



## Idaho State Senate

### SENATOR CHUCK WINDER PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

October 5, 2022

Committee Members  
2023 Citizen's Committee on Legislative Compensation

Dear Committee Chair and Members:

Thank you for taking time to read this letter with regard to the 2022-2024 legislative compensation.

We are all aware of the pain that the spiraling prices are causing every Idahoans. The latest inflation report showed that, on average, the prices of consumer goods were 8.26% higher. Although the gas prices have been moving to the right direction (that is gas prices have come down in recent weeks), most consumer items still remain high.

In addition, over the past months, the surge in housing cost is becoming increasingly unaffordable. Renters are bearing the impact of the current surge. In the Senate, 60% of its members reside more than 50 miles from the Statehouse. For economical and practical reasons, these Senate members rent houses or rooms to be able to perform their legislative duties and obligations competently and efficiently.

With gasoline prices seemingly uncertain, food costs soaring, and house rentals highly priced, I would like to recommend a five (5) percent increase in the Senator's base salary in the next 2 years. Moreover, for the Senate members residing 50 miles and more from the Statehouse, I would like to propose a significant increase on their per diem allowance to help them cover their travel expenses.

Lastly, I would like to ask the Committee to review and clarify few sections of the 2020 Legislative Compensation Report. They are as follows:

1. *Section II, number 3 (Unvouchered Expense Allowances on CAP Payments):* In # 3(c) speaks about vacancy situations for the \$2,500 constituent service allowance payments but does not speak towards the vacancy situation as it relates to # 3(b) and the legislative district size payments. Should these legislative district size payments also be prorated? Is that the intent? Who should receive the payments? What is the timing of the pro-rated payment?
2. *Section III (Vouchered Expense Allowances):* Compensation for the legislators residing less than 50 miles from the Statehouse during extraordinary and organizational sessions is not mentioned in the report. Should there be compensation or none, I would like to propose that it should be clearly established in the report.

3. *Section III (Vouchered Expense Allowance)*: Clarify the term “actual travel expenses” mentioned in Section III of the report. Is there a cap or limit on the amount that a legislator is allowed to claim, or the legislator is reimbursed for the actual cost incurred with evidence of a receipt? I suggest that this should also be defined in the report.

Finally, I have attached State Controller Brandon Woolf’s letter dated September 30, 2022, regarding his concerns and suggestions to the 2022 Citizen’s Committee on Legislative Compensation. Please review and consider his proposals for legislator’s CAP Payments.

In the light of what have been stated above, I kindly ask for your consideration on the salary and per diem recommendations of our legislators and re-evaluate Sections II and III of the Report to help identify their intents going forward.

Thank you for your service.

Sincerely,



Chuck Winder  
President Pro Tempore  
Idaho State Senate

CW/rw

cc: Scott Bedke, Speaker, Idaho House of Representatives  
Brandon Woolf, State Controller, Idaho State Controller’s Office