It May Concern:

Five or ten years ago it was considered a privilege to work for the State of Idaho. The benefits were great, the pay was more than fair, and it was considered a "higher end" job. That is no longer the case.

Idaho State employees are increasingly underpaid and underappreciated. What used to be a job that provided great opportunities for employees and their families is now one that just barely gets them by. With the battle of inflation, housing market explosions, and price increases due to Covid-19, you are failing state employees by the lack of "fair and competitive" pay. How? Said employees are making 10% less than comparable jobs in other states. The desire to keep Idahoans in this great state filling Idaho State jobs can only be met by pay that can keep them here.

Let's talk housing, one of the basic psychological needs on Maslow's hierarchy. The median home price in Idaho is \$398,900, which is, at minimum, a 30% increase from prior years. Couple that with a rent increase of 15-20%. There is no possible way Idahoans can even begin to save for a down payment for a home with rent as high as it is. No down payment means you can continue to be taken advantage of by unreasonable rent, or it means a higher monthly mortgage payment. Idaho employees cannot reasonably afford an approximate \$2,000+ mortgage payment. That is well over 50% of one's take home pay. If you follow Dave Ramsey, one of the most popular personal finance personalities, he states your mortgage should not be more than 25% of your take home pay. Mr. Ramsey isn't the only person suggesting this. Loan and mortgage companies, as well as financial advisors, across the country often suggest the 28/36 rule. According to this rule, your mortgage payment shouldn't be more than 28% of your monthly pre-tax income and 36% of your total debt. This is also known as the debt-to-income (DTI) ratio. State of Idaho employees can't make that work. They can't follow the recommended 25-28% mortgage payment because they aren't getting paid enough to live here. They are drowning. The CEC of 2% is no longer effective, nor is it meeting the needs of State employees.

Now let's talk retention. The turn over rate for state employees is 40% - the highest it's ever been. You could argue a variety of reasons as to why citizens are leaving state jobs in droves, but I guarantee it always has something to do with pay. If you pay state employees what they are worth, they will stay. Sure, you can raise the pay for entry level positions (like has been in the past) to hopefully bring more people to different state agencies, but you do nothing about the people in higher positions that have been there close to or over a decade. That is a complete insult to the employees who have carried the State of Idaho through highs and lows over many years and have never jumped ship. That brings entry level positions within pennies of some of your most veteran employees, and that is an absolute disgrace. Instead of paying those long-standing employees more, they are given more work and more responsibility for the same amount of pay. Sounds like exploited, overworked employees to me. The yearly 2% raise isn't cutting it. State employees deserve better than that. This is why you see job burnout, anxiety, depression, low morale, and a whole list of other complications. You respect and pay your employees what they are worth and surprisingly a lot of your issues as an employer go away.

The State of Idaho is the largest employer in the state. You are looked upon to set the standard for businesses and companies across the state. Please pay state employees better. Please bring back the pride of having a state job. You are the only ones that can fix this issue, and Idahoans are depending on you to make the right decisions. The numbers speak for themselves. Do not fail us another year.

I married someone from out of state, yet we chose Idaho out of any state in the country to raise our family. As a born and raised Idahoan, I found great joy in raising my kids watching the

mountains I grew to love as a girl, but we are being failed. You are failing Idahoan families. My kids deserve piano lessons, karate, or whatever activity they want to participate in, but instead of watching a dance recital, we are watching, month after month, our money evaporate because we can no longer reasonably afford to live here. Do better. Idahoans deserve it. The future of Idaho expects it.

Kayla Price

Ms. Otto,

First, I want to thank you for your service and contributions to the Idaho Legislature in your position. You serve a critical role, and your work is much appreciated and valued by me and all my family. I am humbly requesting you consider the following information with regards to changes in employee compensation (CEC) for ISP employees for this coming fiscal year:

This is the first time in my life I've felt compelled to share in writing my concerns about a grave need with respect to employees of the Idaho State Police (ISP). As you're aware, the population growth across all of Idaho has strained many aspects of state government with many challenges, and ISP is not excluded. However, there are also significant hardships being experienced by many employees in ISP, in large part, because ISP's wages have not kept on pace with our allied law enforcement agencies throughout Idaho or state police agencies in the northwest. ISP has experienced many continuously open vacancies, countless employees who have left (or are in the process of leaving) for better wages elsewhere, and we simply cannot currently fill many advertised openings for both commissioned and non-commissioned staff. Alarming, this trend is continuing while traffic fatalities on Idaho's thoroughfares reached a recent high in 2021, significant opioid issues are plaguing the state, and the calls for service and other demands and responsibilities of the ISP are at an all-time high. In District 1 (Coeur d'Alene) for example, ISP Troopers experienced a record year for removing both impaired drivers—as well as illicit drugs—off our roadways, and our Troopers, Detectives, and Support Staff struggled to meet the demands of the increased casework on top of the growth in our area.

With specific regards to ISP wages though, many employees (including myself) work second, third, and even fourth jobs to survive. The employee parking lot at the ISP District 1 Office has served as a revolving door the last five years for Troopers who have had to park their campers or RV's there because they cannot afford to purchase even a starter home in north Idaho. Most rental houses in the Coeur d'Alene area cost the same or more per month than what newer Troopers make in a month. As an ISP Recruiter, I've also lost track of how many highly qualified and prospective employees I've corresponded with in the last year who have chosen elsewhere to work because of ISP's wages not being competitive. Finally, just this week, I was made aware of another new Resident ISP Trooper living in a camper in Bonner County. He is without sufficient heat, has frozen pipes preventing running water, and is having to rely on the local Sheriff's Office's facilities for grooming needs before coming into service. There are many, many more similar dismal examples I could share of our employees across the state, but, in short, these are simply unacceptable conditions for what is asked daily of these critical public safety employees.

I'm respectfully requesting the CEC Committee consider the attached wage letter drafted by members of the Idaho State Police Association (ISPA), which is made up of employees of the Idaho State Police. Also, to be clear, I certainly understand that increased wages do not solve every issue, and I know that poor personal monetary decisions contribute negatively to one's life circumstances. However, in my 20+ years in law enforcement, I've never so openly seen the discouragement of so many of our ISP employees when they learned the proposed 5% CEC increase will not even cover inflation costs of the last year, and I would be remiss by not relaying the serious concerns of so many of my fellow employees. In short, as a 7th generation Idahoan, I'm very afraid that, without forethought and proper planning in this area, we will all

eventually lose what we cherish about Idaho—the safety and security we feel here. ISP has a critical role in maintaining those ideals, and I hope the CEC Committee will consider appropriately addressing the needs of our employees regarding their compensation.

Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
~AI

Lieutenant Allen Ashby | ISP 513

Idaho State Police
615 W. Wilbur Ave. Ste. A
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815
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allen.ashby@isp.idaho.gov



My name is Heidi Graham. I am a state employee and these are my personal words. In the interest of time, my testimony is brief.

As long as I can remember, my purpose has been to advocate for others. As such, I cannot ignore the message that has been welling in my heart since the fall of 2021. That message is: This extraordinary time requires extraordinary and bold response. For this reason, I ask the Change in Employee Compensation Committee to reach beyond the proposed pay increase for state employees; to see beyond today's horizon.

Since last summer, I have been paying attention to national, state, and local economic reporting. I have also been reading comments posted to a local, neighborhood forum. Citizens are struggling to make ends meet, including state employees, while the cost of daily living (prices, housing, food, energy, and cars) increases.

In networking with a variety of state employees over the years, I have found we appreciate AND are most grateful for each pay increase received, including during those lean years when the pay increase may not have kept up with the cost of living.

In closing, I respectfully ask the Committee to reach beyond the proposed pay increase for state employees.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony.

Heidi Graham

Ms. Otto,

I would like to thank you for the considerable amount of time and effort you devote to the people in Idaho in your position with the Idaho Legislature. I never realized, and may still not fully realize, the amount of cooperation and knowledge that is needed to make the State of Idaho function smoothly. I have had the opportunity to provide Capitol Mall Security for two weeks in 2021 and was impressed with the professionalism and effort demonstrated by our elected officials, and today, I am still in awe at the amount of work that is accomplished daily.

I have realized I should have written more letters to our elected official throughout my life as I have received both negative and positive letters and or comments from some of the people in Idaho whom I have contacted as both an Idaho State Police Trooper and as a Kootenai County Deputy Sheriff. So again, thank you for your dedication. With more than 1.75 million Idahoans I can appreciate the amount of mail you receive. I hope my letter is received with all the other positive letters that come across your desk.

I feel impressed to share with you my thoughts and introduce myself. Brenda, my wife and constant support for the last 21 years, have two sons; Malan, who is 19, is attending the University of Alabama on an academic scholarship, and Porter, who is 16, is a sophomore at Coeur d Alene High School (CHS). We are very fortunate to not share in some of the current financial struggles that some of our Idaho State Police staff are experiencing today. But we are also feeling the pressure of it to a degree. We are grateful for the education he received at CHS and for his academic scholarships. However, I still cannot assist him with any educational expenses due to our cost of living in Coeur d Alene unless I work an extra shift every week which is not always feasible. Even then, when we work overtime the hours are not paid out on a regular basis and when they are paid out it is usually at straight time, which helps but is not as beneficial.

