

Many of your employees make less than the kids at the hamburger places. I understand we have tons of extra monies due to the Feds trying to buy our state out.

No bitterness here. Just facts.

Thank You for your time.

Janalie Anello

Office Specialist II

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Employee compensation is more important than ever as the Behavioral Health team moves through changes which impact their workloads. You as the legislatures may not be aware but the Behavioral Health unit has been going through significant changes over the past few years. Many clinicians have increased their work loads to include several different roles and responsibilities. Many have done so without pay increases and as a Designated Examiner with the population increase so have the clinicians roles and responsibilities. The morale has decreased as clinicians who are hired at a higher wage surpass those who have been with the Department and have been dedicated employees. I am fearful that there will be a mass exit for those who are not feeling valued. The clinicians who have been loyal to the Department deserve to be recognized as valuable employees and the best way to demonstrate their worth is by increasing the pay structure. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Noël Mathews, LCSW

Designated Evaluator & Team Lead

Idaho Department of Health & Welfare



208-334-0788 Fax

Hours: M-F 8-5pm

CEC Committee Members,

Our department continues to have trouble retaining staff due to the much greater compensation amounts offered by private companies. In the past month alone, we lost two RNs, Beth Howell and Amanda Sheets, to Skilled Nursing Facilities. We are paying in the low \$30.00 per hour range, specifically \$31.13, for starting RNs. Both of them went to work for Cascadia Corporation in different facilities with a beginning pay exceeding \$50.00 per hour. Our benefits package does not make up for the large wage differential.

Also, in the past year, we lost support staff, Noe DeValle, to the private sector. We were offering \$16.50 per hour for an AA1 posting and he received an offer from a private company at \$25.00 per hour doing the same work. Our TRS2 staff members are

under the same pressure to take private company jobs at much greater wages than the State is offering.

I understand that we have a great benefits package, but what people are saying is that does not cover their bills today. Especially with the inflation in rents/mortgage expenses and food costs, people need money in their pocket now to meet regular living expenses. In addition, State Employees are talking about the huge surplus in the State's budget and asking why we do not rate better pay when there is so much money available. Unless something is done about the wage disparity, we, the Idaho State Government, will not be able to replace departing staff and attract new employees with others of a similar caliber or even better qualifications. Shouldn't we have a desire to attract the best staff to serve Idahoans?

If there are any questions regarding my statements, please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your consideration regarding raising compensation for Idaho State Employees.

Lynne Given
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It is the responsibility of this committee to make changes to employee compensation based primarily on inflation. Inflation rates are not a secret; this committee's decision making process should be straightforward.

Myself and my peers are loyal servants to the State. We desperately want to work for you. Please allow us to do that by providing appropriately competitive pay.

Doug Morford

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I am writing to provide comments regarding the CEC committee meeting, the state's personnel system, and employee compensation.

My husband and I both work for different agencies within the state of Idaho, and have moved throughout the state over the past several years to follow jobs we've held within the Departments of Fish and Game, Environmental Quality, and Health and Welfare. We currently reside in the treasure valley, and were fortunate to be able to purchase a

home in 2020 when interest rates were low, prior to the large spike in inflation recently. Many of our Idaho friends and colleagues, especially in the Boise area, were not as fortunate and are still renting, or have been forced to move to more affordable areas. The costs of living in the treasure valley, and Idaho more broadly, have increased substantially over the past several years, and have made it very difficult for younger people who are just entering the workforce to make it here.

Speaking for myself personally, I have been so grateful for each of my jobs with the state. They have been very rewarding, compelling, and meaningful, and the health insurance and retirement benefits are truly exceptional. Moreover, I have had the opportunity to work with extremely bright and motivated people who have created a positive and healthy work culture. When my husband took a reduction in his hours at the beginning of 2021, I was forced to make the difficult decision to leave the state to work in a private sector position for higher pay. I missed my job with the state tremendously, and I remained in the private sector for less than a year before returning to the state. Compared with the job I held in the private sector, I took a \$15,000 cut in my annual salary to come back to the state. This was worth it to me to return to work that I enjoy within a supportive and healthy work environment, and I feel extremely fortunate that I am in a situation where I have the flexibility to make such a career switch. However, my situation has had a lot to do with luck and good timing.

That being said, I am concerned about the future of our workforce here within the state, due to current compensation rates. I am concerned that as more senior members of the state workforce begin to retire, we will lack competitive applicants available to fill those vacancies, and the lower level vacancies that occur as mid-level employees are promoted. I worry that the quality of our workforce will suffer because younger people simply cannot afford to live comfortably here, purchase a home, and put down roots in Idaho, based off the current salaries for state employees, particularly those in entry level positions. According to Zillow, the average home price in Idaho was over \$460,000 as of November, 2022. With interest rates around 7.0 to 7.5%, that puts a monthly mortgage payment around \$3,000. This puts buying a first home out of reach for most state employees in entry level positions, earning between \$15 to \$27 per hour (\$2,600 to \$4,700 per month, roughly). Moreover, with current inflation rates around 7%, annual raises below the level of inflation more or less equate to a pay cut, year over year.

As you consider our current employee compensation rates within the state, I would urge you to consider the future of our workforce as well. Recent cost increases have disproportionately impacted young people who are entering or will soon enter the workforce. Idaho is a fantastic place to work and live, and making our compensation rates more competitive is one way that we can help ensure that we continue to have a motivated, committed, and stable state workforce for years to come.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

--

Emily M. LaFrance, Ph.D. (*she/her/hers*)

Principal Research Analyst | IdVDRS
Bureau of Vital Records & Health Statistics
Division of Public Health
Idaho Department of Health & Welfare
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Average rent for Boise, ID: \$1,677.00 (1-bedroom apartment, 877 sq. ft.)

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

Average mortgage for Ada County, ID: \$1,716 (in 2021)

Source: <https://better.com/content/counties-where-mortgage-payments-have-jumped-most-past-two-years>

Property tax rate in Idaho: 0.75% (ex. Avg. home value \$452,219.00 in 2021, avg. property tax is \$3,618.00)

Source:

https://www.buildidaho.com/home/boise_idaho/boise_cost_of_living_comparison/,
<https://better.com/content/counties-where-mortgage-payments-have-jumped-most-past-two-years>

Average utility cost per month in Idaho: \$243.71 (electricity, natural gas, internet, water)

Source:

https://www.buildidaho.com/home/boise_idaho/boise_cost_of_living_comparison/

Average car loan payment: \$612.50

Source: <https://www.lendingtree.com/auto/debt-statistics/>

Average car insurance payment: \$148 (full coverage), \$45 (liability coverage)

Source: <https://www.bankrate.com/insurance/car/average-cost-of-car-insurance/>

Average student loan payment: \$274.00

Source: <https://studentloanhero.com/featured/idaho-student-loans-refinance/>

Average gas price per month: \$82.32 (2 fill-ups of 12-gals regular fuel)

Source: <https://gasprices.aaa.com/?state=ID>

Average grocery bill in Idaho: \$267 (single adult), \$773 (family of 4)

Source: <https://247wallst.com/state/cost-of-living-in-idaho/>

The financially healthy way to allocate your income based on financial experts is 50% on living expenses, 20% towards debt reductions and savings, and 30% towards discretionary spending.

Based on the average monthly cost if you're a renter your total monthly expenses are \$3,304.53.

Based on the average monthly cost if you're a homeowner (family of four, 2 cars, 2 student loan pymts) your monthly expenses are \$4,966.35.

An average single adult would need to take home at least \$3,400.00 to be able to make their monthly payments for living in Boise, ID. This does not include if they go out to eat, have unexpected car maintenance, medical bills, childcare, or put money into retirement/savings.

Of the 221 DEQ employees only 43% make an income that would allow them to make their monthly payments plus put money into savings/debt reduction/retirement (20% of income). Of the 43%, 20% are administrators. Therefore, only 23% of non-administrators are making enough monthly.

Madeline Renfrow | Hazardous Waste Permit Writer

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To whom it may concern:

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to voice our concerns again about wages and personnel for the State of Idaho.

As the Statewide Facility Manager for the Division of Public Works, I oversee several campus' with roughly 35 employees, and I again implore you to consider radical changes to the way the State recruits, hires, trains and retains employees.

First, let me please address the archaic methods we employ to apply for a job, the method is obsolete, using a written essay like method to questions, using a 3rd party subject matter expert (SME) and then if they clear the first hurdle are then subjected to a group or panel interview with pre-written questions, and if they pass the second hurdle then a possible second interview, or job offer. By the time all of that occurs, they most likely have accepted another job. The process is slow, cumbersome, outdated, and totally inefficient and I'm begging for someone to hear my cry for help. Other companies that have a streamlined system understand the need for a quick hiring and onboarding process, and in most cases are hiring those folks away from us – due to our slow and outdated process.

The second issue continues to be our low rate of pay. We are consistently offering a pay rate that is too low for our job candidates, and we hear many times over that they can't come to work for us for that low amount of pay, and even when we discuss the amazing benefits of PERSI, health insurance, paid time off, we often hear the response, "I can't feed my kids with PERSI" or "I can't make my mortgage with health insurance." The pay is TOO low, and has been for many, many years. We've had vacancies in our

unit or upwards of 12 to 15 months, with no applicants or applicants being rejected by the SME, and when we are now officially competing for employees against McDonald's, Wendy's and Arby's, it has to make you wonder why? I fear that at some point when we're unable to recruit and hire for these positions we'll have large gaps in our daily maintenance, the biggest of which is the State Capitol Building. Imagine seeing light bulbs burned out for long periods of times, doorknobs that don't work, touch up paint that doesn't get addressed, or the day to day routine maintenance requests we receive from the constitutional officers, including the legislature. We hang pictures, move furniture, repair faucets, doors, urinal and toilet flush valves, replace burned out light bulbs, and insure the heating and cooling are functioning correctly. We have always had a very rapid rate of response for those request, but if there is no manpower, there would a sizeable delay in getting to those requests.

Our only course of action at this time is to subcontract for those services and our operational expenses continue to climb due to the high costs of contractor labor, which in turn would force us to raise the rents that we charge throughout our campus', as we're a self-funded unit, relying solely on rental income.

Again, I appreciate the opportunity to voice my concerns, and hopefully a plan of action will be developed to make real and necessary change to our recruitment policies, and our incredibly low wages.

Respectfully,

Paul Navarro
Statewide Facility Manager
Division of Public Works,
Department of Administration,
State of Idaho



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Hi Christine,

I have written a few comments below for the CEC Committee - thank you for all your work in compiling these!

"My name is Allyson Fadel, and I am a Family Service Worker for the Department of Health and Welfare. Before this, I was fortunate to serve Idaho's youth as a special education teacher. In my current role, I have the privilege to work with many clients throughout Region 4 of Idaho to strengthen families and help ensure the safety of Idaho's children, our future. I am grateful for the opportunity to work hand-in-hand with some of our most vulnerable populations, and value my role as a public servant.

However, the global rise of inflation has created strain in my husband and I's existing expenses and budget. We currently live in a 350 square foot studio apartment, and would love to be able to obtain permanent housing in the Boise/Treasure Valley area that allows both of us to continue in our public service jobs **and** start a family. Unfortunately, with inflation, the pressures of the housing market, and the pay cap in our respective professions, this seems less and less likely. I am writing to you, not to complain, but rather to respectfully request that you consider these factors in your deliberations. It is my honor to serve the families of Idaho, and my hope is that I am able to continue this service for many years. Thank you for your consideration of my comments, and for your hard work in representing the citizens of Idaho."

Thank you again for your work on this,

Allyson

Allyson Fadel

Safety - Family Service Worker, Region 4
Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
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To the CEC committee,

As a vested employee of the state of Idaho, I appreciate the opportunity to work for a fiscally conservative state whose responsible governance results in balanced budgets. I also feel privileged to live in such a popular state, with our annual growth rate among the highest in the country for the past several years. This has thankfully resulted in repeated record budget surpluses, during which time Idaho's economy has been described as "red-hot".

The consequence of Idaho's sizzling fiscal growth is that we too have experienced extremely high inflation rates of over 7% for all of 2022. Median home prices in the Gem State from 2019-2021 (the most recent year data are available) have led the entire nation, increasing by an astonishing 44% in that time, including concomitant property taxes. My family health care premiums from Blue Cross of Idaho have increased 43.7% in the last three years (including 14% in the last year alone). Meanwhile, my income has increased by an average of 4.3% per year for the past four years, despite consistently good performance ratings. It is a simple math exercise to determine that state of Idaho employees have less buying power each year even though they work in one of the strongest economies in the country.

Idaho's fiscal solvency is a direct result of the no-nonsense politics and conservative family values that have attracted workers and investments from across the country. However, my family, including four small children, is struggling to stay afloat despite my masters-level position in a state agency that has generated record revenue for the last several years. Can Idaho really claim to be a champion of conservative values while well-educated and hard-working families like mine have to be supported by WIC and the school lunch program? The state and federal government *are* ultimately supporting people like me, but not with the self-respect and appreciation that comes from self-sufficiency. It would behoove the CEC committee to redirect some of our record budget surplus toward state employees by recommending a wage increase of at least 8% (on average) to actually increase our buying power in accordance with Idaho's values and the strength of our economy. Regionally competitive raises would both attract and retain talent and reward the loyal people who have worked hard and sacrificed to ensure Idaho remains a bastion of productivity and common sense in a country under turmoil.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to participate in this process.