Malan is studying Mechanical Engineering and the classes are hard enough that he cannot at this time handle a part-time job to help offset the expenses which are not covered by his scholarship. I would like to help him financially without hindering his own growth, but I am not able to at this time. He recently came home for winter break, found a job the second day he was home and worked all 4 available weeks he was home. Porter also works about 24 hours a week at North 40 Outfitters in CDA so that he can pay for some of his expenses such as gas, some clothing, and some food, while also learning to save for college or trade school education costs. We have always encouraged our sons to work so even if I were to make more money, I would still expect them to work. I often say that because I have been chipping away at finance since 2000, I am better off than a lot of employees with the Idaho State Police.

You may have already heard how we have new troopers who live in travel trailers (two troopers specifically in District 1), live with their parents because they cannot afford a house or rent (At \$22.80 per hour it is very hard in CDA), and how many employees are working multiple jobs or a lot of overtime shifts, or spouses are working one or more jobs just to make ends meet. I know of several employees who are considering looking for other employment whether to the private sector or to other agencies who are more aggressive at increasing the CEC. I understand that increasing wages does not nor cannot always help people out of difficult situations because there are too many instances where poor or uneducated financial habits are difficult to overcome no matter how high the wages are. I personally feel that if we cannot find or allocate the necessary resources for state employees-and particularly for me Idaho State Police employees we can continue to see qualified and valuable people apply to other agencies or leave ISP for other work. The work law enforcement officers must do is tough, really tough and can be more appreciated through written testimony and personal interactions. I feel that if the Idaho State Police continues to have lower wages than other agencies as well as an agency that takes more years to achieve maximum wages (Currently about 24 years to earn the maximum compared to CDA Police Department which is 5 years) we will continue to have a "Revolving door" of employee turnover. The CEC projected for this year will help me but not as much as the new employees and

those at or near the starting wages. I know it is easier said than done but I would like to suggest that those at or near the starting point receive a higher CEC than 5 % so that they might be better able to afford their housing needs here in District 1 even if this means that those of us at the higher end receive a smaller percentage..

I respectfully request your thoughtful consideration when addressing the CEC Committee.

Thank you for your time.

Regards,
Rob

Trooper Robert Davis | ISP 510
Idaho State Police D1 | Patrol
Motors Unit

[615 West Wilbur Ave Ste A](#)
[Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83815](#)
[Office \(208\) 209-8620](#)

To Whom It May Concern,

Thank you for the opportunity for open written testimony to the CEC Committee for consideration in the upcoming session. I am a full time employee for the Idaho State Police and a member of the Idaho State Police Association. A few months ago the Idaho State Police Association drafted and delivered a letter to Governor Little and the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee which detailed strong concerns members and employees of the Idaho State Police had regarding salary and pay shortages in our agency across the state.

I wanted to take this time to send the contents of that same letter that was sent to Governor Little and JFAC.

Thank you for your review and respectful consideration,

Corporal Jeff McConnell,
Idaho State Police District 3 Patrol

Governor Brad Little Members of the Joint Finance-Appropriations Office
of the Governor Idaho State Capital
Post Office Box 83720 700 W Jefferson St
Boise, Idaho 83720 Boise, ID 83702

Colonel Kedrick Wills
Idaho State Police
700 South Stratford Drive

Meridian, Idaho 83642

Governor Little, Members of the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee, and Colonel Wills,

On behalf of the Idaho State Police Association (ISPA) members and employees of the Idaho State Police, the ISPA Board of Directors is writing to request a pay increase to retain the current employees and recruit new employees.

In the past few years, Idaho has experienced unprecedented growth and an unparalleled abundance in the State budget. The expanded growth has impacted the infrastructure of our state government on every level. Idaho must rapidly adapt to the increase in demands.

A starting place for improved retention is to raise the wages of all Idaho State Police employees.

The Idaho State Police is comprised of 279 commissioned officers, and 238 non-commissioned staff providing a broad range of law enforcement services to protect the lives, property, and constitutional rights of people in Idaho.

Employee Shortage

Currently, the Idaho State Police is facing unprecedented workforce shortages, with 18 commissioned and 24 non-commissioned unfilled positions. The absence of these employees is creating increased responsibility and tasks in every division of the Idaho State Police. Current employees are experiencing low morale, financial hardship, and increased workload due to Idaho's rapid population growth. Recruiting quality employees is difficult with the current pay scale and the extreme rise in the cost of living.

Below National Average Pay Scale

Idaho State Police employees are paid below the national average by 22.4% while housing costs are 14.1% above the national average. Several employees within the agency work two or more jobs to survive financially. In District 6 one of the office staff has a niece that just started working at a Wendy's restaurant and is making more money than our employee.



The discrepancy in pay is forcing loyal veteran employees to leave ISP to cover the cost of living for themselves and their families. They take with them their expertise and extensive training. Recently, two highly trained Patrol Troopers in District 3 left ISP and joined the Meridian Police Department for a significant pay increase. A third Trooper, who was a field training officer and POST certified instructor left District 3 to work in the private sector for significantly more money. The State of Idaho spent tens of thousands of dollars in training and certifying these officers. The State of Idaho will now have to pay to hire, train, and certify new Troopers to fill their positions.

The retention of employees is crucial to the continued success of the Idaho State Police in serving the citizens of Idaho.

Cost of Living Increase

With the average home price up 34%^v in the past year in Idaho, finding affordable housing is becoming a crisis for Idaho State Employees. Here are some examples of current Idaho State Police employees across the State that are dealing with disrupted living accommodations due to the increased cost of housing and lack of wage increase as well as they can:

- In District 1 there is a Commercial Vehicle Specialist that is staying in his travel trailer in the parking lot of the District 1 building because he cannot afford a rental in the Coeur d'Alene area.
- District 2 has a Trooper assigned to the Orofino residency that could not find affordable housing in the area and had to move back to the district area. The residency position is now vacant.
- District 4 has a Trooper renting a house in the Twin Falls area and his lease is coming open in March. He cannot afford the rent increase or to purchase a house and will be leaving the agency next Spring.

- In District 5 there is a Trooper who had his rent raised to a level he could not afford by himself. He was forced to move back in with his parents in the Idaho Falls area. This has had a direct effect on District 5's staffing as this Trooper now has to commute an hour to reach his designated patrol area.

Difficulty Recruiting New Hires

All employers in Idaho are experiencing trouble finding qualified employees. Compared to other Idaho State Government agencies, Idaho State Police face an additional hurdle in the hiring process. To honor the responsibility to serve and protect the citizens of Idaho, we hold candidates to high standards to ensure integrity in our agency. In addition to interviews, to qualify for employment, a person must pass an extensive background check, drug-free blood test, polygraph examination, and a stringent physical fitness test.

The changing sentiment towards law enforcement agencies in the last years has made it very difficult to recruit outstanding employees who are qualified to be hired.

Closing Facilities Due to Employee Shortage

The employees are being asked continually for more output, responsibility, and hours with unchanged compensation or at most an occasional 1 to 3 percent cost of living increase.

The Regional Communications Center North (RCC North) has been forced to close during the early morning hours because of a labor shortage. 24-hour coverage is no longer an option for RCC North.

The Regional Communications Center South (RCC South) is requiring 35 hours of overtime every 2 weeks for all their communication staff. This is very taxing on each employee as sick leave and vacation time cannot be taken. The centers are 11 employees short, and more employees are leaving due to increased hours and lack of wages. RCC North and RCC South during the week of September 19 to 25, 2021, jointly handled 3773 calls for service, 101 crash calls, and 4222 telephone calls.

The future success of the Idaho State Police as Idaho's comprehensive law enforcement entity requires an immediate substantial change in the wage structure. Increasing the pay structure to a livable wage will help retain veteran employees, improve employee standard of living, and recruit qualified new hires.

The Idaho State Police Association Board of Directors on behalf of our members and the employees of the Idaho State Police respectfully asks for a substantial wage increase to enable the success of the agency and its employees.

Respectfully,

Chairman Peter Sibus
Vice-Chairman Terry Murdock
Chapter 1 President Tim Johnson
Chapter 2 President Gideon Roberts
Chapter 3 President Tyler Jussel
Chapter 4 President Cliff Katona
Chapter 5 President Denise Gibbs
Chapter 6 President Michael Nielson

Appendix

The 2019 FY 2021 Change in Employee Compensation & Benefits Report states Idaho's Public Sector compensation is below the national average by 12.4%.¹ A study published by Open Payrolls² states: "The average employee salary for the State of Idaho in 2020 was \$51,181. This is 22.4 percent lower than the national average for government employees and 15.4 percent lower than other states."

Endnote References

¹<https://openpayrolls.com/state/idaho/page-8>

²https://www.bestplaces.net/cost_of_living/state/idaho

³ <https://www.oregon.gov/osp/jobs/pages/Become-a-trooper.aspx>
<https://www.wsp.wa.gov/be-a-trooper/>
<https://www.whp.dot.state.wy.us/home/trooper---careersrecruiting.html>
<https://isp.idaho.gov/recruiting/join-the-idaho-state-police/>
<https://highwaypatrol.utah.gov/join-uhp-becoming-a-trooper/employment-compensation-benefits/> ⁴
<https://www.noradarealestate.com/blog/boise-real-estate/>

⁵<https://idahootwork.com/2021/07/27/why-idaho-employers-struggle-to-find-workers/> ⁶ <https://dhr.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/PDFs/CEC/FY2021CEC.pdf> page 16-17

⁷<https://openpayrolls.com/state/idaho/page-8>

Hello, I am Travis Gurney, and I am a Trooper for the Idaho State Police. Commissioned personnel morale for the Idaho State Police is low. There are multiple factors causing the low morale. Where you are asking for a testimony on employee compensation, I will go into detail regarding how this is part of the cause of poor employee morale with the Idaho State Police.

In the last several years Idaho State Police has struggle in recruiting commissioned personnel. We are competing with agencies inside Idaho and neighboring states that pay significantly more. The Idaho State Police gets treated as a stepping stool for going to other agencies. We have had multiple commissioned personnel leave the Idaho State Police or have started with the Idaho State Police just to go to another agency who pays more. As a recruiter I struggle to get people to want to move to Idaho and work because they can't afford to buy a house on what Idaho State Police is starting its employees at. As these positions we have sit vacant it put unnecessary stress and workload on the commissioned personnel that should not be there. The increase workload brings multiple problems resulting to officer burnout. We are creating other problems along the way such as decrease productivity, decrease safety for the citizens, decrease in officer safety, and a decrease in confidence in the Idaho State Police as an employer. This leads to not wanting to ask others to come and work for the Idaho State Police.

Some of the recent solutions proposed by the leadership of the Idaho State Police is provide housing for remote Troopers. But we keep adding housing at an alarming rate stating it is because housing in the area is not affordable or none is available. This only helps a hand full of Troopers. Housing is not available or affordable for most of the state employees. At some point we need to address the real problem and that is an increase in employee salary.

Idaho State Police should be looked at as an agency you want to work for strive to get to. There are several states that make sure their State Police are in the top 3-4 paid law enforcement agencies. When this happens, it makes sure we are getting the cream of the crop. We are not getting other agencies leftovers for employees. We end up spending less money on training employees because we find people who want to stay with the Idaho State Police.

Most of those who are the commissioned personnel have a family. Their family is what is important, and the time spent with them is what is most important. I know multiple Troopers who spouses have gone back to work because they cannot afford to live on the wage provided by the Idaho State Police. A Troopers schedule rotates, and the spouse's jobs typically don't rotate and mesh well with the Troopers. This creates friction and makes it hard to coordinate. Many times, when you come to work for the Idaho State Police you must move with your family. This makes it hard because now your spouse must find a job in a new area as well.

The wage disparity for State of Idaho employees has been around for years. I have read articles from 9 years ago on how the State of Idaho is behind. It is time for something to be done to help the state employees. Thank you for your time.

Jennifer Harlan

Caldwell, ID. 83605

January 16, 2022

*Change in Employee Compensation Committee
Idaho State Legislature*

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing this letter, as a testimony, so that you may better understand the impact that my inadequate, employee compensation is having in my life. However, the opinions expressed in this letter are solely mine, and in no way represent the Department of Health and Welfare.

My name is Jennifer Harlan. I am a single parent of 3 children, residing in Caldwell, Idaho.

I am currently employed by this great state of Idaho, at the Department of Health and Welfare, Region 3, Family and Children's Services, as a Client Service Tech. A Client Service Tech, typically referred to as a Visit Tech, provides transportation and supervision for visits between foster children and their families. I help to bridge the gap between social workers, families, and the community. I have driven thousands of miles, dried hundreds of tears and celebrated countless milestones. You see, "Ms. Jenn" picks up these foster children every week. I make it my business to know their birthdays, schools, interests and most importantly, their feelings. I make a meaningful bond with these children and their families. That is what is important and needs to be retained.

I have really been struggling to write this letter. I think it's because I truly enjoy my job and I am very grateful to be where I am. Unfortunately, I feel that I may be forced into finding employment elsewhere. I have been at the department for 5 years. I am currently earning a wage of \$14.36/hour. This equals a gross wage of \$2489.00/month. My net take home equals roughly \$1800.00/month. As we all know, the cost of living has increased substantially over the past 2 years. Between the high price of gasoline and the ever-increasing cost of groceries, I have resorted to supplementing my income in a non-traditional way. I have been donating/selling my plasma. If I go 2 times/week, the maximum number of times allowed by the clinic, I can earn \$480.00/month. This is how I feed my family. Prior to selling my plasma, I have accessed community food banks.

I am asking you to please consider an increase to the employee compensation that Client Service Techs currently receive, to a livable wage or to the policy rate for pay grade G.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to give my testimony.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Harlan

Good Day! My name is Chris C. and I'm a 17 year Trooper for the Idaho State Police. I currently live and serve in the Boise area. I'm extremely proud to serve the citizens of Idaho in this capacity. In my time with ISP I have never seen anything like what has happened these past several years. Between the population growth and the increase in housing costs, we have a serious issue with manpower and the ability for newer Troops to afford housing. If you haven't lived here since the recession of 2008, chances are you probably can't afford to... increasingly so the closer you get to the present. The manpower issue has added to the stress of overall law enforcement. The lack in manpower leaves those who are covering calls the stress of covering ALL the calls. In this way Troopers feeling like they struggle to get caught up. Mingle this feeling with the idea that many other agencies pay better, and it's a recipe for loosing Troopers to local agencies. If we can make ISP wages comparable, or superior to the other larger agencies, we'll see other Officers lateral to ISP, rather than loosing our guys to their agencies. In other words, I believe that by fixing the pay-concerns, it will help with manpower-concerns. At least to the extent where we will be fully staffed. The second part of the concern, will be to get more Officer positions added to ISP, to keep up with population growth. Adding any positions may prove to be futile though, if we don't pay competitively enough to retain the officers in the first place. Without pay, we'll just be training Officers, then watching them lateral to other agencies.

Thank you to the CEC committee for any and all consideration you can provide. It truly is a blessing to serve.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris C.

Sent from my iPhone

To the Change in Employee Compensation Committee,

2021 marked the beginning of my career with the Idaho State Police as a Sandpoint resident Trooper, and words cannot describe how thrilled I am to be a part of such an incredible agency. I moved to Idaho last year from Florida, where I worked for the Marion County Sheriff's Office as a Detention deputy for two years.

Transitioning from Florida to Idaho has provided me with some challenges, primarily locating housing. As a state employee, locating affordable housing within my pay scale in Sandpoint and the surrounding suburbs is nearly impossible. The waitlist for apartments is over three years out per the apartment managers I have spoken to, and the monthly rent averages from 60% to 150% of my take-home pay before any expenses (food or personal vehicle expenses like gasoline and maintenance). The same situation applies to rental houses as well. Purchasing a house is also not realistic, due to houses in my assigned area starting at approximately \$500,000.

I am able to live and work in Idaho because of the generosity of the people I have met in my short time here. I purchased a travel trailer and stay on an empty lot a member of my community rents me. Due to the nature of the travel trailer, they are incredibly difficult to keep above freezing. My pipes froze on the first day of December and have been ever since. The local Sheriff's office has generously allowed me to utilize their facility to shower and complete paperwork. My supervisors and fellow Troopers have extended invitations to me to stay at their homes on especially cold nights, an offer which I have accepted a handful of times.

I am not the only Trooper that I know of that is in a similar situation. Many Troopers I went to the academy with across the state stay in campers, sub-par apartments, or pool their money and stay in a house with multiple families. For many out-of-state recruits, housing was a major concern on our minds during the academy. Many, myself included, wondered where we were going to live once we graduated. Sleeping in our issued patrol cars was joked about frequently, but it was a real consideration.

A fellow Trooper from my class is unable to find any housing in his assigned area and has to commute using state resources an hour one way to reach his assigned area. One case that stands out in my mind is that of a Trooper staying in a travel trailer with his wife and 3 children, moving to a new campsite every few months.

The largest problem I see and hear every day, from local to state agencies, is recruitment. Current and new Idaho residents can make a living wage working in many other fields, and choose not to work for the state or local government due to the relatively low pay. With the influx of new residents and increased tourism traffic, the staffing numbers of ISP, ITD, and other relevant agencies are not increasing in proportion to the demand. The staff is stretched thin, and recruiting new employees is a harrowing task with no housing options. Candidates with years of experience and potential are not considering serving Idaho due to the housing and pay issue.

A pay increase would alleviate some of the issues, but some long-term solutions would provide the state with assets in recruiting and retaining employees. State housing on state land for resident Troopers in remote areas would immediately dismiss a large number of issues. The relief of not having to secure housing that consumes all of a Trooper's pay would allow them to focus on the safety and security of the public and save their pay to purchase a house within a more realistic time frame. Once the Trooper secures their housing, the state still controls their asset and can leverage said asset to recruit more outstanding candidates. Another solution is a basic housing allowance instead of a general percentage-based pay increase across the board. The basic housing allowance would be aimed directly at solving the housing crisis we all are currently in the midst of.

I am not trying to complain about the situation most state employees find themselves in, but rather provide the Committee a perspective from an average Trooper. I do not want to work for any other agency in this country. I find myself surrounded by like-minded, motivated professionals every day, and I feel the support of my supervisors and legislators. I hope that this letter assists the committee in reaching a solution in the upcoming meeting.