Respectfully,



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Hello,

This is my letter regarding the upcoming meeting for state's personnel system and employee compensation.

I have worked closely with the Department of Health and Welfare for 8 years. I started out working as a contract worker, working with Child protections and Children mental health. I have seen many employees come and go over the year. Within the department there has been a lot of turn over. Wages have continued to increase throughout the valley and individuals are leaving to go to higher paying jobs, with less stress. The department has failed to keep quality individual due to the lack of support these individuals receive and the expectations of the job, with very low wages. We saw the system failing its employees as well as the public. As a foster mom, as well as a state employee. I have seen the system fail my foster daughters. We have had several case worker that don't last and my foster girls have not been represented as they should. Quality of employees comes from representing them, supporting them, and helping them secure their future. If we want to keep good employees, that will continue to make a difference in our community we have to provide them with more.

Thank You

Krista Morton, B.S
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Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
Family and Community Services Division
Infant and Toddler
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Good Morning,

I first want to say that the state wages are great for the most part, and I do not want to seem ungrateful and I know that in time as I get older money will come.

But since the economy is the way it is right now I feel like the compensation is not adequate for what the economy is doing. It cost \$25 for 5 dozen eggs. That means in my wage I have to work 1 Hour just to be able to buy eggs for my family of 5. We go through 5 dozen eggs in 4 days, because it is a good healthy protein and fast to make for the family. That means it cost me \$50 just to buy 10 dozen eggs a week! That is insane. The cost of food keeps going up and it is not getting any better. For my family of 5 it cost us \$1000 a month just for Groceries. Just to eat a be able to live. If I did not have as husband my take home would only be \$3000 a month this is after persi is extracted and Insurance and taxes my checks are only \$1500 every two weeks. I would need to be on welfare. Your OWN STATE EMPOLYEE would have to be on WELFARE!!!! But I went to college I got a Bachelors Degree spent a lot of money on getting that degree to be able to succeed in life. Make more money and not have to be in poverty, At lease that is what was stated to many through my whole life. With a Bachelors Degree I should not be at a poverty level and needing Welfare. I should be succeeding and making more and being able to provide for my family with or without a husband.

I know that the state raised the wages last year and it was about \$2, this did nothing because the cost of living doubles every few months. If I broke it down to be able to provide for my family I would be in the negative and not able to live. Is this what that State wants for their OWN people? The people that work so hard for the participants to provide these services and work in the community? We put in so many hours of our time and so much emotions and our life to work for the State! How is that right to treat the State Employees this way?

Medicaid has a huge budget that pays only 1% of it to the employees and pays a ton out to those that are on Medicaid for the healthy care. These people that are on Medicaid get a lot better can than I do with I pay a premium each month to have our State Insurance. There are so many problems with how Medicaid is ran and what the participants are getting. There are so much going out to refugees, illegal immigrants,

“poor” people that are perfectly capable of working but don’t. You know why they don’t work? Its because wages are so low that even if you work you are still in Poverty. How is that right?

In conclusion we need an big increase to keep the State Employees out of poverty. We need to be at least 50% over the income limit of what Medicaid wage acceptance is to be on Welfare. If you did the math and really took the time to see how many people that are working for the State and are still on Welfare you would be shocked. It is more than half the people. I think this new Committee needs to take a real hard look at what is happening and provide for the employees that work so hard for them.

Thank you for you time,

Andrea Bustos

Program Speacilist

Medical Care Unit

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January 4, 2023

Rebecca Frey

[REDACTED]

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 five years with the Organic Program, with my newest position as manager being 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. Inflation is also greatly impacting visits to our local grocery store, and we have been forced to tighten our budget as a result.

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 Program Manager

Hi there,

My name is Savannah Sprute. First of all I would love to thank all of you for this opportunity to express my opinion. I absolutely 110% love my position within the Department of Health and Welfare. I am 29 years old and have been a CST for 3 years now and I will retire from this position. Another CST in my region asked me last week how I was doing financially – because they are struggling. I explained to the other CST that I was barely breaking even and a little raise past \$20.00 would change a lot for my family. The other CST agreed. The other CST told me that they are now doing “Door Dash” for a second income to make sure their family is secure in this economy. I do believe in good money management, unfortunately with the price of everything continuing to sky rocket, it is almost next to impossible to salvage any of my paychecks. I have 3 children and trying to keep things going has become a real struggle. Idaho’s average pay was \$23.05 to \$25.00 an hour in 2021. I make \$18.30 an hour and even though I am grateful for this position and to have had all those raises to make what I am now, I am struggling to make ends meet; I never want my children to have a need for something that I cannot provide. I strive to stretch every penny and I simply can’t make it on my current wage. If you are seriously considering what State Employees opinions are for a raise, here it is – people want to have the security in their job that they can provide for their family. People don’t want a huge raise, they just want to be content and secure in their job within the State of Idaho.

Committee,

I am in my tenth year with the Division of Behavioral Health (DBH). I started as a clinician, and have promoted through every available position including team lead, program specialist, supervisor, and am now a statewide program manager.

Coming to the state was a pay cut, but at the time I needed insurance and I was grateful for the stability. It took three years to make the rate I was making in the private sector,

but I really loved my work and the team I was on. I received an amazing raise when I took over supervising the team, as I was managing one of the largest teams in the state while also working on statewide projects. That raise influenced how I felt I was valued by the Department, and it felt really good to be praised for the hard work I've put in here.

When I promoted to my current position, I was given a 24 cent raise. When I brought up the not even a full quarter, I was told that HR based my raise off my program specialist pay as the supervisor pay was a temp raise, so really I got quite a big raise. For HR to be able to justify such a low raise for such a huge increase in responsibility was upsetting and honestly offensive. I almost didn't take the position because of the raise, but I wanted to ensure the staff hired for this team had a quality and supportive supervisor as it is brand new territory and staff report 54% understanding of the work to be done in the bureau I was walking into. I put the well-being of a future team and the longevity of the division ahead of my ego and financial goals. Something I know a lot of DBH staff do as everyone here believes in the values and mission of the division.

As I said originally, I am in my tenth year with the state. When my student loans are forgiven in December 2023, I will likely leave as I can do much less work, have far less stress, and make the same, if not more money elsewhere. I am at a point where I can have insurance under my spouse and still maintain a 401k elsewhere, and have a small income from being vested here at retirement. The benefits touted by leadership and HR are good, but at a certain point in people's lives, hourly wage is an important indicator of career happiness, especially right now as we are going through a major organizational overhaul in DBH that has taken nearly two years and frankly is just exhausting and killing morale. Here are some examples of positions that I can easily apply for and make the same, if not more money per hour, for less stress and/or responsibility:

- Private counselor \$45+
- Law enforcement CIT clinician \$36-40 DOE
- Hospital ER clinician \$38-40 DOE

When I hear HR state "we strive to be competitive in this market" I shake my head. Don't get me wrong, PERSI and our insurance and other benefits are fantastic, but at the end of the day what is most important is being able to pay my mortgage and other bills and have enough leftover to pay for a trip to even use my vacation time for something other than a staycation.

Dear CEC Committee:

I would like to take advantage of and thank you for this opportunity to share my thoughts with you regarding the state's personnel system and employee compensation.

I have worked for the State of Idaho for 18 years and during that time have witnessed extreme fluctuations in state employee compensation. This includes years where state employees received no increase in compensation to years where the Legislature's

recommendation was above and beyond DHR's recommendation. While over the last few sessions the Legislature has recognized the need for significant change in state employee compensation, unfortunately, we are still way behind the public sector. 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. Total compensation is 12% below the private sector, though it's improved to 7% below market for public-sector pay. I work for Department of Administration and over the last few years have seen and felt the struggles of attracting and retaining good employees. I have no doubt that the majority of this struggle is due to the gap between state employee compensation and public sector employee compensation. Again, there has been much improvement over the last few years, and I am extremely grateful to the Legislators who recognize the struggle state employees face regarding equality in compensation when compared to the public sector, but there is still work to do.

In closing, I will tell you that I have had the honor to work with some of the most dedicated and hardworking folks in this great state. I believe that if you look across the gamut of state employees, you will find these attributes to be true about the majority of state workers. I understand that as Legislators you must answer to your constituents. I ask that you remember that state workers are also your constituents and to recognize their efforts and important work and ensure that they are compensated appropriately.

Thank you for taking the time to read my thoughts and if there is anything I can do to be of any further assistance, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Thank you,
Kim

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

Kimberly Rau, [CPM®](#)
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I am going to be as efficient and to the point as I can with my comment. I am witnessing first hand the gap between the cost of living and wages for hard working citizens grow every single year in the state I grew up in and planned to raise my children in. We have a borderline workforce crisis on our hands because wages are too low, which is absolutely something that affects the state as a whole. It affects us in every way that it

effects a small business. I witness first hand the fact that we cannot keep our facility staffed with good employees because wages are far too low. We cannot afford our mortgages and rent on the current wages. Anything under \$18 an hour on a 40 hour work week at this point is poverty, and contributing to that is the price of groceries to feed our children. If we cannot pay a livable wage to employees then we cannot keep employees. Our facility cannot handle being low staffed. At SWITC in Nampa we NEED to have staff to care for our clients. Yet we cannot keep ANY of the good employees that go through new hire training in the last year because the pay is not enough. Across the board.

What this translates to, is two main things. Slow and inefficient work force that take very long to perform menial tasks. And being vastly understaffed. Both of those are huge detriments to any organization or business. It does not matter if it is a State entity. If we continue down this path of low wages and only giving just barely enough to keep people quiet when raises come. We will have a very real problem on our hands across the entire state of Idaho within 5 years. What that will look like at SWITC is a complete lack of employees to run our campus and take care of clients. And when we fall short on that the clients suffer. We owe it to the clients in our care to pay better wages to the people that help take care of them so that they are not left without care simply because a few people who stay here for work cannot take care of all of them. And we get a new client once every month or two.

Please consider the well being of not only the clients in our care, but also the children of the employees at SWITC. Because some of us cannot afford to feed our children 3 square meals a day. Because wages are too low, and children need taking care of, we cannot work 3 jobs and take care of them. Nor should we have to, in order to feed them and give them a good childhood.

I am just one voice in a sea of millions of others like me, who would all have relatively the same thing to say about the wage issue in this great State of Idaho. Let's be sure to take care of our people or nobody will want to live here at all in 5 years. And due to the wage gap, that process has already begun. Thank you.

Taylor French
Building Maintenance Foreman
208-442-2812 Ext. 32437

CEC Committee Members,

The phrase "You get what you pay for" comes to mind, when the question of pay increases for State Employees is raised in the Legislature. We have all seen the increase in goods and services. This new reality is seen in our checking accounts. State employees should have a voice in obtaining a fair and livable wage. In my short time with the state, I have seen my department struggle to hire and retain staff members. The many that have left have all stated that the States wages do not compete with the private sector.

I understand that we have a great benefits package, but what people are saying is that does not cover their bills today. Especially with the inflation in rents/mortgage expenses and food costs, people need money in their pocket now to meet regular living expenses. In addition, State Employees are talking about the huge surplus in the State's budget and asking why we do not rate better pay when there is so much money available. Unless something is done about the wage disparity, we, the Idaho State Government, will not be able to replace departing staff and attract new employees with others of a similar caliber or even better qualifications. Shouldn't we have a desire to attract the best staff to serve Idahoans?

I love the State of Idaho. I am honored to be employed with the State, and I strive each day to make the lives of the people of Idaho better. I would hope that the Legislature would be willing to make the lives of their employees better as well. I would also hope the CEC Committee Members are willing to allow for a fair and accurate wage adjustment for State employees.

Thank you

M. Rachel Murdock
Technical Records Specialist II
Bureau of Facility Standards
Fire Life Safety
Long Term Care
Rachel.murdock@dhw.idaho.gov



First I want to say thank you to those of you on the committee last year! I have no idea how we could have even remotely managed without the change in compensation approved last year.

I do want to request that you try to approve one this year. My husband and I are both State employees and have been for 20 years. This year, our son qualifies for a Pell grant! That means we don't make enough to be expected to fully support his college education.

We live frugally, shopping at thrift stores, buying food on sale and at lower cost grocery stores and going out to eat or entertainment only for special occasions but it is still month-to-month with very little savings.

After college degrees and 20 years with the State, it is hard to believe that so many jobs out there are starting at wages so close to what we make. Please continue working to keep State employees wages in line with inflation.

Thank you.

Dear CEC Committee,

Following is my feedback for your consideration:

It would be beneficial to review the states positions and pay rates on [Transparent Idaho](#) and see the discrepancies in pay rates for those in the same classified position. (A few position examples: Administrative and TRS positions) Understanding that there are differences in time spent/tenure in specific positions, the pay rates for like positions should be reasonably static, and not have such widespread discrepancies. With the rise in cost of living in Idaho, the pay structures should be reviewed at a deeper level. (Example: There are people in positions in the state of Idaho making less than those who work in unskilled labor. Shouldn't pay rates for skilled positions at the state pay a rate comparable to say, serving fries at McDonalds?)

When COVID-19 hit, many (most) state employees took a hard hit to their accrued time off, due to illness of themselves or family members. Please review the time off allotment granted to employees, for increases and possible payment back of the time off used for the illness during the pandemic. Many state employees are now struggling and have no time off remaining or are short on time off. Additionally, when those in non-state positions, had to take time off due to illness, there were Federal Covid-19 programs in place which paid towards time used for illness, that were not put into place for state employees in Idaho, thereby forcing them to use all their time off for the illness, or to work without pay.

Please note that there are state employees who opt out of the state medical insurance, however, their paychecks still show a state payment is being made to providers towards insurance benefits. For those employees who opt out of insurance benefits, instead of the state paying providers for those who are not using the state's insurance, perhaps it would be prudent to renegotiate payments to providers regarding the uninsured, and to compensate those employees at an additional rate adjustment since they are not receiving the same benefits as others?

Thank you,

Candace L. Villarreal

Issues to resolve:

1. Too-low wages. We just had a surplus. Pay people more. It's quite simple.
2. An antiquated and unnecessarily confusing application process. Someone on the committee should just try to apply for a State job. Frankly, the process sucks.
3. Antiquated work tech. Why doesn't the State embrace non-traditional work models? Work from home, flex schedules...the State is MILES behind the curve. These "traditional" work models and ideologies need to be taken outside and shot if we're to recruit fresh talent. Our agency has several open positions that are OVER A YEAR out of being filled! That's absurd.

Daniel Foster

Division of Public Works, Idaho Department of Administration



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Chinden Campus: ccs.idaho.gov

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

My testimony:

I quit my career, left my family behind in the rearview, and relocated from California to Idaho in 2021 during the peak of the pandemic. I found freedom in the great state of Idaho with four seasons, the outdoors, fresh air, fewer people, fewer taxes, fees and regulations, and a lower cost of living. I came here searching for a better quality of life, and I found it.

When I accepted an entry-level position at Idaho State University, I recognized that I would be starting all over in my career in higher education. I did not realize that fast food and Walmart workers would earn more hourly than I would. I started at ISU in 2021 at \$14.01, about the same salary I earned in the same position at California State University, Bakersfield, 8 years ago **in 2014**: <https://transparentcalifornia.com/>

I currently earn \$15.19 per hour, and while I appreciated the CEC increase of 8.5% in my pay rate in FY23, it did not even cover skyrocketing inflation. My husband and I both work at ISU – at the same pay rate - and we cannot afford food and gas right now. Sad

but true! According to [salary.com](https://www.salary.com), the current pay rate for Administrative Assistant I at the State of Idaho (~\$30,000/annually) is less than 10% of the national average, which is unfair. It is my recommendation that the State of Idaho staff pay rates should be at the median of 50% of the national average: <https://www.salary.com/tools/salary-calculator/administrative-assistant-i/pocatello-id>

However, I understand that the State of Idaho provides a compensation model based on total compensation, including benefits and retirement. Employee compensation is directly related to employee retention. I think Idaho State University has a high turnover rate due to low wages. My department lost three stellar staff to higher-paying jobs in 2021 – salaries that ISU was unwilling to match.

Furthermore, onboarding costs are expensive! The average onboarding cost is \$4,000 per employee. A 100-person organization with an average employee salary of \$50,000 is likely to have turnover and replacement costs between \$660,000 to \$2.6 million per year. For midrange positions, the cost to replace an employee is around 20% of their annual salary. When replacing people in executive positions, costs may reach up to 213% of their average salary. Person-hours spent on paperwork and administrative costs – about \$400 per employee. Loss of productivity during onboarding and training – new employees function at about 25% productivity during their first 4 weeks, and it may take up to 26 weeks for new hires to get up to expected performance levels. Workspace setup – software companies and agencies may spend anywhere between \$500 to \$1,000 or more to help new hires set up their home office or in-office setup: <https://whatfix.com/blog/cost-of-onboarding/>

If the State of Idaho fairly compensated its employees, it would retain more top talent. No State of Idaho staff member should be struggling with bare necessities. To quote President Satterlee, no one should have to apply for other positions or leave their department or institution to earn more money. Career ladder steps for each position should be developed and implemented immediately. Total Reward has five variables: compensation, benefits, work-life balance, professional development, and career advancement. Compensation is the number one reason people stay or leave. That's the bottom line.

Thank you for your time.

Jena Lords

Administrative Assistant | Educational Technology Services

Pronouns: She/Her

CliftonStrengths: Strategic | Positivity | Empathy | Maximizer | Input

[Staff Council](#) CLASSIFIED Member-at-Large

Eli Oboler Library | Room B38A

921 S. 8th Ave. STOP 8064 | Pocatello, Idaho 83209-8064

 | jenalords@isu.edu

Dear CEC Committee

I have been with the State since June 2021. I make \$19.50 an hour as an AA2. After taxes and deductions my net is \$2200/mo. Unfortunately, my income does not meet my basic cost of living. My rent on a 1 bed apt is \$1435/mo. That is 65% of my net income. I cannot survive on my current wages without working a second job. I love my job and I really want to continue working for the State for the next 15 years. I really hope the State will consider raising employee compensation. We should have to work 2 jobs.

Thank you



Dara Fugett

Investigations Support Specialist

Building, Construction, and Real

Estate Bureau

Investigative Unit

Email: BCRE-INV@dopl.idaho.gov



www.dopl.idaho.gov

11341 W Chinden Blvd. Bldg. #4

Boise, ID 83714

To whom this may concern:

I am a classified employee in the position as Administrative Assistant II for the Career Center at Idaho State University. I have held this position just short of four years now, and thoroughly enjoy the community ISU provides and my colleagues in the Career Center.

In my position, I am not only the face of the office for students, staff, employers, and community members, but also the go-to person for all Idaho State University employees within the Career Center. I regularly perform jobs outside the norm for an Administrative assistant, to include; social media marketing, student supervision, procedures manual editor, budget management, and so much more.

Even with all that I provide for my office and students, to ISU and the state of Idaho, my position is considered the bottom of the totem pole. I hold no value and my pay rate demonstrates that. I do not hold a degree, despite the years of experience I bring to the table, therefore I can not advance within the University.

I have considered pursuing an education and even enrolled in classes to try, but due to financial, mental and anxiety struggles was unsuccessful and chose to withdraw. As a single mother without support, this route was unobtainable for me.

The state of Idaho and America in general chooses to pay Americans bare minimum keeping those who grew up in poverty repeating the cycle for generations to come. It is not because of laziness or lack of education but more so lack of resources and support. If we could all be at least middle class in any field of work, this would give every American a fighting chance at success, at being a homeowner, at stability, at mental success, at pursuing an education, among many other advantages.

I grew up in poverty and repeated the cycle of teen parenting like the rest of females in my family. Because like me, they worked 24/7 to provide and kids were left unsupervised. Like many children of teen parents, I grew up without a father, my son included. I work 2 jobs, I wake up at 3:30 am, I go to the gym for some mental sanity, I get my son and myself ready for school and work and there we stay until 5pm, then I head to my second job until 9pm. Do you see how this leaves no time for me to be a mother? I do not receive state benefits or assistance, I do not receive child support regularly, I do it all on my own. My son's father is not responsible for food, clothes, medical bills, supplies, etc. He is simply responsible for child support which he doesn't always pay. Do you see how this is unfair to single mothers and how much of a disadvantage is put onto the children in these homes? I am unable to purchase a home because I don't make enough money and if I try to apply for programs for low income families, I then make "too much money" according to the state. I work so much in order to try and live comfortably and still cannot succeed under the wages provided by Idaho State University and Idaho.

I hope that in reading my email you can get a sense of the struggles many Americans like me face and will consider a substantial wage increase for Idahoans.

Thank you for your reading,

-Vi

Vianca Morales

Administrative Assistant II | Career Center

Museum Building | Room 418

921 S 8th Ave, Stop 8108 | Pocatello, ID 83209-8108

 | viancamorales@isu.edu

Dear Christine Otto and other CEC Committee Members:

Thank you for serving on this important committee and thank you for soliciting comments. I am a faculty member at Idaho State University. I have been here for 7 years. My wife and I have six children, ages 16 to 5, and we live in Pocatello.

For my comments, I would just like to share some about my personal experience. Being a faculty member at a state university is not the highest paying job. My 9 month salary is about 50% of what it would be if I was working a 12 month job in industry. Idaho State University also has lower faculty salaries than faculty at many of our neighboring peer institutions in Washington, Oregon, Utah, and Montana. But, I stay in this position

because I love my job, I love teaching, I love ISU, and I love Pocatello. So the sacrifice of pay is worth it to me.

However, inflation has hit hard. Besides our house payment, my family primarily spends our income on (1) property tax, (2) food, (3) utilities, (4) gas, and (5) clothing, in that order. Despite being a university professor for 13 years now, there is little room in our budget for luxury items. And that is okay. However, it is frustrating when we can no longer afford many of the essential items that are needed to sustain our family. For example, we now have to consider milk and eggs as splurges and ration our use of them. This just isn't sustainable for us. With the rising costs of everyday items, I hope that there is a commensurate rise in employee compensation so that we can afford these staples.

Thank you again for your work on this committee and for communicating our needs to legislatures.

Sincerely,

Joshua Swift

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Joshua K. Swift, PhD
Department of Psychology
Idaho State University
email: joshua.keith.swift@gmail.com
Author of: [Premature Termination in Psychotherapy](#);
[Engaging and Retaining Clients in Psychotherapy](#)

Dear Committee Members,

I have worked for Idaho Department of Environmental Quality for over six years. Last year, the CEC committee raised state employee wages commensurate to the increased cost of living and inflation we were all facing, thank you. The ability to create and maintain a healthy, happy, and productive workforce is directly tied into employees' wage security. This year we continue to face these increased food and housing costs. I ask that the committee once again ensure our compensation is tied to these increases. State employees shouldn't make less and less each year when we see inflation eat away the value of our pay. We continue to 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 | Air Quality Monitoring Supervisor
Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

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Office: (208) 373-0454
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Our mission: To protect public health and the quality of Idaho's air, land, and water.

I am on staff at Idaho State University as a Management Assistant. Last year's cost of living increase did not meet the actual cost-of-living increase experienced by residents of the state by nearly 1%. With the surplus that the State of Idaho has in reserves, a cost-of-living raise to match the actual cost of living increase over the previous year would be appreciated.

As is always the case, non-faculty members are given lower increases since they make less money. It would be a sign of good faith if the lower-paid employees (less than \$74,999) of the state received 2% more than those making over \$75,000. Most of us love our jobs in higher education, but the salaries are less than ideal. Many employees are leaving ISU for more money outside of academia. Some have even left for positions in the service industry for more money. I hope this isn't the standard you wish to set for people who have given you years of service.

Perhaps a true performance-based system such as that used in big business would work. Faculty are under the impression that, because they have been employed for the same amount of time as someone else, they should be paid the same. In the business world, there is a flat, across-the-board increase. Then, based upon performance, additional percentages are given (or removed). If this is the case in the state of Idaho, it should be relayed or made more transparent.

Thank you,

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Nancy S. Herrick
Management Assistant
Idaho State University College of Pharmacy
Mailing Address: 921 S. 8th Avenue, Stop 8288 | Pocatello, Idaho 83209

Harmony - Achiever - Analytical - Discipline - Consistency

Hello -

I appreciate the opportunity to comment and hopefully be heard by the CEC Committee. I am taking the time to speak largely to the lower pay that State government workers face compared to public and private sectors, but in particular I want to take the time to comment on the FY2024 CEC report. Through the use of various statistics, I believe it does a good job of identifying the inequities that State government workers face. While being transparent in illuminating these issues, it is equally transparent that the actions taken to try to help the issues are not nearly enough. I have worked for the State for over 15 years and am located in the Core Salary Structure as identified in the report. I recognize the effort to increase the

minimum and maximum salaries for the paygrade, but this unfortunately as I see it will help very few people. Few people will likely fall below the minimum of the paygrade. One could say that means they are already paid well enough. The reality is that the report shows that is far from the truth compared to other markets and sectors. One may then argue that the paygrade shift is a proactive intentional effort to create lower compa ratios to then more easily be identified and rewarded in future efforts. It will create lower compa ratios but in our own organizations we will still have to abide by a pecking order for merit increases. If one has a slightly higher compa ratio than the next person then they are typically not considered for a merit. Most important to note though is the fact that person still remains well below other markets and sectors and is not compensated accordingly. They are essentially stuck!

The aforementioned compensation structure creates a situation where people feel that they cannot effectively advance in pay. They're continually compared to their peers and what they may or may not be making, yet nobody is making what they're worth. Everybody's a link on the same frozen chain. One can see how this is leading to the turnover stated in the report. With Idaho, and the Boise area in particular, experiencing massive growth and inflation it is very difficult to make ends meet with the salaries provided to State workers. Appropriate pay has always been an issue but with the growth and inflation it has ballooned to an insurmountable obstacle for some. We are losing employees at a high rate at our organization. That's a significant issue in its own right, but we also cannot recruit new employees due to the low pay offered (and also found among present staff), crazy housing market, and so on. Remaining staff are then required to pick up the slack. This has long been approaching a breaking point and has now shifted into high gear. For the first time in my career I have been having some second thoughts about whether to search out greener pastures. I have lived in Idaho my whole life and am extremely passionate about serving Idaho on every front. I come from a small town and a military family and truly honor loyalty to a cause, so it is hard for me to think about leaving. Yet as days go on it becomes more and more of a potential reality. I take great pride in out-working the next person and putting my greatest effort forward, but it becomes quite discouraging when not acknowledged.