With all due respect,
Trooper Dale A. Turnbull
Idaho State Police

Ms. Otto,

I wish to thank you for the invitation for correspondence. This is the first of its kind I have seen in my 15 years with the ISP. Correspondence of this kind was quite discouraged in the past. Simply put, we here at ISP have failed to keep pace with other agencies and the needs of the area, especially in the Treasure Valley. I have watched our District 3 Meridian office staffing levels dwindle. We currently have 11 commissioned positions we cannot seem to fill, the majority of which are in patrol. Our new hires struggle due to our low starting pay and high real estate prices. To put that into perspective, the average patrol team currently consists of four or possibly five Troopers, including the patrol team Sergeant. Those Troopers are expected to cover all ten counties that comprise District 3 during their shift. It seems impossible at times, especially if Troopers are not working due to training, days off, sickness, special assignments, etc. A patrol team down even one Trooper suffers a significant disadvantage. Our policing has slipped from extremely proactive to reactive out of necessity. The work load has increased at a dangerous rate. Quality of work has suffered. The safety of our Troopers has suffered. The wellbeing, both physical and mental, of our Troopers has suffered. We receive complaints from the motoring public with demands for more patrol presence we cannot provide. We simply have not grown to match the demands of the area and are failing to serve the citizens as we should. Please know, I wear my ISP badge with extreme pride, but it hangs over a heavy heart. I care deeply for and worry about the future of the Idaho State Police. I realize my opinion solely focuses on commissioned ISP, but I am well aware the same conditions can probably be applied to the majority of Idaho state employees. It especially applies to the majority of non-commissioned ISP employees. Please keep in mind this is a simple Patrol Sergeant's personal observation, with his boots on the ground every shift, and not the opinion of the Idaho State Police.

Sergeant Jeremiah West

Idaho State Police
District 3 Patrol
Office: 208.884.7364
Cell : [REDACTED]

Hello! I am Kevin Rigsby senior Craftsman at facility services at Capitol mall and do to the cost of living in the boise Idaho area/ rent,food,utilities,ect and not to mention the responsibility of maintaining state buildings, with the fact of not being able to get or keep good employees do to the fact employees can get so much more Compensation from the private sector I could see a increase in Compensation of 20 percent not being out of line. Thank you for your time! Respectively Kevin Rigsby.

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

To whom it may concern:

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter during the 2022 legislative session. This letter contains my own thoughts and in no way reflects my current standing as an employee for the State of Idaho/Idaho State Police. For the past five years, I have had the honor and privilege of serving the great state of Idaho as a patrol trooper for the Idaho State Police. It's no surprise that we have seen an unprecedented amount of growth in Idaho over the past several years. Individuals are flooding to Idaho for a better place to raise their families and get a fresh start with what Idaho has to offer.

A couple of months ago, Governor Little and the JFAC commission were presented with a letter from the Idaho State Police Association pleading for a substantial pay increase for the ISP employees, citing examples of financial hardship within the agency. It was discussed that some troopers have resorted to living in a camper trailer or at home with family because they simply cannot afford reasonable housing in their assigned districts. They have a passion for serving the citizens of Idaho yet are struggling financially to make ends meet. This is not how those who put their lives on the line every day for Idaho's citizens should have to live while doing what they love. Recruiting numbers have drastically been affected and we cannot recruit new troopers due to low wages that do not meet the current cost of living. I personally know several law enforcement officers in other states who will not move here because the starting pay does not adequately match Idaho's current cost of living.

ISP's current employees are experiencing increased workload with higher stress levels from the population growth. We are being stretched to our capacity doing twice the workload we used to with the same number of staff and relatively same pay. Our patrol staffing numbers are the same today as they were ten years ago and have not increased to account for the population growth. Many troopers have left law enforcement to go into the private sector or turned to other agencies offering more pay. That is thousands of dollars we put into training these troopers who are no longer with the agency. Recruitment and retention are of the utmost priority as this state continues to grow dramatically.

I began my career in Mountain Home as a resident trooper and transferred back to the treasure valley in 2019. It was very difficult finding an affordable house to buy with the very high demand at the time. My wife currently stays at home with our two children and if not for the additional income from her small business she runs out of our home, we would not stay afloat financially. My mortgage payment is just shy of one standard paycheck after taxes and that is for a home I purchased over two years ago. My other paycheck goes to other monthly expenses such as groceries, gas, electric, internet and phone bills. Daycare at the present time is out of the question, as those costs have risen like everything else, and my wife would be going to work to simply pay for daycare.

The CEC raises of 1-3% the past several years are nowhere close to keeping up with the cost-of-living increases Idaho has experienced. Idaho State Police employees are paid 22% below the national average for law enforcement while the price of a house has increased approximately 30-40% in the past year alone. Supply chain issues are increasing the costs of normal living expenses as the Covid pandemic continues. I ask you consider a drastic CEC increase to all State of Idaho employees, ensuring a brighter outlook for the future. The time is now to take action in financially supporting those who give their all every day to make Idaho the great state that it is. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Jeffrey Rodean

To the Change in Employee Compensation (CEC) Committee –

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding compensation for state employees. I listened to the meeting conducted on January 12th and some of my comments are based on points made in that hearing. Please consider the following as the CEC Committee addresses this in 2022:

- My response to the statement, “Money can’t be our only solution.” Let us be clear that it IS the main solution for every state employee and no amount of “soft investments in the human aspect of work” can make up for it. A gym membership would be a benefit to some individuals, but to many it would not. A person has to have time, and a location available to them, and, frankly, I cannot eat a gym membership. Substantial increases in pay for state employees are long overdue, have been avoided by the Legislature, and as a result are now critically necessary. The most important way to make work a “fulfilling experience” and communicate to employees that they are truly valued is by paying them accordingly.
- State employees feel undervalued by our legislators. The strategy from year-to-year always seems to be, how can we avoid not making equitable, reasonable pay increases? The continual chipping away at benefits along with the unwillingness to provide cost of living increases or to bring pay closer to the private sector clearly contributes to this. If there is one thing we know, if you truly value something, you are willing to pay for it. State employees provide a wide range of services critical to maintaining services and infrastructure for Idaho citizens. We are valuable. And many of us are leaving...
- Even if state employees would get the full amount of the Governor’s recommendation (5%), that doesn’t even cover the current increase of 5.9% in the cost of living – and the cost of living is rising quickly. Further, this proposed increase doesn’t even touch the increase in property taxes and housing costs across the state. State employees are falling further and further behind financially, which contributes both to low morale and attrition.
- Legislators seem to think that the benefits make up for the gap in pay between the state and the private sector. They don’t. The state offers competitive benefits, but many private employers offer solid benefits packages with better pay and flexible working conditions.
- State employees not only have a strong work ethic, but many feel that public service is a calling and are deeply committed to making Idaho a better place to live by serving its citizens. So, why are they leaving in such numbers? In many cases, they simply can’t afford to continue in state service, and the benefits offered do not make up for this. Having health insurance and PERSI is great, but if I cannot keep up with the basic costs of food, shelter, transportation, and child care, I can’t afford to keep working for the state and continue going in the hole financially.
- The remaining state employees are overworked as they then carry the responsibilities left by all the vacated positions in addition to the already heavy workloads. Chronic understaffing also contributes to low morale and attrition.

- Boosting starting pay for new employees is crucial, but increasing the pay of experienced employees is just as crucial, including providing retention bonuses. What do you think it does for morale when new and inexperienced employees start at pay levels above experienced employees who have provided years of dedicated service? There must be a balance. The state employees with Institutional knowledge need to stay.
- Please know that I love my job. I want to stay. Help me want to stay. Increased, substantial increases are needed and this would help every state employee.

Thank you for your time.

Trinette Middlebrook

Administrative Rules Specialist | Idaho Dept. of Health & Welfare
trinette.middlebrook@dhw.idaho.gov
208-334-0440

01/14/2022

Dear CEC Committee Members:

First off, let me express my gratitude for the ability to express my concerns to you regarding pay and compensation. Forgive my long email, however, I want to accurately portray my concerns and request. It has been many years since I have had this ability and with the current climate changes and struggles, being able to express the challenge we are having is appreciated. I am the Regional Communication Center Coordinator for the Idaho State Police in Coeur d'Alene. We have two centers in Idaho that dispatch for the State Police, as well as many state and federal agencies at no cost, such as Idaho Probation and Parole and Idaho Fish and Game. I have a staff of 11 telecommunicators, 2 supervisors, and myself. We are currently running at 57% staffing (we do have two in training, but until completed this is our available staff number). We are a 24/7 operation and currently cannot continuously meet minimum staffing requirements to handle the 911 call load, as well as the radio traffic. Telecommunicators do both jobs simultaneously, answering emergency calls and dispatching troopers. At one point in the early morning hours, we only have one Regional Communication Officer (RCO) working in the center for three hours.

Staffing levels do not allow RCOs to take a "lunch break" or any other type of break, other than getting up to grab food or use the facilities. You do not get a sick day or vacation day unless someone else covers your shifts. We cannot just run short for the day, someone always has to be there. You can imagine this gets more challenging when children must do at-home learning, or need daycare for canceled school, etc. Our jobs require 100% focus and so bringing them to work is not an option either.

The economy and pricing in the large cities in Idaho have made housing skyrocket, as well as goods and services. Calls for service and 911 calls rising rapidly with the increase in populations. The types of calls we are handling are changing, mental health appears to play a large role, but we have increased high-risk calls such as pursuits, weapons offenses, and high-risk stops. With more and more calls of suicidal people from people that have seen posts online, we then must identify who and where they are, and get them assistance. I am proud to say we have saved two lives, in another part of Idaho, recently from the skills and abilities my RCOs have. We

need to be able to continue to make Idaho a safe place to live and work. Ensuring we have capable and highly trained RCOs is an investment for Idaho. It will allow us to provide the highest level of service to our customers. This should be a vitally important thing to everyone, if you or a family member need help, you want their focus and attention on your needs, not juggling too many tasks and other phone calls to give you quality service.