I appreciate the time to discuss my candid thoughts here. Thank you!

To whom it may concern,

My feelings regarding employee compensation is this. Inflation is killing us. Also considering how fast food workers get paid at least \$13 to \$16 plus an hour, state worker's compensation seems extremely low. State employee compensation does not reflect the inflation in the slightest. For most of us, we cannot afford to live. I also feel that longevity should play a role in our wage increases. That does not seem to matter much when it comes to our yearly merit increases even if we have an extraordinary evaluation.

Thank you for listening.

-Ambri

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Ambri Saighman

Career Path Internship Coordinator | Career Center

Museum Building | Room 418

921 South 8th Ave., Stop 8108 | Pocatello, ID 83209

 | ambrisaighman@isu.edu



**Idaho State
University**

Hi Christine Otto,

I wanted to share a couple of thoughts in response to the email I received indicating the state legislature has requested comments on the change in employee compensation. I love Idaho and I love working for Idaho State University. I earned my degree from Idaho State University in 2013 and was delighted to be able to return to Idaho as an employee of ISU in 2019. My wife and I both work full time and have two young children. We know with inflation each month's budget has become tighter. We just realized that our one year old son has outgrown his current car seats and then yesterday my wife's check engine light came on. We are struggling to figure out how we can afford these extra expenses, without having to put them on a credit card we may not be able to pay off.

I know many of my colleagues here at ISU are in similar situations. We love working for this university and serving students. We are grateful for our wages and benefits. We take pride in supporting and educating the future leaders of our great state and communities. Thus, anything that can be done to attempt to keep our compensation competitive with the rising cost of living in Idaho would be instrumental in continuing to hire and retain excellent staff and faculty.

Thank you for your time in reading my comments.

Best wishes,
Cliff Rone

To whom it may concern,

Starting in December (pay starts January) the annual increase for social security is going to be 8.7 percent.

Housing in Boise has increased 19.78 percent. Transportation is up 14 percent and groceries, don't get me started on eggs. The list goes on as we all know.

The average cost per month for a 1 bedroom apartment is roughly 1500 dollars. The average cost of living per month for a family of 4 is roughly 5000 dollars. The starting wage of an inspector is roughly 25 dollars an hour which equals out to be 4000 dollars per month before taxes and benefits are removed. A lot of our revenue for BCRE comes from permits and licensing which is enforced by inspectors. It is our job in the field to make sure the appropriate fees for permits have been paid and the contractors are licensed, therefore, providing our bureau the funds it needs to function. With all the training, schooling, and work experience that is required for our position I would like to see the gap closed between the amount of money you can earn in the field in comparison to the amount inspectors make. We have seen a huge turnover since the inflation started which has led to drastic measures to keep the inspections happening. We keep losing people due to how much money is offered to inspectors to go back into the field and work, and it's extremely hard to hire new employees at our wages. We have amazing benefits working for the state however if people can't afford to live currently where they are they have to do what they need to do to live. Yes the price of gas has dropped recently however nothing else has and it doesn't show signs that it will anytime soon. I took this job for many reasons and I am not going anywhere. I love what I do. However I feel changes need to be made to get us through these tough times and maintain our crew.

Thank you,

Todd Schwendiman

HVAC Inspector

Building, construction and real estate bureau

Todd.schwendiman@dopl.idaho.gov



11341 W Chinden Blvd

Building 4

Boise Idaho 83714

dopl.idaho.gov

Hello, I am an instructor at ISU College of Technology. One thing that I have noticed at times as an instructor is that our graduating students are going into industry, right out of college being compensated as much or more than we as instructors are and that's not right. The college is losing good instructors because of that. They are going back to industry. The five percent raise that we received last year wasn't enough to keep up with the rising economy. I think that the instructors should be compensated the same across the board also, which we aren't.

To whom it may concern,

I am answering the call to provide written testimony about Idaho's employee compensation. It is my understanding that Idaho is currently one of the fastest growing states in the nation, and we are experiencing a record budget surplus. Based on this, I am humbly requesting an increase in state employee compensation to keep up with inflation, but also to be competitive with surrounding states. Investing in our state employees is never a bad thing and I believe it would have a positive effect on the state's economy. When people are making more, they can spend more.

Thank you for your consideration,
Alyssa Holt

Hi,

Thank you for the chance to provide feedback to the legislature for the coming year for state employee compensation.

You all know state workers make far less pay than their counterparts in private industry. State workers provide valued services for the citizens of Idaho yet are unable to live off those wages unless they have a partner, a second job or other forms of income. Idaho state workers' pay increases have not kept pace with those in the private sector. On top of that, the state employee wages are not keeping pace with high inflation. This situation compounds the issue of recruiting and retaining staff. The inability to hire and maintain staff puts a huge burden on existing staff who take up the extra work when a position goes unfilled. Due to job turnaround times, existing employees are in a constant state either taking on extra work or constantly training new recruits. This leads to stress, work exhaustion and low employee morale for existing employees. No wonder people are leaving their state jobs!

Please reach into your heart and head and really consider what it is like to be a state employee in Idaho. You cannot afford to live on your wages, you have a second job because you are single, and you are constantly exhausted. You love your job but are considering leaving because **you cannot afford to stay**.

That does not have much to say for the State of Idaho. We can do better than that.

Good Morning;

In regard to employee compensation;

Electrical Inspectors continue to fall behind industry average, currently an inspector, with 30 years' experience in the field is making less compensation than starting wages for an apprentice at any industrial site.

Consequently, qualified help is nearly impossible to attract, with the best pool of educated personnel (early retirees) expressing disdain for the offered compensation as

the primary reason for bypassing State proffered jobs. In specific to this group, insurance is a large draw (and frequently advertised as a portion of compensation!) as exposure to a lifetime of industrial toxins are starting to accumulate.

Sadly, in this we are also falling woefully short. As a recipient of the current Blue Cross insurance every single treatment ordered by my doctor beyond yearly health checks has been a fight to get with Blue Cross denying service as standard operating procedure. Broken bones, MRI scans, x-rays and chipped vertebrae have all been routinely denied and nonsensical delaying tactics employed, Currently, a member of my household has been delayed for two torn tendons that the doctor says must be operated on to repair, for over six weeks as “low priority”. Even after the diagnosis the insurance was denying an MRI ... mostly just a knee jerk reaction, I think.

Are we that destitute as a State that we just have to take any scraps?
Are we even shopping this insurance between vendors?
I would think with this large of a pool of customers we would have some bargaining leverage.

I have asked if there was just another tier of service that I could voluntarily pay for to be met with little more than vacuous statements from people never exposed to industry (or damage apparently) that their yearly check up was “cheap” and they saw no issue with insurance.

While wages are well behind the industry, the dismal performance of the insurance is of greater concern, as provided, the hassle of getting them to perform is the definition of unneeded stress.

Respectfully;
Samuel Kasper
Idaho State Electrical Inspector.

Dear Change in Employee Compensation Committee,

Thank you for being willing to hear our thoughts, it is appreciated. I think most people are acutely aware of how much inflation and housing prices have hurt state of Idaho employees in recent years. I have always been somewhat conscious that working for the state meant lower pay than private or federal agencies. I was generally okay with that, because I truly love the mission of the state of Idaho and love the people that I work with and for. Currently, that is a lot harder to swallow when I look at how much my pay is compared to the cost of living. I know several of my peers who were hired on in 2021 as biologists in the treasure valley. They are paying over half of their monthly income on rent. They can't even consider buying a home. After using the other half on groceries, bills, etc, that leaves absolutely nothing for savings. We have to remember that these people have higher education (masters and doctorate degrees!) and they are still scraping to get by. On a personal level, it is hard for me to know I have gone

through extensive schooling and still can barely break even at the end of a month. There is something fundamentally wrong about that, none of us are out here leaving extravagant lifestyles. It is understandable that wage adjustments to reflect the rapidly changing world are hard to do overnight, but something must be done to hire and retain good employees. Another difficult aspect of changing times is trying to hire seasonal positions. Without our fleet of seasonal employees, IDFG truly cannot get any of our work done. We are seeing an absolute fraction of applicants compared to pre-covid and I can't help but think this isn't related to low wages and difficulties finding housing that they can afford. All I ask is that you please consider a significant increase in state of Idaho employees pay in FY2024. Quality of life is certainly being affected at this time, and I don't think we can afford not to make considerable changes in pay for all pay grades.

Thank you again for your consideration and support.

Megan Heller | Regional Fisheries Biologist
Salmon Region
99 Hwy 93 North
Salmon, ID 83467



As work loads increase and job security decreases inside DBH, it is tough for worker to feel valued. There has been a significant increase in the workload due to the increased population in Idaho. The resources to help the clients we work with are at their max. It has become harder to hire clinicians due to the wage. New workers are being hired on at a higher wage than workers who have been with the State for 15+ years. That becomes frustrating as the 15+ year employee is having to train the new worker and have to assume more duties to their already overloaded/understaffed jobs. Employees feel valued by the wage, and that shows DBH does not value the long-term employee. Most of the clinicians have to work 2 jobs due to the rising costs in Idaho and the low wage at DBH. This is not an entry level Clinician position. Clinicians are assessing Idaho's most vulnerable adult population, this takes years of experience to know the ins and outs of the resources and the needs of the population. This dedication to DBH and the State of Idaho should be acknowledged and the best way to keep experienced, trained workers is with wages. The hospitals are hiring new workers at a wage several dollars higher than a clinician with the State who has been dedicated for 15+ years. It is time to raise the wages of the employees of the State of Idaho and show the long-term employees DBH appreciates the years of dedication. Plus, it is always

cheaper to pay long-term employees more than to spend a lot of money training a new employee who will leave in a short amount of time for more money elsewhere.



*Dawn Doepke, LCSW
Clinician, Designated Evaluator Team
Department of Health and Welfare*

NOTE: Please update my email address in your contacts to:
dawn.doepke@dhw.idaho.gov

Hello,

I want to start off by saying the State of Idaho is a wonderful place to work. My colleagues have been welcoming, knowledgeable, and great to work with. I prefer working as a public servant and my job satisfaction is high. I truly love Idaho, but unfortunately it is no longer an affordable place to live. It is particularly difficult on the younger cohort of employees (say less than 35), who are “trying to get their foot in the door”. Below are 3 major reasons why I believe the employees of the State of Idaho should receive an increase in compensation.

Cost of Living

Housing and rental prices have gone up dramatically. The median price of a home in the Idaho Falls is \$385,000 (69% increase in 4 years). The current interest rates 6.879% which generates a monthly payment of \$2,560 dollars including taxes and insurance. To put this in context if a dual income family makes \$100,000 (\$6,091 monthly, post tax) 42% of your income goes towards housing. Childcare is also incredibly expensive costing approximately \$750 per child. For a young family of four their monthly *back of the envelop* expenses are below.

\$6091 (monthly income) - **\$2560** (housing) - **\$1500** (childcare) - **\$800** (groceries) - **\$650** (Transportation: Car/insurance/gas) - **\$200** medical insurance/expenses - **\$120** (electric/heating). This leaves you with **\$261** not including cell phone, any luxuries, retirement/nest egg savings, clothing, student loans, etc. An annual income of \$100,000 use indicate a well-off family, but this is no longer the case and many state employees fall well below this income level.

Additionally, inflation has also made everything more expensive. If you are fortunate to have a low mortgage payment you will still be receiving a 7.1% decrease in your buying

power as of 11/22. When margins are this slim it leaves people with one choice. If a higher paying job is available, you must take it.

Employee Turnover

Many work groups are experiencing large amounts of turnover. Of the 7 filled positions in my group 5 people have been a member of the program for an average of ~2 years. Another member is planning on retiring in the next 6 months. One position is currently vacant and receiving no applicants.

Employee turnover is a financial burden to the state and reduces public confidence if the program is not running effectively. I believe the majority of turnover is due to a lack of competitive compensation. We are not keeping pace with the private or the public sector and as new hires get younger the problem will increase.

Below average pay nationally and in the surrounding states

Average pay for State of Idaho employees is the lowest in the surrounding states (Idaho: \$53,609, Montana: \$54,165, Nevada: \$60,242, Oregon: \$71,415, Utah: \$76,143, Washington: \$64,235, and Wyoming: \$53,765 according to openpayroll.com. We are 20.1% lower than the national average for government employees and 14.4 percent lower than other states (openpayrolls.com, 2021). Competition with Federal and Local governments are also a major issue and may not require relocation. It is difficult to compete with the private sector, but this is also a major issue.

In summary, I believe the employees of the State of Idaho should receive a minimum compensation increase of 5%. This modest increase will help relieve the burden of the rising expenses and will aid in retaining employees. State of Idaho employees protect our public health, keep our environment clean, and a multitude of other services. If we are consistently understaffed or undergoing large amount of turn over, we cannot do our jobs effectively.

Thank you for your consideration,
Nicholas Krohe

CEC Committee,

I would like to provide my thoughts on the current wages at Idaho State University in Idaho Falls. I was in the medical field for 15 years and decided to take the Administrative Assistant/Financial Tech position in IF on Jan 10, 2022. My starting wage was \$16.36 and is currently \$16.86. I took a huge pay cut taking this job and no opportunity for overtime. I am a single mother and making \$16.36 is not a livable wage in the area for a family of 5. I am going into debt every month. I currently have 2 children in college, and 2 in high school. My life is getting more and more expensive to

support my family. The cost of living has drastically increased over the past few years and a single income of \$16.36 does not support a family anymore.