I am in the Coeur d'Alene area, and I know the Boise area is the same, but we have entry-level jobs that are paying close to the same wage as we are, with benefits. While candidates may not always consider our full benefits package, it has significantly impacted our ability to hire as well as retain employees. I have gone through multiple rounds of interviews where people do not show up and we have no candidates, or the one or two that do cannot perform the job functions. We have an additional challenge of shift work, which is extremely difficult on families. We work holidays and weekends and right now we are all working 50 (some more) hours a week, with fewer days off, to maintain basic staffing levels. We are all wearing out, myself included. I am proud my agency took the steps they could to try to retain and mitigate the loss, but more needs to happen. We ask our employees to take on additional duties, such as being a training officer, with little to no extra pay. I currently have four trainers, two being supervisors, to train new RCOs. Training is taxing and our training period is 4 months long. Supervisors proving training does not allow them to do quality assurance or other duties they should be performing. We must have quality training to ensure new employees can provide quality call taking and dispatching for the citizens of Idaho. I have worked for the State of Idaho for 25 years in this position. I love my job, but I am exhausted and the prospect of this continued cycle of loss and not being able to compete or even come close, with pay is driving me to explore options for my mental health and wellbeing. The stress is becoming too great, and my ability to retire at the rule of 90 and age 55 is a ways away.

One frustration is obtaining PCA's for hire. While we are struggling to get people, my agency continues to allow agencies to utilize our services, increasing phone and radio traffic, yet they do not seek new positions to help us handle the call load. Over the last three years ISP has added K9 positions, motor unit, and special teams, this year they are seeking 12 new Capitol Security Positions, but no additional RCOs to dispatch them, adding them to our already taxing load. I am working the radio for 50+ hours as the manager of the division right now, and I should not be on the radio. We do not have enough supervisors to have a supervisor on shift to manage emergencies or handle other duties. We have two and they cannot be there 24/7.

The skills and abilities of an RCO are unique and require a special skill set. You must be able to multi-task. This isn't the multitasking of a mom or other jobs. You must be able to do multiple things at once. Listen to 12 radio channels at once, prioritizing the highest priority call. This along with handling emergency and administrative calls. RCOs must be trained in counseling skills such as suicidal callers, have to know how to handle people in crisis and what to do. We must know Hazmat and when to recognize danger from a described scene. We must be able to give medical instructions when needed, and we are the first interviewer in many crimes and must know what to ask to get the information, no different than an officer. There are many other unique skills an RCO must have that set us apart from any other job. This is a high-stress job that is causing health and mental wellness impacts, which are increased with the additional stress of low staffing. Not having adequate staffing also doesn't allow us to send people to advanced training to keep our skills up and learn new things.

I have no idea your abilities as a committee to make recommendations or make changes, but I would like to express our needs and why. First, we need to increase the base pay for the hiring of our RCOs to be competitive with the stress, hours, and pay from surrounding agencies. A

pay increase will help us attract new candidates and allow them to afford the housing and costs of the area. Again, our agency did increase the wage by one dollar, and my gratitude is immense, but we need to do more. Second, we need to add new positions, our last request to our agency was for five positions total. A supervisor, and two RCOs for each of our two dispatch centers. This will better allow us to staff our centers and provide the quality and safety of our customers. Lastly, I would ask that you look at raising the ceiling on the Hay scale for the job classifications and/or making it easier to move our classifications, bumping people up one grade. I have three RCOs at my center, myself included, that are topped out. While that is an outstanding problem to have, and one that may be glad to have, I did not receive the full increase my agency gave, nor will I get any of the 2-5% that my agency is receiving this year for our employees. I know that ISP has an additional compensation plan that others have, it has also been one of the reasons I have stayed in my job for 25 years. The two other employees have been there close to as long as I and they are in the same position I am. We have many nearing the ceiling, and possibly with this increase will also reach it. Again, what a great problem to have, but we need to remedy the situation to keep these employees.

I am attaching my request for positions to provide you with some facts and figures. Again, I appreciate you taking the time to consider my requests. I love my agency and the people I work with. As a leader, I am watching the struggle. While this struggle in emergency communications is not unique to ISP, it should be a significant concern. If there are no staffing or quality people to answer you when you call 911 for help, the resulting delay in emergency services could cost someone, even someone you love, their life. This is a fact; one you can see happening around the country.

Thank you again for your time and consideration,

Melissa Stroh, MBA, CPM

Decision Unit information:

Additional RCOs are needed to meet the increasing demand caused by the increases in the number of units and agencies, the volume of traffic, and phone calls in the RCCs. Additionally, this request also includes the additional authorization and funding for one (1) Regional Communication Supervisor FTP at RCCN. This position would allow RCCN to provide improved shift supervision on the majority of its shifts. To have a supervisor on every shift, something we are not requesting at this time, two additional supervisor positions would be needed. The ISP continues to increase trooper strength within the agency, along with agreeing to formalize providing dispatching services to other State and Federal Agencies. Those agencies include Idaho Fish and Game (along with fielding all of its Citizens Against Poaching hotline calls), Idaho Probation and Parole, State Fire Marshall's Office, Idaho Parks, and Recreation, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Idaho Transportation Department, and more. Increased emergency calls, high-risk incidents, and heavy radio traffic has led to difficulty managing workloads with current RCC staffing capabilities. The result of the increased workload is greater stress, overtime, few to no breaks during shifts, and low morale. The RCCs are functioning at minimum staffing on most shifts.

In 2016, the Idaho population was 1,680,026. The population in Idaho in 2020 was 1,826,913. The increase just from 2019 to 2020 was 2.12%. The Idaho Department of Labor estimates that the state population will grow at an annual rate of 1.1% through 2029.

<https://lmi.idaho.gov/population-projections>

Some of the challenges the RCC program faces:

- Increased officer staffing by ISP, State and Federal Agencies utilizing its dispatch services.
 - Commissioned ISP FTPs has increased from 301 in 2019 to 317 in 2020;

- Total Number of other-agency units served - 444* (BLM, IDFG, P&P, ITD, POE, USFS, other misc.)
- Total number of all agency units served - 767*
- Processing all Idaho Fish and Game Citizens Against Poaching (CAP) hotline calls, and the See-Something-Say-Something (after hours) hotline calls. CAP Calls: 2019 totals = 1,898; 2020 totals = 2,277 (increase of 20%)
- * = approximately
- Increasing radio traffic, including heavy demands caused by special teams (DUI, DHE), various emphasis patrols, and Mobile Command Center requests/deployments
- RCO job complexity is increasing, defined as the number of tasks that are regularly part of the job. APCO's Project Retains – Effective Practices Guide and Staffing Workbook states, "There are limits to the number of different tasks employees can handle. Dispatchers are famous for their multi-tasking abilities, but they do have limits. The [RCO] finds him or herself in an environment of high stress levels, and the requirement to juggle multiple computer systems."
- RCO's ability to juggle radio channels while simultaneously handling phones is becoming increasingly difficult. The need for two RCOs on at a time to manage the radio/phones for several of the districts is increasing.
 - RCCS dispatches on 39 main radio channels/talk groups for four (4) patrol districts. RCCN dispatches on 18 main radio channels/talk groups for two (2) patrol districts. Regarding the radio talk groups for which data was extrapolated:* SP1-Patrol 1(District 1 Primary) had 310,266 push-to-talk transmissions; SP3-Patrol 1 (District 3 primary) had 282,960 push-to-talk transmissions. These are only two of the channels/talk groups dispatched.
 - Breaking down the data on one primary radio talk group, there were 543.62 push-to-talk transmissions in one hour.* That equates to nine (9) transmissions per minute, varying in length. These transmissions usually involve tasks the RCO must perform, dispatching troopers to emergency calls for service, acknowledging trooper traffic stops, dispatching back-up units to troopers, checking driver's checks, completing wrecker requests, phone calls, registration checks, and etc.
- Additional radio talk groups/channels to manage:
 - Currently in District 1, the radio traffic is so heavy on the primary talk group; we have to use a secondary talk group to allow troopers to be able to call out a traffic stop during peak times.
- Increasing 9-1-1, emergency and administrative phone calls:*
 - RCCN handled on average 27.2 calls and 2.16 9-1-1 calls per hour. The average 9-1-1 call takes 2.07 minutes, other calls 1.50 minutes.
 - RCCS handled on average 21 calls and 2.16 9-1-1 calls per hour. The average 9-1-1 call takes 2.23 minutes, other calls 1:59 minutes.
- Increasing high risk/critical incidents:
 - These incidents result in increased radio traffic and requests from the units and troopers in the field.
 - Statewide high risk and drug cases have both increased, 2.44% for high risk, and 6.92% for drug cases.* DUI and warrant cases have remained the same.
- Overtime shifts required to adequately cover radio and phone needs, as well as cover vacant positions, vacation and sick time:

- The RCC had 3,483.2 hours of overtime for 2020. A total of \$41,657.88 dollars paid out in overtime. This does not take into account the time off utilized to burn off accrued compensatory time.
- Staffing shortages lead to high overtime and functioning below minimum staffing levels for the centers.