The same position one building over for University of Idaho starts at over \$19.00 an hour. I feel that the state is not keeping up with the times and is losing valuable employees to the INL and other local companies paying higher wages for less work. I am constantly taking on more duties with the university since we are very short staffed. I am always willing to take on more work to help the university out, but need to be compensated. I love my job at ISU but the wage is not cutting it. I have been looking for other state jobs that pay more, but I want to stay at ISU. I am hoping that wages can be increased so good employees will stay and hopefully attract more help. Big changes are coming to ISU in Idaho Falls and I would like to be a part of that.

I would also like to take advantage of the education benefit with ISU but currently looking for a second job to supplement income. This would not allow me time to do homework or adjust my work schedule for classes. Again, if my wage was better I could take classes to better myself.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Wendy Horne

Wendy R. Horne

Administrative Assistant

Idaho Falls Facilities Services

Center for Higher Education | Room 100

1770 Science Center Drive, Stop 8150 | Idaho Falls, ID 83402

 | wendyhorne@isu.edu

Hi Christine,

My name is Dan Hermes, and I work for DEQ as an IPDES Compliance Officer. I have some comments regarding the CEC.

I've been working at DEQ for 3-4 years now and have been frustrated with the CEC that I've experienced in that timeframe. In years in which the inflation rate in Idaho has increased 7-8%, it does not feel the CEC Committee and Legislature have been able to accommodate state employees accordingly. In 2020, there was no salary raise, and in 2021, I recall receiving a 4.5% salary raise, which was not consistent with the rate of inflation. As government employees, we already accept lower pay relative to the private sector; however, many of us do so because we truly stand behind the missions of our various agencies. The inability to keep up with inflation though is merely widening the income disparity between government employees and private sector employees. Providing a CEC raise less than the inflation rate is effectively the same as a salary

reduction as we lose buying power and are unable to keep up with the cost of living. Many of us here at DEQ have technical degrees in sciences and engineering, and advanced ones at that. We undoubtedly have the desired skills suitable for higher-paying positions within the private sector; however, as I previously mentioned, we stay because we strongly believe in the work we do. Unfortunately, everyone has a breaking point though, and there comes a time in which frustration builds to the point in which government employees feel there are no alternatives but to seek higher-paying positions.

At DEQ, we have had a turnover rate of 20-25% each of the past two years, and during exit interviews, the resounding rationale for leaving the agency is that the employees were feeling underpaid. In the IPDES Program here at DEQ, we have seen considerable turnover in the past two years as we have lost six compliance officers, and it appears we are about to lose another within the coming weeks. Additionally, we have lost a permit supervisor, two permit writers, our Rules/Guidance Supervisor, and another permit writer plans to leave within the next couple months. With this magnitude of turnover, the perception of our program and our agency on the whole will be that we lack competency. Without being able to retain essential staff, we will perpetually be in a rebuilding/training cycle that will hinder us from delivering the quality work our agency intends to. I can say from personal experience, I was offered a job with a private consulting company in March of 2022. The job was considerably higher paying and seemed to have a great atmosphere with great benefits too; however, I turned down the job as I informed them that I hadn't yet completed my service to DEQ and the State. At that time, I stood behind the work I do and the service we provide to the state, but now it feels the state does not stand behind its employees in the same capacity. I believe I too have reached that frustration threshold and will likely begin my job search within the next couple months.

To summarize, I think additional effort is required to ensure the employees of Idaho are adequately paid. Currently, I believe we are significantly underpaid, and I don't think the rate at which we are receiving CEC raises is doing anything to close the gap or make us feel as valued as we would like. Without that additional effort, I believe many of the agencies across the state will merely be revolving doors. I'm not sure how much weight my input will carry, but I hope it will at least be recognized that many employees at DEQ, and presumably other state agencies, are not content with the current situation.

Regards,

Dan Hermes | IPDES Compliance Officer

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
1445 North Orchard Street, Boise, Idaho 83706

Office: (208) 373-0383

Mobile: [REDACTED]

<http://www.deq.idaho.gov>

IPDES E-Permitting System: <http://www2.deq.idaho.gov/water/IPDES/>

Dear CEC Committee Members:

When considering employee compensation, please provide us with an increased compensation package that aptly overcomes current inflationary losses. Every time we shop for food, gas, or clothing, we see we have less money than we did a year ago.

Kind regards:

Jeff Rosentreter

(ISU employee since 1991)

Good afternoon,

I am a Chemist with the Idaho State Department of Agriculture and have been with the division since 2010. We were given the opportunity and encouraged to write to you regarding the upcoming CEC meeting and to share our thoughts regarding our compensation with the State.

I would like to start out by saying that I think the benefits offered to us through the State of Idaho are beyond wonderful, and I do realize that these are considered a part of our total income. I appreciate that along with everything else, the cost of these programs has continued to increase in price and that for the most part, those costs have not trickled down to us, the employees.

With that being said, I do feel as though the actual monetary income for State employees is severely lacking. I am a single person who lives on just this one income. In the recent months/years, this has become increasingly difficult. While we have received CEC increases through the years, in no way has this kept with the rate of inflation. For example, I feel as though I live well within my means in my modest 2-bedroom apartment. The rent has always been affordable until the last year when it has increased by more than \$250/month with no promises that it will not raise again. This is still the least expensive option for me as most comparable places in Twin Falls would be over \$1300/month (and would be almost 70% of my take home pay). I don't feel as though an adult in a professional position should have to rely on roommates or have a second job just to be able to survive, even though that is exactly what I am currently facing. On top of the housing issues, the cost of groceries, utilities, gas and almost every single necessity has also risen to the breaking point. I am no longer working to live life, I am working just to survive and afford the basic human necessities (I don't even have a car payment), and that just seems a little unfair to me. I couldn't even fathom trying to support a family on my current income. It's lucky for me that my kids are grown and moved away at this point, but many of my co-workers are raising/starting families and I feel for them even more.

I truly am grateful for the opportunities that I have been given here with the Dept of Ag and look forward to many more years to come, but hopefully those years come with a wage that is at least a little bit closer to the cost of living. Idaho is growing fast, and

unfortunately, I think our days of being one of the most affordable places in America to live are gone. It's time for our incomes to match.

I appreciate your time.

Thank you,

Kelly Rey

Chemist

Idaho State Dept. of Agriculture

Idaho Food Quality Assurance Laboratory



Dr. Ms. Otto,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding compensation for state employees.

As noted in this [article](#), Idaho was the second-fastest growing state in the US in 2022. While the article does not draw conclusions, I can say from my perspective it appears to have resulted in a higher cost of living.

Personally, I have experienced an increased cost of living without a sufficient corresponding pay increase. I describe myself as "house poor" as once I pay my mortgage (which I am lucky to have), utilities, grocery, etc., I have little wiggle room for anything else. I have been evaluated as exceeding expectations and even with the larger percentage increase, it is not enough to keep up.

I moved to ID from CO myself in 2016 to care for my elderly mother. It appears I had good timing, as I would not be able to afford my house now. I see the beginnings of what happened to CO, happening here with the actual workers not being able to live near where they work.

I left my former occupation in HR to work at a job that would bring more personal satisfaction and I do love my job. However, I am now making just over what I made in 2003 as an entrylevel HR coordinator. I realize that my pay will never match what I made previously given the difference in positions; however, it is frustrating to feel like I need to choose between a job I love and job that pays well enough to not live paycheck to paycheck. Further frustrating, is the gap in pay between upper administration and employees.

Thank you,

Michelle Havens

Academic Advisor | College of Technology Student Services

Eames Complex | Room 102

[1999 Alvin Ricken Dr. | Pocatello, ID 83209](#)

I would like to give my input into the current situation we are having hiring instructors due to lack of compensation. I believe if we paid our Clinical Instructors in Career Technical Education a wage more compensatory to what they would be making in the field that they are professionals in and teaching the future generations in, we would be able to hire the best and brightest individuals. With the current economics status going on in the Country and the uncertainty of the Political environment our Instructors are looking elsewhere for employment opportunities. Let's fix this soon, so we can hold onto the Instructors we have and hire the best out there.

--

Robert Cromie

Clinical Instructor | Automotive Technology
EAMES BUILDING | Room 302
1999 Alvin Ricken Dr | Pocatello, Idaho 83201
[\(208\) 282-2868](tel:(208)282-2868) | Cell: [REDACTED] | robertcromie@isu.edu

Dear Committee Members,

I have worked for the Idaho State Police for over 15 years. Last year the CEC committee raised state employee wages in a bid to keep up with increased cost of living. Please know that many of us were very grateful for this. However, we are still facing increased cost of living expenses. While many of us consider ourselves to be faithful public servants, and understand that state pay (and that includes benefits) often lags behind the public sector, we also don't want to be making less and less each year. The ability to create and maintain a healthy, happy, and productive workforce is directly tied to employee's wage security. Our ability to recruit and maintain a talented workforce is directly affected by the wages we pay our employees. The erosion in our buying power is an issue that must be addressed. I implore the committee to once again ensure our wages are keeping pace with inflation.

Thank you for your time, respectfully,

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

phone: [REDACTED]
fax: (208) 884-7193
SOR email: idsor@isp.idaho.gov

Hello, my name is Anthany McCabe and I am a network administrator at Idaho State University, working for the State of Idaho. I am writing to express my support for the State of Idaho Change in Employee Compensation (CEC) Committee's efforts to raise salaries for state employees.

There are several reasons why I believe that state employee salaries should be increased. First, the cost of living in Idaho has been steadily rising, making it increasingly difficult for state employees to make ends meet on our current salaries. Second, the state of Idaho has a responsibility to attract and retain talented employees, and offering competitive salaries is an essential part of this effort. Finally, investing in the salaries of state employees is a smart investment for the state as a whole. When state employees are paid fairly, they are more motivated and productive, which ultimately benefits the people of Idaho.

As a single father, I have additional responsibilities and expenses that make it difficult for me to live on my current salary. In addition to my full-time job as a network administrator, I also work two part-time jobs just to pay my bills. Despite my hard work and dedication, I struggle to provide for my family on my current income. I have a bachelor's degree in Computer Information Technology and several industry certifications, and I have been working in the IT field for the past five years.

One of the main reasons for my financial struggles is the fact that there is no increase in pay based on merit in my job. This means that even if I were to quit and be replaced with a new hire, that person would receive the same salary and benefits as I currently have. This lack of opportunity for advancement makes it difficult for me to improve my financial situation, despite my education and experience.

Furthermore, the salaries of state employees like myself are in the bottom 30% of similar jobs in the state. This makes it difficult for us to compete with other employers and leaves us with little room for financial growth. As I mentioned earlier, I believe that the state of Idaho has a responsibility to attract and retain talented employees, and offering competitive salaries is an essential part of this effort. Investing in the salaries of state employees is a smart investment for the state.

I understand that the CEC Committee has limited resources, but I hope that you will consider the importance of investing in the salaries of state employees like myself. Our work is essential to the smooth operation of the state, and we deserve to be compensated fairly for our efforts. As a single father working multiple jobs just to make ends meet, I know firsthand the challenges that state employees face in trying to provide for their families.

Thank you for considering my testimony and for your commitment to improving the lives of state employees.

Anthany McCabe, CCNA, INSTC

Network Administrator

Idaho State University, NetCom


anthanymccabe@isu.edu

Hello,

My name is Devin Smith and I am a full time Network Administrator in the Information Technology field at Idaho State University. I have spent the entirety of my professional career building experience in this field and am a graduate of ISU with an Information Technology Systems degree. I also have several certifications which I keep up to date. I have exclusively received "Exceeding Expectations" on my yearly performance evaluations. This experience and education makes me qualified for the work I do and I do not believe state employees in the IT field are fairly compensated for their work in this state, and I am in full support of the proposal to increase state employee pay.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the median pay for my profession in Idaho rests between \$59,000 and \$76,600. Anecdotally, I know that several of my past coworkers (all good qualified people who used to work at ISU with me) have moved on to either ICCU, INL, ON Semiconductor, or have left the state entirely to seek fair payment. All of these people now make over \$70,000 and each one of them cited low pay as either the main reason or the only reason why they quit. All four of my current coworkers who make the same wage as me are looking for other jobs, simply because we make far below what we should be paid and could be paid elsewhere.

The dramatic increase of housing and transportation in Idaho leaves my family with almost nothing at the end of the month to put into savings. I am now facing a dilemma of seeking an additional job to supplement my full-time position, or applying for the same job at a different company with higher pay. I believe it sets an incredibly poor precedent for the state for its own employees to be making far less than the IT industry average.

I also fully support more pay based on retention and merit. When several of my coworkers quit to seek higher pay, new employees were hired and put at the exact same wage as me despite having been here for several more years, being more experienced, and being responsible to train them.

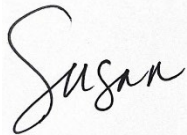
I enjoy the work that I do and get satisfaction from my day-to-day tasks. I like my job and don't want to quit, but like my coworkers I am now searching for new employment opportunities solely based on our low income. Our 1-3% pay increases yearly are not

nearly enough, and we need a larger boost to our salary for inflation, to be competitive with the rest of the industry, and to support proud hard-working state employees.

Thank you for considering the CEC proposal, and I hope for the sake of Idaho employees and families that you increase state employee salaries.

Hello,

My comment on compensation is that as faculty, we should have the choice to opt out of the stock market (TIAA CREF) and contribute to PERSI. Prior to accepting a faculty position, I was a staff member at ISU and found PERSI to be a wonderful benefit to my employment. I have never wanted to be a player in the stock market, but seem to have no choice, this was chosen for me. Thank you.



Susan Carter, BS, CMA(AAMA)
Program Director/Clinical Assistant Professor
Owen Redfield | Room 243B
921 South 8th Ave., Stop 8380| Pocatello, ID 83209
[REDACTED] | susancarter@isu.edu

My name is Joshua Rupe I am a Network Administrator at Idaho State University. I would first like to thank you for the opportunity for our voices to be heard. I am a Husband, a father, and a Veteran, I have worked hard my whole life to be able to provide for my family and own a home. I am writing in support of the Change in Employee Compensation Committee; I do believe that increased employee compensation is necessary and vital for more efficient and the best quality work.

When I started school at Idaho State University in the Information Technology program I did so because I wanted better opportunities for myself and my family. While I was still a student at ISU, I was able to work my way up from being an intern student employee for the ITS department, to having the opportunity to take over the position of one of my bosses who left ISU for other opportunities out of state. I enjoy my position at ISU very much so, however with the increased cost of living due to our current economic situation it has been increasingly harder to just make it month to month. It would be hard to pass up better paying opportunities even though I love my current job so much.

My wife works at the hospital and has a great salary as well. But even with our combined salaries we do struggle each month between our mortgage payment for a house that cost us \$350K in 2022 when 5-10 years ago it would have cost \$150K, to

childcare, groceries, etc. I also know that us Network Administrators at ISU are paid quite a bit less than most other Network Administrators in the state in both State jobs and private businesses, this has caused retention issues at ISU which does affect quality of work and the number of experienced professionals that are willing to work and stay at ISU. I did some research and according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics website the annual mean wage of Network Administrators in the state of Idaho is \$76,600.00, That is around \$28,000.00 more than what we are currently making.

I believe if the state of Idaho wants to retain good employees in the Information Technology profession, they need to be paid to match what the rest of the market is paying or at least close to it. While I do understand that resources are limited, I still believe we could be receiving a more competitive salary. Thank you for your time and for the opportunity to have my voice heard.

Very respectfully
Joshua Rupe

2023 CEC Committee,

The views and opinions expressed in this letter are my own and do not represent the policy or opinion of my employer.

I have served the citizens of Idaho for twenty years in various commissioned roles within the Idaho State Police, but primarily as a Detective. 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 is rooted in me and 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. After the 9/11 attack on our country, I felt compelled to return to service, so I joined the Idaho State Police to serve our great state and its citizens.

Being an Idaho State Police Detective is an honor, but it's 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 the clock. Adding to these demands is the unique requirement to forgo anniversaries, birthdays, and 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 demands outweigh our personal schedule, and we encounter physical and mental demands, unlike other professions.

I take great pride in serving our state and providing for my family. However, over the past twenty years, my pay and the pay of my teammates have fallen behind inflation, CPI, and housing costs in our ever-growing state. You represent me, my teammates, and our citizens which is a balancing act. You are aware of the ever-increasing costs of living in Idaho which relates to your own need of a 9.5% pay increase. I am asking the CEC Committee to provide the same 9.5% increase to the Idaho State Police Troopers and Detectives, plus a 3.5% to ensure the Idaho State Police is a competitive law enforcement agency capable of recruiting and retaining high-quality professionals while providing for our families.

I am seeking your recommendation and endorsement of a **minimum 13% increase** to the base pay of the Idaho State Police.

Respectfully,

J. M. Lake
Idaho State Police Detective

Joe Lake
Detective
Idaho State Police
District II Investigations
[REDACTED]

Christine Otto,

I am a resident and registered voter in the state of Idaho, I am also a retired state worker with over 34 years of service to Idaho State University. During My time at ISU I served as a Mechanical Systems Supervisor and as the Maintenance and Operations Manager for Facilities.

I would like to provide comments on state's personnel system and employee compensation.

I started working for ISU in September of 1985. Pay was extremely low. I believe I started at \$5.85/hr. and the first few years were really rough on raises. We, as state employees, had 1 guaranteed pay raise given every 5 years. This was the Longevity raise.

The Longevity raise was a 5% increase awarded after every 5 consecutive years of good service. The State took this raise away with the promise to the employees that raises would be based solely on cost of living and evaluations. The state did not follow through on this promise.

I ask for the following:

1. Longevity raises to be reinstated to honor those employees that hit the 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35 ,,,, milestones. A 5% guaranteed pay increase for faithful and dedicated service to the state is very reasonable.
2. Have a clear and precise explanation on merit raises that all state agencies and departments within each agency must follow. If you only knew how many times I heard that merit raises are forbidden by the Governor it would amaze you.
3. When raises are awarded by the state, the cost of living for all employees should come first. Then the agency should be the one to decide how the extra is divided fairly among the rest of their employees, not decided by the individual departments within each agency.
4. Give State agencies (Not the Dept) the option to award a Bonus, pending approval by the 'highest of high' (That is the main leader at an agency) at each agency, to any employee that has gone above and beyond their normal duties to serve the institution.
5. IDHR Personnel System needs to provide up to date job descriptions to accurately describe classified positions.
6. IDHR needs to improve on which applications move forward and which ones don't. I have interviewed numerous people over the years that had zero experience in the position being filled but yet still made it past IDHR. Perhaps having testing of individuals for the position needs to be reinstated. When I applied in 1985 I had to take a test on the position I applied for and it was a test at a location with some other applicants and administered by a test proctor.
7. Stop allowing departments within State Agencies to hire an individual for a position that he/she is clearly not qualified for then have that same dept create and hire for a new position as an assistant director who knows the job duties of the newly hired Director that was not qualified in the first place.
8. If the state still follows the Hay Plan, then move away from it and use common sense in determining wages. You don't need some outside group saying "stay within 15% of Montana"!

Mark Cates

Idaho State University, Retired!

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). I recently celebrated my 10-year anniversary working for the State of Idaho, and it has been an honor to serve the children and families in my community. Despite the financial challenges I hope to be able to continue in this service, I believe we are making a positive difference in people's lives. I am so thankful for last year's generous CEC, it helped greatly with the rising cost of living. I continue to do all I can to economize, but the cost of housing is out of my control and yes, the rent was increased another \$100

per month this past November. I am a cancer patient and protocols recommend periodic CT scans, but because of the rent increase I had to decline the last scan as I would not be able to pay my out-of-pocket portion (I am grateful for our health insurance, it is wonderful, but some things are still costly). So, I urge you please to recommend an increase in wages this year, it would mean so very much to me.

Sincerely,

Laura Strunk
Administrative Assistant 1
Infant Toddler Program-North Hub
Phone: [REDACTED]
Fax: (208) 769-1430

Esteemed legislators,

I would like to submit this short testimony in regards to state employee pay;

- In the summer of 2021, I made the decision to move out of my home state of Florida. I had no reason for the move besides a change of scenery, and I selected Idaho because of the state's amazing reputation for professional law enforcement, government philosophy, and strong economy.
- I do not have any plans to leave Idaho, or the employ of the state as a state trooper. I intend to retire from the ISP.
- Since my hire date, I have made tangible progress to increase my pay using the CHOICE point program, and working many overtime shifts and details.
- I am grateful that my pay as a trooper allows me to feed myself, support my hobbies and interests, and lead a relatively comfortable life

However

- I have lived in a leaking, unheated, and mostly without water or power travel trailer for the last 14 months. This is because in my assigned and contractually bound living area (sandpoint) has an incredible shortage of housing. This month, I am utilizing a significant portion of my personal savings to move into a legitimate dwelling.
- This apartment, even after working as many overtime shifts as I can manage, will still cost me over half of my take home pay a month in rent alone. After paying for utilities, fuel and insurance on my personally owned vehicle, and food, I will only be able to contribute a small amount of money to my savings.
- This apartment is one of the cheapest available in my area, and it took me 14 months to even be able to apply to move in due to sky-high rent and unavailability. I do not lead a lavish life, and I am content with that. I have very few bills and little debt. However, I feel that I will never be able to purchase a house to escape renting, afford to finance a vehicle less than 25 years old, or

save enough money to have a financial safety net because of the inconsistent pay to the constant rising cost of living ratio.

Thank you for your time

Trooper Dale Turnbull | 622
Idaho State Police | District 1 Patrol
Cell: [REDACTED]



1/10/23

Currently in the Dental Residency program, it has been difficult to find and retain staff, specifically dental assistants and front office employees. We have 3 dental assistants who are with us as permanent employees, but we need a total of 5 dental assistants to make the program successful in training our dental residents. I believe it is important to provide an educational experience that is going to develop our residents to be equivalent to a dentist who has been in practice for 5-7 years, due to the quality and content of our program. The program has to meet accreditation standards, and that includes supporting our residents with sufficient support staff. When there aren't enough employees to support the program, we have residents having to clean up and set up their rooms, sterilize their own instruments, as well as other seemingly menial tasks which take away from the intent of the program. Having to perform these tasks that a dental assist would normally be responsible for doesn't allow the residents to see as many patients on their schedule daily, and in the long run decreases our revenue as well. Our program runs on a budget that counts strictly on its own revenue to operate. I am finding the current situation is causing burnout to the existing employees as well as the dental residents.

I feel it is necessary to have two full time front office employees that are equal in nature to accomplish the front office tasks with skill and professionalism. We have had times when we have had only one front office employee, the voice mailbox has twenty messages, the patient check-in and check-out line is 3 deep, there are people asking questions about their billing, scheduling their next appointment, etc. This causes extreme pressure on the front office employee as well as patient dissatisfaction. We have 4 dentists, I believe two full time front office employees are integral to completing all tasks correctly and precisely. In addition, I feel there is a need for a third person to know the front office so in the event someone is on vacation, or there are a few extra busy moments in the day at the front office, that person can step in.

In an effort to attract and retain a professional work force in the Dental Residency program, I have written updated and accurate job descriptions of the dental assistant

duties to reflect what tasks are expected of our dental assistants during a normal workday in clinic. One of the main additions is the educational component the dental assistants 2 & 3 provide to the residents in the course of their time in our program.

The residents know little to nothing about placing dental implants, adding bone grafting and membrane to the implant site, as well as the process of IV sedation. These procedures are not in the normal course of obtaining a dental degree and most residents have no knowledge of the intricacies involved in providing these procedures. The dental assistants are expected to know and impart their knowledge to the residents in these areas. The adjunct faculty does direct the teaching process, but can't be at 4 dental chairs at once, so the responsibility falls on the dental assistant.

Some of the additions I have made include educational components to the dental assistant 2 & 3 descriptions that show they provide knowledge of how to set-up and use the implant machines and drills. They teach the residents how to properly accomplish this.

We use several implant systems. The dental assistants have to know what size implants, abutments, locators and healing caps are available, keep them organized and assist the residents in learning the details.

The residents take a didactic IV sedation, the assistants are responsible for the hands-on know how of setting up and utilizing this equipment. They show the residents how to do this. Each resident performs approx. 50 sedations while they are in residency.

The residents perform several types of bone grafts in implant sites. The assistants are responsible for sharing their hands-on knowledge of how to accomplish the phlebotomy needed to successfully use the patient's own cells for the grafting.

These are only some of the educational points the assistants are responsible for.

It has been discussed between the assistants at times and then brought up to me that McDonald's starts their employees out at \$15/hr. I haven't checked those details out, but it has been brought up.

Currently we have 3 P/T DA's that are considered temp employees. 2 are ISU students who are doing their work to get into the hygiene program. They work in between classes and we will loose them once they complete their requirements for their hygiene programs. If it weren't for them we wouldn't have enough bodies. They are here for the experience to help them gain a place in the hygiene program.

Best,

Peggy Walker, DMD
Clinical Site Director, Idaho AEGD
Idaho State University
465 Memorial Drive
Pocatello, ID 83209
[REDACTED]

To the committee:

Thank you for taking the time to read my statement, I'll do my best to be brief. When the email came out that state employees had the opportunity to share our thoughts on

consideration for potential wage increases, I wasn't certain I wanted to until I sat and thought about one thing that I've always known, but didn't really click until this chance presented itself, and that was I too, am an Idahoan.

As such I feel tremendously blessed to live in a state that I believe genuinely cares for its citizens, and their well-being, and even more honored and humbled at the ability to work for and with them. To say the past few years have been an extreme test is quite frankly an understatement, but with determination, Idaho has proven resilience and perseverance during these unprecedented times. Working as a self-reliance specialist for welfare eligibility, it has been rewarding to help my fellow citizens in their time of need, obtain services that aid in ensuring the basic needs of Idaho families are met.

Ironically enough, this made me think, for just a moment, about my needs and that of my family as well. For the better part of six months my family has been going through a mental health journey with my teenage child. It at times has felt like the hardest challenge I have ever faced. So much so, that my family and I will have to seek additional mental health treatment outside of Idaho, due to resources not being available. I bring this rather personal testimony up because as I'm sure everyone can relate in some capacity, travel and medical expenses not covered by health insurance, can be very costly.