* All numbers used were from May 1, 2020 - to September 20, 2020, utilizing peak times.

These increased service demands have taxed both of the centers to operate close to their maximum call-handling capability. RCOs are handling phone calls and radio calls simultaneously. By the call numbers, there is very little time they are not on a phone call in the center. Before continuing to increase RCC demand for services (internal and external to ISP) we should ask ourselves, "What is the number of field units that can safely be monitored by a single dispatcher while also handling phones?"

APCO International notes, "If center's current staffing levels compromise their ability to respond to normal call activity, what might happen in the event of a disaster? This diminishes the safety margin that permits them to handle unanticipated surges in activity." This is a reality for both RCCs. During a statewide survey conducted by Boise State University, some of the comments from RCC employees were:

- "We work with minimum staff or short-staffed and the workload is getting worse. We handle a lot at once. It gets you many times. The morale is low in here and working split shifts on your days off to cover is hard."
- "I used to love my job, but over the years, it has gotten so hard to come into work."
- "Morale is the lowest I have seen it in a long time, possibly ever."

These comments, coupled with the turnover rates, paint a picture of overtaxed employees.

The NFPA 1221 standard, 2016 edition and now the 2019 edition, Chapter 7 (7.3.1) states, "There shall be a minimum of two telecommunicators [RCOs] on duty and present in the communications center at all times." We are not in line with this standard. RCCN does not have ample staffing to ensure a minimum staffing of two (2) RCOs at all times, something which needs to be addressed immediately.

APCO Retains Staffing and Retention listed the top ten working conditions that determined higher retention rates. The distribution of work, and break-time away from the console were two of the top reasons. It is rare that RCOs are able to get up and take breaks away from the console. Typically, they are eating at the console when time allows. There are simply not enough RCOs to distribute the workload.

These additional FTPs would greatly assist RCC to staff appropriately for the increasing call volumes and reduce compensatory time accrual due to various leave requests. It would also assist the supervisors in performing more effective and efficient supervision/leadership duties, rather than working routine and regularly scheduled shifts at the console position as an RCO instead of performing supervisory duties coaching and mentoring their staff and watching out for the betterment of the department and those whom ISP serves. This in turn would lessen the workload, and assist in improving turnover rates and morale in the centers.

One (1) Regional Communication Center Supervisor FTP in RCCN.

This position would permit a supervisor position working for almost all shifts in RCCN, allowing a decision-maker to be present to handle issues as they arise in the center, as well as being a coach and leader. Having a decision-maker in the room, would help during critical incidents, as well as managing staff and sending RCOs with overtime home, when not needed.

Currently, our supervisors are covering console positions almost full time, and usually, the coordinator is as well. This leaves them with little time to perform quality assurance reviews and complete other supervisory duties. When a supervisor is working a console, they focus on their own radio needs and are unable to perform the supervisory role of assisting and coaching the floor RCOs. RCCS currently has four (4) supervisors, with an average of 5.75 RCOs per supervisor. RCCN has two (2) supervisors, with an average of 5.5 RCOs per supervisor. This does not include part-time employees. Currently, at RCCN, there is not a supervisor assigned to each shift. This leaves an unfilled need for a leader or decision-maker. NFPA 1221 also states, "at least one supervisor shall be on duty and available to the telecommunicator when more than two telecommunicators are on duty, and, the supervisor shall be assigned to the operations room when there are more than three telecommunicators on duty." In the NIMS Incident Command structure, an effective span of control is defined from three (3) to seven (7) and a ratio of one (1) supervisor to five (5) reporting elements is recommended. The Kyle Plush Answer The Call Foundation attributes inadequate supervision as one of the failures in their son's untimely death.

Dear Committee Members,

I have worked for Idaho Department of Environmental Quality for over five years. I am asking you to raise state employee wages commensurate to the increased cost of living and inflation we are all facing. The ability to create and maintain a healthy, happy, and productive workforce is directly tied into employees' wage security. The cost of housing and groceries have skyrocketed, yet state wages have remained stagnant and are increasingly falling behind the market average. State employees shouldn't continue to make less and less each year as we see inflation eat away the value of our pay. We have an influx of people and money to the state of Idaho, which has been a boon and a curse. State employees just want to be able to afford to live in the state that they serve.

Thank you for your time, respectfully,
Ben Seely

Ms. Otto,

First, thank you for your service! I am also very appreciative that we are afforded the opportunity to communicate our concerns.

I am a 2nd generation Trooper and have been around ISP since I was in diapers! For nearly 40 years I've watched ISP employees continue to be underpaid, especially our junior employees. However, the problem is glaring more than ever right now. We have Troopers living in below standard apartments, trailer parks, and campers as

they cannot afford housing. To be honest, it is embarrassing! One of our Troopers in the Sandpoint area has to shower at the local sheriff's office as he is living in a camper and his pipes are frozen. This is because he can't even afford a decent apartment. We have another Trooper in the Boise area living in one of the most dangerous apartment complexes in Idaho. The bottom line is, a new Trooper can't afford to live in Idaho with our current wages. Our noncommissioned staff make less than most fast food restaurants in the area I live. I'm not sure how any of these employees make it with a family!

We are continually understaffed as ISP has difficulty hiring quality candidates due to its starting pay for Troopers. In 2021 we had the opportunity of a lifetime, recruiting and hiring lateral officers from other states who were leaving or separated over the vaccine mandates. To my knowledge, ISP wasn't able to get a single one of these folks as the starting pay is so low and we didn't offer any kind of incentive. I am often laughed at when I attempt to recruit quality people to our agency due to the low starting pay.

The current proposed CEC raise of 2% plus an additional 3% based on merit won't even keep up with inflation, much less help any of our employees get ahead or afford a decent home for their families.

ISP employees continue to save and change lives throughout Idaho. Their work has never been harder or more dangerous. Their families continually make the sacrifices necessary to keep Idaho safe. They deserve a decent living wage!

It is time our legislators take the necessary action and give these employees the raises they need and deserve so we can continue to keep Idaho a great place to work and live!

I have attached a recent study from the Idaho State Police Association.

Respectfully,

**SERGEANT JUSTIN KLITCH
IDAHO STATE POLICE
DISTRICT ONE PATROL
615 W. WILBUR AVE.
COEUR D'ALENE, ID 83815**

OFFICE:(208)209-8670

CELL: [REDACTED]

January 17, 2022

Dear CEC Committee Members & Legislators,

Thank You for the opportunity to correspond with you about the state employee compensation budget and this year's pay schedule and have the opportunity to provide some feelings I may have on this topic.

I am an employee of the Idaho State Police and am proud to represent the State of Idaho and such a fine organization. We have dedicated employees who are honored to do the job we do and to protect the citizens of Idaho from those who would violate laws to do harm. Over the past 20 plus years that I have had this honor to work for the Idaho State Police I have met many professional people who could be working in the private sector making a lot more money, but they do this job for the code, honor, and service that they feel is important to give if we want to continue living in a free representative republic society. There are so many who have given the ultimate sacrifice in foreign and domestic controversies, America is blessed to have honorable men and women who stand up to meet a call of service to the greater good, and many times forgo a safer and more economically opportunistic path. I am proud to serve among such. It has been a wonderful career.

We are living in times like many of us have never seen before. With Covid and some of the steps taken by government to try to make it easier for many to get by, I feel we are now witnessing some unintended consequences to some of these actions that have been taken. It seems people do not have the motivation to work. When it is too easy to get a check in the mail from the government unfortunately too many sit back and accept the easy money. Now employers are having difficulties in filling needed work positions to conduct their businesses. I recently stopped by a Little Caesars Pizza in Idaho Falls and read a sign on the door that asked for patience with the team of workers who are shorthanded yet trying hard to get the job done. The sign expressed gratitude for those who at least showed up for work today. I hope we have not created a habit of entitlement worse than what there has previously been among some.

I do not see this feeling of entitlement amongst Idaho's law enforcement. Instead, I see dedicated individuals who go to work wearing bullet proof vests, kissing loved ones as they go out from their homes to protect and serve. We will continue to do so, for we know who we are and what we represent. We are grateful to be in a position to serve.

With that being said, we also have families to feed, care for, and to provide the basics in life, housing, medicine, and clothing. We do our job for love of Country, but we also have financial responsibility to those we love. We have sick kids, aging parents, all the same that others have, but we can't just go to the boss and ask for a raise, hoping that based on the merit of our individual work ethic and product that we as an individual could obtain a raise to add to the family comfort. We in the State Police are dependent on a raise as a whole. Anything we get is as a group. This is why I decided to do what I could as an individual to help myself and my Brothers and Sisters in appealing to you to look beyond what a head of agency might feel ok or comfortable to ask for and consider a raise to State Police employees that will help make a difference in their family's lives. I don't know the numbers, but I've heard a 3 to 5 percent raise was asked by agency heads, when in reality 10 to 12 percent would be closer to a needed salary to keep people working for us and not leaving due to a need to provide better for the family. There are many who would rather stay and provide a needed service to their community, but leave out of necessity to better provide for their families. I hate to see great people leave the State Police for other agencies or the private sector because of this. Now I knew getting into this 20 years ago that I wasn't going to live the high life of fancy cars, boats, exotic vacations, and all the other fine things money can buy; but I wanted to make a difference and I was alright with living a simpler life. I chose it. For many Officers even a simple life is tough to accomplish with this economy we find ourselves in and the pay rate we receive compared to other agencies or the private sector.