Regardless of our role or duty we hold with the state, at the end of the day we are all Idahoans. This statement isn't so much to focus on why we should all receive pay raises (at least it isn't for me), but more so to express that I am an Idahoan that has a family with needs. These needs are obviously met by income. Anyone that is a parent can relate to having the drive and determination to provide every necessity and resource available to ensure their child and/or children have happy and healthy lives.

If we receive raises, I would be immensely grateful, and if we are unable to receive raises, I would be immensely grateful because it will not change the love and admiration I have for Idaho and her citizens. I will continue to do the work I have been fortunate enough to do, so long as the state will have me. Being born and raised here, Idaho is my forever home. I'll still be here.

Thank you for your time once again!

Destinee Thomas

Self Reliance Specialist

Division of Welfare/Benefits Eligibility Division



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www.healthandwelfare.idaho.gov

idalink.idaho.gov



Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to voice my humble opinion on the topic of compensation.

Let me start off by saying I am 56 years old and have been a lifelong Idahoan and have never lived outside of its borders. I have always worked very hard for my family and have always been a top performer wherever I have worked, and I have never been laid off or fired from any job. I would gladly provide years worth of reviews to anyone interested. So I feel I am not only justified but also qualified to have a voice on this matter.

Let's cut to the chase. I am a Utility Craftsman for Idaho State University and I love my job! With that being said, the medium pay for a Utility Craftsman is 50,238 - I make 38,592 a difference of 11,646 dollars, and again I am and always will be a top performer. The average monthly cost of living is 5,577- I make 3,216 a difference of 2,361 and I am currently the only one working in my household. With Idaho being one of the fastest growing states in our country and the tax base rising, with the cost of living increasing to around 9.1%, why wouldn't the great state of Idaho want to take care of their own people?

Our Governor and other elected officials should want to set the standards and be the leaders of how organizations should treat their employees. They should strive to have every state employee living a good and plentiful life, not wondering how they will ever be able to afford a home, how they are going to pay for a car repair or feed their families. My honest opinion is , "if you are paid the best, you act like the best, and perform like the best". In my opinion every state employee should love to come to work, should never want to leave their jobs because of lack of pay and should take great pride in saying I work for the great state of Idaho. I urge our elected officials to help make a substantial increase in the pay for us hard working state employees, not the token " a few cents here and there," something substantial, something families can celebrate and use to better their lives.

Again thank you for the opportunity to voice my opinion and for your time and consideration!

Sincerely,
Patrick Poole

Good morning,

We have been given a chance to give our thoughts on any upcoming pay increases for the coming fiscal year. As a current State employee I am seeing the shift among other employees leaving the State for private sector jobs or City and County work. This is due mostly in part to wages. Given that we are on average 15% less than the private sector and an average of about 10% less than others doing our same job in surrounding areas. The inflation has made it very difficult to manage monthly finances and prices don't seem to be coming down soon enough. I have heard many times peoples reason for leaving the State Agencies as they were offered large pay increases to go to either private or City/County agencies. With the State having large surpluses in funds each year , I feel it would be the smart thing to do by increasing State wages to at least match outlying States wages for same positions. This at least shows current employees you are working to keep up with inflation and bring them up to reasonable hourly

wages. I think this would help with the mass exodus we are seeing with employees at the State level. When inflation is above 8%, a 3-4% increase doesn't keep up with monthly finances and I feel this is why people are taking other jobs outside the State. Governor Little is constantly expressing his appreciation for State employees but yet we still struggle with our monthly finances. Verbal appreciation is always appreciated but really, in outlying jobs, appreciation is always shown at yearly reviews. That being said, I appreciate any increases we get, but I feel it is time to increase State wages to at least mirror our outlying areas so we, as well, can better afford to live with equality as our counterparts in other agencies in our State as well as surrounding areas. Let's show the appreciation to the employees who have stuck with our agencies as well as any applying to the current list of open positions that you are willing to make their job equal to all others in surrounding states as well as in our own state including the private sector as well as City and County for the same jobs. Wages matter a great deal with the financial burdens each of us a going thru together.

Thank you for allowing us the chance to "voice" our thoughts on this matter and for including us as State employees to have a voice in our future.

Best Regards,

Diana Jones

Storekeeper
Idaho State Police
700 S. Stratford Dr.
Bldg #5
Meridian, ID 83642

Hello Legislative CEC committee,

Thank you for inviting state employees to send you our thoughts on the upcoming fiscal year's CEC. I appreciate that you are considering a CEC for state employees this year. As we all know, costs of many life necessities, such as groceries and gas, have risen sharply over the last couple of years. A CEC would certainly help offset these additional costs, and would ensure that working families can continue to afford basic housing, gas and food needs. Furthermore, the state sets a great example to private employers by implementing a CEC, as it acknowledges that costs of living are rising and that income needs to also increase to help Idahoans keep up.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Regan Berkley

Regan Berkley

Regional Wildlife Manager
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
McCall Regional Office
555 Deinhard Ln.
McCall, ID 83638

<https://idfg.idaho.gov>



Hello Christine,

The assistance given to employees last year as a result of the CEC meetings made a huge impact on me and my family. Keeping up with inflation is an incredibly huge ask, yet the state of Idaho met that need last year. This year the need is near identical according to the [US Inflation Calculator](#). I hope the state will continue to keep up with the cost of living. I love my job and do not want to face a decision where I have to leave for more pay.

Thank you for taking these comments,



**Joel Lange - Infrastructure Engineer III
CCNP Enterprise**

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

Christine,

Good morning. I appreciate the opportunity to share the current staffing situation in my group, regarding the CEC. The Idaho National Laboratory (INL) Oversight Program is 100% funded through two Department of Energy (DOE) grants. Our program works directly with the INL contractors, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, United States Geological Survey and Idaho State University's Environmental Monitoring Laboratory. Our staff of eight (currently 7) full-time employees is the primary interface with the INL for radiological environmental monitoring and emergency response. Our group also provides specialized support for the Idaho Office of Emergency Management, the surrounding counties of the INL, emergency response HAZMAT personnel and Idaho State Police along all state shipping corridors for radiation detection and training. I have managed the program for almost three years. In that time, six Health Physicists (HPs) have left our program to work at the INL. The draw has been on average 50-70% compensation increases. We have lost four Environmental

Scientist/Hydrogeologists to much higher paying positions as well. We need to compensate individuals for their knowledge and understanding of radioactive materials, the history of the INL and its impacts on the Eastern Snake River Plain Aquifer. Our staff is required to obtain DOE/INL "L" clearances and complete all contractor trainings to access INL facilities to conduct our work. My concern starts when we onboard a new employee, they complete the badging and training processes, and become prime targets for INL recruiting. My last two HPs left the program after one-year and 6-months, respectively. One of them doubled their salary.

Our DOE contract/grant manager has shared that the grant would authorize salaries similar to the INL if the state would allow it. As a stand-alone program, within DEQ and the state, which is 100% grant funded, I struggle to understand the reasoning to not increase the group's salaries to be somewhat competitive. I mentioned ISU. The ISU laboratory manager is a state employed, health physicist. His salary, which is paid by contract through one of our grants, is approximately 40% more than those in my group. The proposed new reactors coming to the INL will not only increase the need for the state to ensure an effective radiation program but will provide more outside career opportunities for folks who work in our group. To add to it, the number of students graduating from Health Physics and radiation related programs nationally has declined over the past 30 years. Add that to the retiring work force and the gap is steadily growing. Increasing demand for radiological professionals will only drive salaries up. If we can't recruit and retain a knowledgeable staff, it could be detrimental to the state. Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

Landry J. Austin | INL Oversight Program Manager

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
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Hello,

Thank you for taking the time to read all the emails you will get from the state employees. I watched the 2022 CEC committee meetings and was happy that most of the committee wanted to give state employees the compensation we have earned. While many of us have appreciated the compensation we received last year, it still hasn't helped with rising cost of everyday items nor are state jobs as competitive with other companies regarding salary. State used to be high coveted for job seekers. Now other companies can offer just as good benefits as the state does (some don't require the employee to pay for their benefits) and they are paying more. It is a job seekers market in Idaho. While benefits are good for some people in certain situations, it does not pay for everyday items. Average rent in Idaho for a 2-bedroom is \$1310. Average cost for 1 dozen eggs is \$5.00. Average cost of gas in Idaho is \$3.42 while the national average is \$3.290. Current inflation rate in the US is 7.1%. All these expenses add up

and people are leaving state jobs for higher paying employment. "You get what you pay for" is a good phrase right now. My supervisor told me that even a couple of years ago we would get over 30 people apply for a job and they would pick the top 10 to interview. Now we barely get 10 people apply and you want the best candidate, so we usually end up interviewing maybe 3 people. State wants the best employees; they will have to pay for the best.

thank you,

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

Good morning,

I think a substantial raise would be great to see in July 2022. I started with the State a year ago – on 1/3/22. Unfortunately, this made me ineligible for the raise that occurred in July 2022. I have to work 2 jobs to support my children and cover the ever increasing cost of living. The lack of room for growth in my specific department makes it difficult to have any success in climbing the ladder so to speak. Most transfers are considered lateral so even though a different department shows it pays more hourly, I wouldn't actually get the increase in pay due to the lateral transfer. But advancing to a higher position isn't always possible when you don't have the experience/education required.

Working 6 days a week is not something I want to do for the rest of my life – but most state jobs aren't paying what other companies pay their employees. The insurance is great and I am thankful to have a job that is secure and has benefits. I just don't know how long I can work for such a low wage when everything in the world is increasing. People can barely afford to eat, get gas, pay their bills, keep a roof over their heads. I think it really is time for that to be taken into account and help the employees who are at the lower end of the totem pole.

Thanks for reading,

Olivia Sorenson
Records Management, AA1
Southwest Idaho Treatment Center
Ph: [REDACTED] | Fax: 208-467-0965



Dear Change in Employee Compensation Committee,

I am writing you concerning the CEC. I have worked as a surveyor for over 4 years now. I have seen many people come and go, related to the job of surveyor. As a surveyor, you are responsible to go around the state to conduct surveys for facilities, such as ICF/IID (Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities) Hospitals, RALF, and LTC (Long Term Care Facilities – such as nursing homes). There are many factors that encompass the job and the concerns related to hiring and retaining the staff needed:

- Hours can range depending on the facility and the type of survey being conducted
 - o An example: A family member calls in that their loved one is being abused during a grave yard shift on the weekend and there is not enough staff. The surveyor(s) would have to conduct surveys during the weekend graveyard shift, which would be between 10:00 p.m. – 6:00 a.m. Home base is Boise, however there are facilities throughout the state, which can require hours of travel. Depending on the severity of the complaint, the survey team may have to respond within 48 hours. This makes it difficult to schedule time off, in case there is the need to cover in the event this may happen.
- There are not enough surveyors to complete the surveys and tasks needed.
 - o The Long Term Care team requires at least 15 surveyors, only have 3. Other departments are trying to help, but their departments are limited on staff also.
 - o This causes surveys to be late, which can be very concerning for the residents living in those facilities and their loved ones.
 - o CMS has voiced their concerns about the surveys not being done in a timely manner.
 - o The state is having to pay additional funds to contract with a third party team (who too has shortage in staff).
 - It has been observed both on survey and the work presented by this 3rd party, staff is being missed or there is not sufficient evidence to site a deficiency to ensure the facility fixes the issue.
- There are many staff that do not last long or have retired/resigned due to requirements of the job.
 - o We have had many staff burn out/ leave due to concerns with COVID
 - Being in facilities that have an outbreak in COVID
 - Becoming sick with COVID, causing concerns with home life.
 - Being unable to be around family, so as to not put their loved ones at risk.
 - This concern continues today, as COVID continues to be a concern in facilities.
 - o Staff have resigned because the requirements of the job can be very overwhelming.

- Staff have resigned because newer staff make more than them.
- Competitor are paying more and the new job does not have as many requirements/expectation.
 - We have lost at least 3 staff to this in less than a year to this present date.
- As stated before, the opened job positions starting wage is higher than many of those who are already working.
 - I have worked here for over years and do the same job as those who are starting, and yet others make more than me.
 - There is a staff who has worked many more years than me and has so much knowledge and experience (being one of the longest surveyors as of current). I am concerned we will lose them and their knowledge. They work so hard and are amazing with the providers we work with and survey. If we lose them, it would be detrimental to the department, even with the current struggles.
- With the amount of work, it does not feel as though we are appreciated or people understand what the job entails.
 - Many people are having to cover more surveys, which causes them to accrue over-time – which is converted into additional time off earned. However, due to the inability to take time off, many are losing those hours along with the vacation time accrued they are unable to take due to the shortage of staff.
 - We received a bonus earlier in 2022, however there were conditions of staying for a year or having to pay it back. The way it was issued, many only received ½ of the bonus due to taxes and other deductibles being pulled from it.
- Competition
 - As stated before, there are many jobs that are paying more and allow individuals to work a more steady schedule and go home every night.
 - This was even observed at a job fair. Jobs were providing hiring bonuses and pay that ranged from \$5 -\$18 more an hour.
- Raises have not put into account cost of living.
 - Since starting this job, 4 years ago, rent has increased approximately \$700/month.
 - Fuel as increased
 - Food prices have increased.
 - Utilities have increased.
 - At this point, I struggle to be able to cover all of my bills.
 - I am unable to do anything outside working and being home.
 - I am unable to pick up a second job, due to conflicts in schedule and the conflicts imposed doing this job (i.e. A surveyor is not allowed to have another job related to what they do example being a Registered Nurse cannot work another job in the medical field as it creates a conflict of interest.)