With the budget surplus and continued above average growth of the State, this seems like the year, if any, to institute such a pay raise and let those in the Idaho State Police know of your willingness to fight for us and provide a raise that will help make up some of the short falls we experience. Please take into consideration the long term, and look to provide compensation that you think will recruit, and retain men and women who you'd want to represent our State and protect your family in times of need.

Thank You and with all respect,
Michael Cox

To the members of the CEC Committee,

Idaho continues to grow at an unparalleled pace. With that growth comes the increased need for health, safety, educational, social, and recreational services that benefit all Idahoans. Unfortunately, wages for state employees continue to lag behind private-sector industry and neighboring state pay scales. As the need for state services continues to grow, the state personnel system continues to lose employees at an alarming rate. In addition, low wages make it difficult to attract and retain qualified individuals. State employees are continually being asked to do more with less in order to make up for worker shortages. As long as wages are not at or close to parity with private sector and other government agency wages, Idaho will not attract and retain qualified and quality employees. The inability to maintain a stable state labor force is significant in Idaho, and without bold action, this will not change.

The state is very proud of its surplus this year and is proposing another round of individual tax cuts. Tax cuts don't attract and retain workers. Pay equity attracts and retains workers. The proposed 2% increase for state workers and potential for another 3% increase (a flat 5% for public education employees) is not going to bring parity to state employees wages when compared to private sector wages for the same/similar jobs. The Legislature has the opportunity to address a gaping shortage in state employee pay and begin to rebuild its state workforce by providing a significant increase to all state employee base wages. Until employees can meet the sharply rising cost of living in Idaho, the state will continue to struggle to meet state agency staffing needs throughout the state.

Respectfully,
Shannon Wilcox
Boise, Idaho

To whom it may concern:

My name is Natalie Wollam and I have worked as a child protection social worker for the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare for the past 3 ½ years and am also an Idaho constituent and resident who has lived in Idaho my whole life. All opinions stated here are my own. Through my work with IDHW and my experiences as an Idaho resident I have seen the population grow increasingly fast the last couple of years. This has particularly impacted the work I do as there have been increased children and families who need help in our community. It has also created an increased cost of living, particularly around housing in Idaho and the Treasure Valley. In my particular area of work, we are extremely short staffed with every person doing the work of 2 people. It is impossible to complete the work that needs to be done in 40 hours a week. Additionally, the pay rate I receive for the work I do is not enough to pay for my living expenses.. I have attended 5 years of college education to have my license to do this work and am not compensated enough to ensure I can pay my bills. This is the main reason why there are issues with maintaining or obtaining staff. All of these issues are directly correlated to employee compensation and I urge you to consider raising employee compensation to support employees in a community where the living expenses continue to increase as does the workload due to the increased population. It only makes sense that the compensation would increase as well.

Thank you,

Natalie Wollam, LSW
Case Manager
Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
Children and Family Services
1720 Westgate Drive, Suite D
Boise, ID 83704
Office: (208) 334-6706

Fax: (208) 334-0725

To report child abuse or neglect please call 208-334-5437 or toll free 1-855-552-5437

Dear CEC Committee members,

Increases in housing costs and inflation have reduced effective compensation for state employees:

1) According to Zillow:

Typical seasonally-adjusted, middle-tier home value in Idaho was \$447K in November 2021.
A 35-percent increase over last year.

2) According to Dallas Federal Reserve researchers:

Surging house prices are expected to propel rent increases.
House price growth historically leads rent inflation.

3) According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics:

Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers increased seven percent for twelve months ending December 2021.
Largest increase since June 1982.


Performance evaluation guidelines make it difficult or impossible for some employees to receive appropriate merit increases.

Guidelines may not be equitable for blue-collar and non-supervisory jobs.

Please support state employees with cost-of-living adjustments and equitable merit increases.

Sincerely,

Bruce Jensen


Boise, Idaho 83707

Hello,

I am a Self-Reliance Specialist with the Department of Health and Welfare. I have been an SRS with the State of Idaho for 17 years, working in the division of child support. Over my years of employment I have seen bonuses, raises and increases in pay to bring workers up to market wages. Once an employee reaches what is deemed to be market wages the only compensation is the raise you receive based on your performance evaluation. In a perfect world this would be a fair way to compensate employees but when the standard beginning wage for today's employee ends up being less than a dollar difference from an employee who has worked in their current position for 16 years and gotten yearly performance raises it just doesn't seem fair. I feel employees who have dedicated their lives to working for the citizens of this great state deserve to also receive market raises. Cost of living keeps rising which includes the medical and dental insurance premiums we have to pay. If you're a dedicated employee with any service time at all your wages have not increased to reflect these cost of living increases, and in most cases barely cover the cost of our rising medical/dental premiums. I realize the starting wage has been raised to compete with the private sector and in hopes of gaining employees who will stay and become career employees but what about the career employees who have chosen to stay and serve this great state? Shouldn't our wages also be raised to compete with the private sector? The dedicated employees who have remained at our

jobs working with fewer staff and more work load, training the new employees who leave after a short time deserve recognition.

I ask that you consider giving career employees a market wage increase based on their years of service to the great State of Idaho as well as their performance based raise.

Sincerely,

Jeannette Wilson
Self Reliance Specialist
Financial Integrity Management Unit
Child Support Services
800-356-9868
childdsupport@dhw.idaho.gov
<https://mychilddsupport.idaho.gov>

To whom it may concern;

This is ridiculously low pay by any standards.

We lose many employees to nearby Washington and the private sector...after we spend our/my STATE money training them. Of which you are already well aware.

I don't make as much as most McDonalds or In and Out Burger or most Walmart employees and I have been here over 8 ½ years.

You cannot ever have a quality organization without good, decently paid, employees. (with the exception of a family run place that is their whole life)

I am only still here because I am partly retired, otherwise I would never remain here. It would be counter productive.

Nothing more to be said.

1/11/22, 8:32 AM



***** STATE OF IDAHO STATEMENT OF EARNINGS *****
PREPARED BY THE OFFICE OF THE STATE CONTROLLER



PAY PERIOD ENDING: 12/25/21

PAY DATE : 01/07/22

Employee: JANALIE KATHERINE ANELLO Agency:270-HEALTH & WELFARE

Total Earnings: 932.89 Net Pay: 549.84

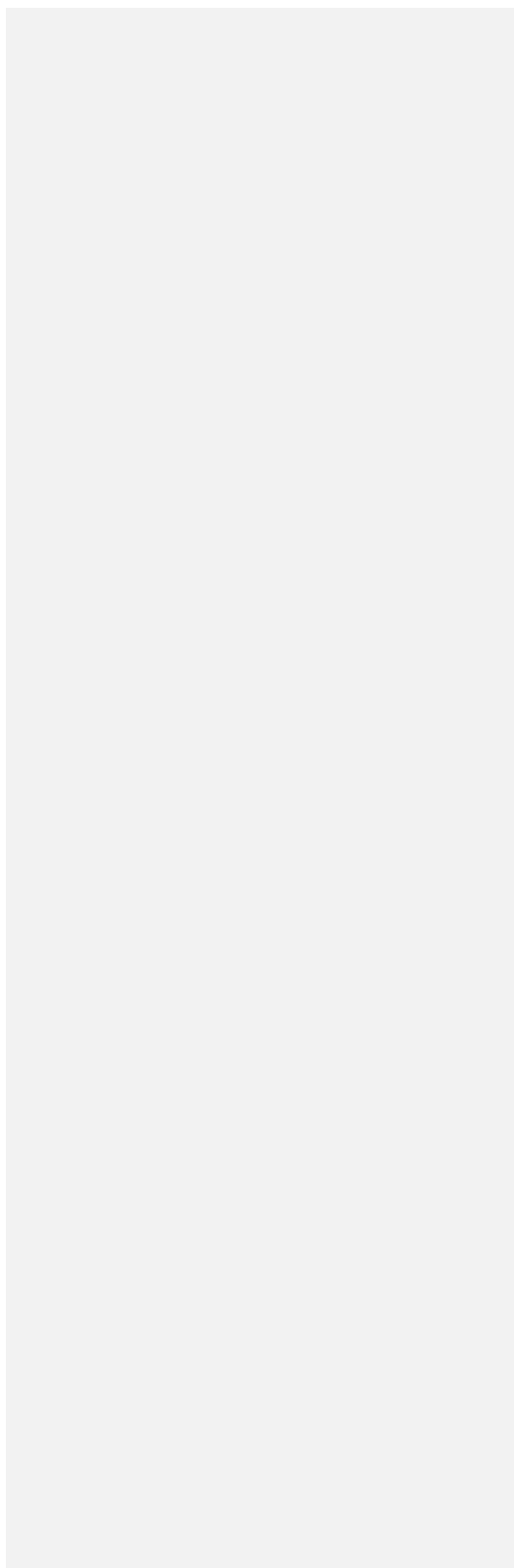
Federal Tax		State Tax		Direct Deposit Information	
Exempt:	N	Exempt:	N	Bank Name	Acct Type
Status:	M	Status:	M	FIRST INTERSTATE BANK	C
Withholdings:	0	Withholdings:	0		
Add'l Amount:	0	Add'l Amount:	0		
Mult Job Ind:	N				
Dependents:	0				
Other Income:	0				
Deductions:	0				

Current Earnings			
Description	Rate	Hours	Amount
HOLIDAY	14.95	6.40	95.68
LWOP-OTH	14.95	1.60	
REG PAY	14.95	50.50	754.98
SICK LV	14.95	5.50	82.23
Total Earnings:			932.89

Leave Accounting			
Leave	Taken	Accrued	Balance
CSS HRS		62.4	17,697.6
SICK	5.5	2.9	29.6
VACATION		3.6	27.9
ON CALL			
RHH			
COV PREV 6			
MO			
COV COMP			
EX COMP			

Janalie Anello
Office Specialist II
janalie.anello@dhw.idaho.gov

208-769-2740 work





**Idaho State Police Association
12 Willow Drive
Lowman, Idaho 83637**



October 1, 2021

Governor Brad Little
Office of the Governor
Post Office Box 83720
Boise, Idaho 83720

Members of the Joint Finance-Appropriations
Idaho State Capital
700 W Jefferson St
Boise, ID 83702

Colonel Kedrick Wills
Idaho State Police
700 South Stratford Drive
Meridian, Idaho 83642

Governor Little, Members of the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee, and Colonel Wills,

On behalf of the Idaho State Police Association (ISPA) members and employees of the Idaho State Police, the ISPA Board of Directors is writing to request a pay increase to retain the current employees and recruit new employees.

In the past few years, Idaho has experienced unprecedented growth and an unparalleled abundance in the State budget. The expanded growth has impacted the infrastructure of our state government on every level. Idaho must rapidly adapt to the increase in demands.

A starting place for improved retention is to raise the wages of all Idaho State Police employees.

The Idaho State Police is comprised of 279 commissioned officers, and 238 non-commissioned staff providing a broad range of law enforcement services to protect the lives, property, and constitutional rights of people in Idaho.

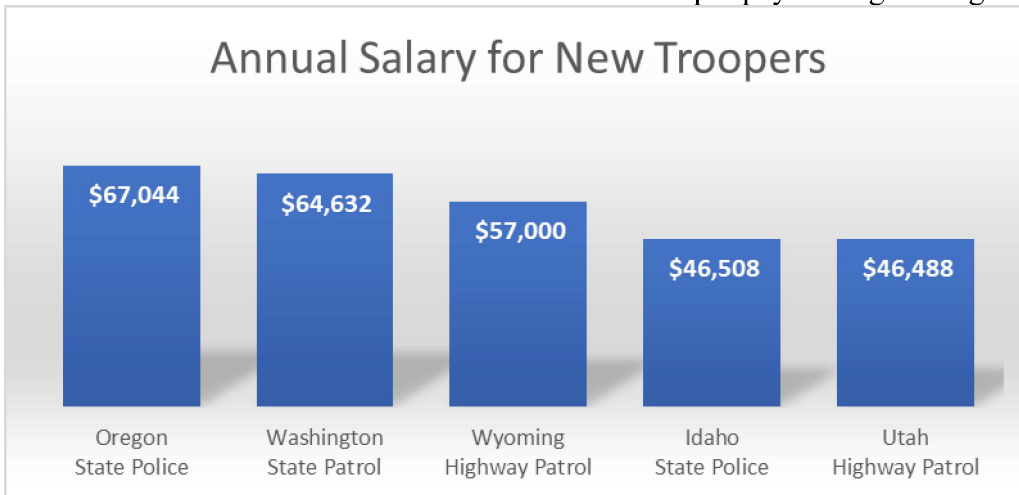
Employee Shortage

Currently, the Idaho State Police is facing unprecedented workforce shortages, with 18 commissioned and 24 non-commissioned unfilled positions. The absence of these employees is creating increased responsibility and tasks in every division of the Idaho State Police. Current employees are experiencing low morale, financial hardship, and increased workload due to Idaho's rapid population growth. Recruiting quality employees is difficult with the current pay scale and the extreme rise in the cost of living.

Below National Average Pay Scale

Idaho State Police employees are paid below the national average by 22.4%ⁱ while housing costs are 14.1%ⁱⁱ above the national average. Several employees within the agency work two or more jobs to survive financially. In District 6 one of the office staff has a niece that just started working at a Wendy’s restaurant and is making more money than our employee.

The chart below illustrates the difference in new Trooper pay in neighboring states.ⁱⁱⁱ



The discrepancy in pay is forcing loyal veteran employees to leave ISP to cover the cost of living for themselves and their families. They take with them their expertise and extensive training. Recently, two highly trained Patrol Troopers in District 3 left ISP and joined the Meridian Police Department for a significant pay increase. A third Trooper, who was a field training officer and POST certified instructor left District 3 to work in the private sector for significantly more money. The State of Idaho spent tens of thousands of dollars in training and certifying these officers. The State of Idaho will now have to pay to hire, train, and certify new Troopers to fill their positions.

The retention of employees is crucial to the continued success of the Idaho State Police in serving the citizens of Idaho.

Cost of Living Increase

With the average home price up 34%^{iv} in the past year in Idaho, finding affordable housing is becoming a crisis for Idaho State Employees.

Here are some examples of current Idaho State Police employees across the State that are dealing with disrupted living accommodations due to the increased cost of housing and lack of wage increase as well as they can:

- In District 1 there is a Commercial Vehicle Specialist that is staying in his travel trailer in the parking lot of the District 1 building because he cannot afford a rental in the Coeur d'Alene area.
- District 2 has a Trooper assigned to the Orofino residency that could not find affordable housing in the area and had to move back to the district area. The residency position is now vacant.
- District 4 has a Trooper renting a house in the Twin Falls area and his lease is coming open in March. He cannot afford the rent increase or to purchase a house and will be leaving the agency next Spring.
- In District 5 there is a Trooper who had his rent raised to a level he could not afford by himself. He was forced to move back in with his parents in the Idaho Falls area. This has had a direct effect on District 5's staffing as this Trooper now has to commute an hour to reach his designated patrol area.

Difficulty Recruiting New Hires

All employers in Idaho are experiencing trouble finding qualified employees^v. Compared to other Idaho State Government agencies, Idaho State Police face an additional hurdle in the hiring process. To honor the responsibility to serve and protect the citizens of Idaho, we hold candidates to high standards to ensure integrity in our agency. In addition to interviews, to qualify for employment, a person must pass an extensive background check, drug-free blood test, polygraph examination, and a stringent physical fitness test.

The changing sentiment towards law enforcement agencies in the last years has made it very difficult to recruit outstanding employees who are qualified to be hired.

Closing Facilities Due to Employee Shortage

The employees are being asked continually for more output, responsibility, and hours with unchanged compensation or at most an occasional 1 to 3 percent cost of living increase.

The Regional Communications Center North (RCC North) has been forced to close during the early morning hours because of a labor shortage. 24-hour coverage is no longer an option for RCC North.

The Regional Communications Center South (RCC South) is requiring 35 hours of overtime every 2 weeks for all their communication staff. This is very taxing on each employee as sick leave and vacation time cannot be taken. The centers are 11 employees short, and more employees are leaving due to increased hours and lack of wages. RCC North and RCC South during the week of September 19 to 25, 2021, jointly handled 3773 calls for service, 101 crash calls, and 4222 telephone calls.

The future success of the Idaho State Police as Idaho's comprehensive law enforcement entity requires an immediate substantial change in the wage structure. Increasing the pay structure to a livable wage will help retain veteran employees, improve employee standard of living, and recruit qualified new hires.

The Idaho State Police Association Board of Directors on behalf of our members and the employees of the Idaho State Police respectfully asks for a substantial wage increase to enable the success of the agency and its employees.

Respectfully,
Chairman Peter Sibus
Vice-Chairman Terry Murdock
Chapter 1 President Tim Johnson
Chapter 2 President Gideon Roberts
Chapter 3 President Tyler Jussel
Chapter 4 President Cliff Katona
Chapter 5 President Denise Gibbs
Chapter 6 President Michael Nielson

Appendix

The 2019 FY 2021 Change in Employee Compensation & Benefits Report states Idaho’s Public Sector compensation is below the national average by 12.4%^{vi}. A study published by Open Payrolls^{vii} states: “The average employee salary for the State of Idaho in 2020 was \$51,181. This is 22.4 percent lower than the national average for government employees and 15.4 percent lower than other states.”

Endnote References

ⁱ <https://openpayrolls.com/state/idaho/page-8>

ⁱⁱ https://www.bestplaces.net/cost_of_living/state/idaho

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.oregon.gov/osp/jobs/pages/Become-a-trooper.aspx>
<https://www.wsp.wa.gov/be-a-trooper/>
<https://www.whp.dot.state.wy.us/home/trooper---careersrecruiting.html>
<https://isp.idaho.gov/recruiting/join-the-idaho-state-police/>
<https://highwaypatrol.utah.gov/join-uhp-becoming-a-trooper/employment-compensation-benefits/>

^{iv} <https://www.noradarealestate.com/blog/boise-real-estate/>

^v <https://idahoatwork.com/2021/07/27/why-idaho-employers-struggle-to-find-workers/>

^{vi} <https://dhr.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/PDFs/CEC/FY2021CEC.pdf> page 16-17

^{vii} <https://openpayrolls.com/state/idaho/page-8>