Ultimately, I love what I do and being able to help those who do not have a voice. However, due to the stresses of trying to be available whenever the job needs me, not being to see my family for many days of the year, and trying to be able to provide for myself and family, the stress can outweigh the enjoyment of the job.

I also want to say, the supervisors and department are really trying to get people to apply and make sure they know everything the job entails, without much success. They have tried different routes, without much response.

Thank you for taking the time to listen.

Aubree Robertson
Health Facility Surveyor



Bureau of Facility Standards
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Fax: 208.364.1888

Dear CEC Committee Members,

I'm writing today because I'm afraid we've lost our way. Pay distribution has been trending downward for the working class my entire life and we've reached the point where it requires *four* full time jobs to provide for a family. I'm not even exaggerating.

In Pocatello, Google suggests the average price of a home is \$200k leading to a mortgage of \$1,650 including taxes, insurance and PMI. Average rent you may be wondering, nearly \$1,100! On top of that, visit your favorite real estate website and filter the homes available in Pocatello down to \$200k, the majority need to be demolished.

Now \$1,650 may not seem like much to some of you, but when ISU career opportunities start (in my pay grade at least) at \$14.43/hr... \$1,650 is your entire monthly net income! Then you must factor in the city bill, electric and gas bills, internet and cell phones, and finally car insurance. None of these being luxury items you can succeed without. Using budget friendly estimates, that's a minimum of at least another \$430. No food, no emergency fund, no medical, no savings, no college, no fun.

I believe immediate, emergency action is required in order to correct the pay scale. Many of these career opportunities (mine included) are not entry level

positions. We have the training, we have the experience, we are journeymen level tradesmen and we love what we do.

Sincerely

Brad Harris

Brad Harris

Locksmith | Facilities Services
Shops - 22 | Room 105
921 S 8th Ave | Pocatello, ID 83209-8137
[REDACTED] | bradharris@isu.edu

Dear CEC Committee,

In the library we have had a lot of turnover in the last 2-3 years. I believe much of the turnover is a result of reactions to inflation. Other employers are compensating their employees with higher wages, so we have lost good employees for that reason. Also, the applicant pools seem to have fewer applicants or more applicants with fewer qualifications. I believe that the classified employees in the State of Idaho need to be compensated better or we may continue to lose good employees and have more difficulties finding qualified workers. The insurance and benefits are great, but many younger applicants only seem to pay attention to the hourly wage.

Regards,

Spencer
Associate Professor

Spencer Jardine

Coordinator of Instruction | Libraries

Eli M. Oboler Library Building | Room 327A
921 South 8th Ave., Stop 8089 | Pocatello, ID 83209
[REDACTED] | spencerjardine@isu.edu

I have been an instructor at ISU College of Technology since 2008 teaching students Computer Aided Design Drafting (CADD). Every item made, manufacture, created has to have a plan and the CADD students are the ones to make that happen. I have an Associate's degree, a Bachelor's degree and a Masters degree, all from ISU. I make \$66,415 per year. I do not have the pleasure of having the state retirement plan, Percy, as it was discontinued as an option the year I was hired. I have TIAA-Cref with the matching opportunity, which I pay into, which will not be enough to live on when I retire, thus making it that I won't be able to retire.

The students **that I have taught** are making over \$80,000 per year with an Associate's degree. The other teacher in the CADD program quit midyear because he was offered a position making twice what he was making as an instructor.

I believe there is an inequity in what CTE instructors are making and what the industry pays. I could go work at the site making more money, however, I have dedicated the past 15 years to helping students better their lives. I have rewritten the program to keep the students employable and on the cutting edge of the industry, and I have updated my own skills so I am current with the industry. I hope that you will consider elevating educators and their status so quality, dedicated educators are rewarded for their efforts and we have the ability to hire dedicated instructors who want to teach. It seems a bit backward when the people who are educating the workers of tomorrow are among the lowest paid in the country. Idaho has had a booming economy and looks to continue that way- how about investing more money in the educators?

Thank you for your time.

Alesha E. Churba, MTD, CAPS

Clinical Assistant Professor, Program Coordinator CADD | Trade and Industry

Pronouns: she/her

CliftonStrengths: Responsibility | Empathy | Achiever | Deliberative | Intellection

#96 Eames Center for Advanced Technical Education | Room 197

921 S 8th Ave Box 8230 | Pocatello, ID 83209

██████████ | churales@isu.edu



To whom it may concern:

Good Afternoon everyone, I am writing to give my personal testimony regarding my own compensation as a State Of Idaho Employee working at Idaho State University.

My official title is an Interactive Video Conferencing Classroom Specialist class code 05380, pay grade J. The hourly wage is from \$18.23--\$39.05 per hour. I have been in my current position since October 2008.

My current hourly wage is \$22.79 an hour. It has taken me nearly 15 years to go from \$14.65 to my current wage. In 2022 I received a raise of \$1.30 cents per hour after not receiving any raises in 2021. My usual annual raise is approximately .65 cents per hour (3%) so the \$1.30 is exactly the same amount I would have gotten if I had not missed my 2021 raise.

According to the FY 2023 compensation schedule, "policy" wage is \$26.03. With the average of 65 cents per year, it will take me another 5 years in this position to reach that amount. At a rate of 3% annual raise, I would never reach the top end of the wage bracket before retirement.

Another concern of mine is wage compression. The current starting wage is \$18.23 an hour, \$4.56 less than what I am making. My 15 years of service and experience equates to .30 cents an hour. With the average raise at .65 cents an hour, per year, those hired at this time would be at my current wage in 7 years, less than half of the time it took me to get to where I am now. This is a huge deterrent for people to remain in a position where experience, loyalty, and years of service are not valued.

With the rising costs associated with inflation, I have had to take a second job in order to cover expenses. I know several people in my department that also work a second job. One coworker with 17 years of service recently quit in order to cash out their retirement to cover finances. This is the third employee in the last 5 years forced to quit and cash out retirement in order to make ends meet. I am happy to report all of these people now have jobs in the private sector making approximately \$15,000 more per year.

I am hopeful that in a year or so my wages might cover the increases in the cost of living but there is a high probability that the 3% wage increases won't be enough and more people will be forced to look for work elsewhere, including myself.

Thank you for your time,
Angela Burnham

Hello Christine Otto,
I am an employee at Idaho State University and received the email I am forwarding on to you.

I would like to comment regarding the salary compensation for Administration Assistant I employees within the state of Idaho. I have worked at Idaho State for 18 ½ years. I started as an Office Specialist II in Jun 2004 and eventually requested a position review to update my position to an Administrative Assistant I and received it in June 2015. Since then, there has been at least one raise to get my position at a competitive level besides the annual consideration of pay raises each year that are considered for all state employees. This one bump in the raise indicates that the Administrative Assistant I position has been underpaid. I also understand there is a committee that reviews the compensation of positions with the state that indicate that we are paid below the market and need a number of years with generous raises to get us to a more competitive level. But for some reason this has not appeared to be a big enough concern to catch salary compensations up to a more competitive level with the current market.

Currently as things stand in the department that I work in , we had an Administrative Assistant I leave their position in March 2022 it took us till July 2022 to fill the position. Once it was filled the person came on board and then left after 2 weeks. Since then the committee, of which I have been on, had a hard time getting people to want to interview. Some would not even respond back to our calls or even show up for an interview . And this was likely due partly to the low pay. At this time I just recently learned that we just hired someone finally for this position and hope that they will stay. We now have another Administrative Assistant I position that just became vacant and hope we don't have the same issues with that one due to the pay. I learned within the last year or two that McDonald's,(a fast food chain), is starting their employees out at \$16.00 an hour. After working for the state 18 ½ years, I only make 43 cents more an hour than a **beginning** McDonald's worker makes by assisting Administration and faculty to help bachelor's prepared nurses to become PhD prepared nurses, Nurse Practitioners and Nurse Educators.

I also want to mention that I do feel the Health insurance package is a real good package offered here at Idaho state and I am thankful that input from state employees has been heard and no changes have been made to that package. However, I do feel though that the state needs to update their sick leave policy on how many hours can be used towards insurance when individuals retire. According to the law as I understand it is - only a percentage of a percentage of those earned sick leave hours go towards paying for insurance once you retire. The remainder of the earned sick leave hours you lose altogether once retired. This law, based on what I have found, was set up back, I believe, in the 1970s and seems very outdated and unfair.

There has been a surplus in tax revenue the state has received in the last couple of years of over 2 billion dollars and I would respectfully request the legislator consider the discrepancies mentioned here and consider making the compensation more fair for Administrative Assistants I and state employees.

Thanks you for allowing me the opportunity to express these opinions.

Dear Christine, I would like to offer the following written testimony to the CEC committee.

I first want to thank the CEC committee for their work on behalf of Idaho's citizens, and for the opportunity to provide testimony. I ask the committee to provide a CEC that is no less than half the rate of inflation over the past year, as a minimum raise for all State employees. I also ask that additional funds be allocated to bring our lowest paid employees up to a fair living wage, provide merit bonuses to reward high performing employees, and provide wage competitiveness increases to help the State retain employees with essential skills. I believe that this level of CEC is a bare minimum needed to continue functioning effectively, and that a higher level of CEC is needed for

our employees to prosper along with the State. Inflation is hurting us all, businesses and employees; and it is fair to share the burden. If the State can afford tax cuts to businesses and rebates to our citizens, then we can afford to help our employees deal with inflation and the skyrocketing costs of housing.

Our State employees are the engine that makes Idaho run. They are essential to our economy and prosperity and should be valued equally with our business community. Our businesses are prospering, as evidenced by our State's rapid growth. Yet, our agency struggles to retain valued staff and many of our employees are struggling to stay afloat financially. I work a colleague where both he and his spouse are working full-time and yet are falling into debt to pay for childcare. One of our talented new hires has to live with a close friend's parents in order to afford to live here in North Idaho and work for DEQ. Another has a long commute to affordable housing and still must turn the heat way down in winter. These are only a few examples of the hidden challenges our employees are facing; and I could share many more. Furthermore, these hurdles existed before inflation hit this year and made the challenges greater.

Consider the imbalance this year between economic growth and the growing burden of inflation. Idaho's GDP grew by 6.6% in 2021 (the latest year for which I can find data), and inflation for 2021 and 2022 was 7%. Even with last year's CEC, we are now making approximately 10% less in real terms than we were in 2020. Yet, assuming 2022's growth is roughly equivalent to 2021's, our businesses' wealth has grown by ~10 - 12% over the past 2 years. Our employees are falling behind while our businesses are growing. It is not just, fair, or moral to ask employees to take additional pay cuts to fuel private sector growth that is not benefitting them. In fact, this growth is making our employees live harder by increasing the cost of housing and eating a larger slice of a shrinking paycheck (adjusted for inflation). Economic growth doesn't help everyone – it only helps those whose wages grow along with that growth. When you account for inflation, our wages are shrinking. This is unjust, and it is driving valued employees away from the State. We are losing essential staff at a time when Idaho's rapid growth is putting greater burdens on our agencies. If the State wants to live up to its ideal of being a place that values our families and communities, then we need to increase our employees pay significantly. Our State does not operate on ideals and ideology, it operates on the diligent work of our employees. That work should be rewarded and compensated fairly.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincere Regards,
Craig Cooper, PhD

Craig Cooper, PhD | SR Lake Management Plan Limnologist
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<http://www.deq.idaho.gov/>

As a state employee, my priorities in regards to compensation are (in priority order):

1. First and foremost... do NOT consider changing the retirement program to a defined contribution program. PERSI has done an excellent job with managing the state's retirement program and IMHO, they are in a far better position than the average state employee to make wise investment decisions. And that is all the more true after an employee retires and may not be as mentally sharp as they were in their younger years. If financial considerations required the state to reduce the expenses of the retirement system, I'd rather have them reduce the amount I received monthly in retirement than to change to a defined contribution (ie, 401K style) system that may leave me far worse off at a time I can least afford it
2. Cost of living increase in wages. Always important, but particularly important in a high inflation era.
3. Catch up to market wages.

Many thanks for your efforts at fairly compensating state employees
Dave Turnmire

Good afternoon,

While I love what I do in my position and I feel like I am adequately paid for it most of the time; the pay does not seem to be progressing quickly enough with the economy. I feel like with my rate of pay I have now, that 2-3 years ago living where I do I would be "comfortable" and could afford to own a home and not stress as a single parent and not be in debt. Now with the rising pricing of EVERYTHING I cannot afford to own a home or live without credit card debt. I always appreciate the position and benefits I have here with the State and the CEC I have received each year has helped but it seems like even with the CEC and then the price of things going up I actually have LESS money each year.

I also understand it is hard with the different economies and areas in the state as they can all differentiate as well and I am thankful for whatever we get each year, even a small amount is better than nothing at all.

Thank you

Stephanie Dixon
Program Specialist
Self-Reliance Quality Control
Office: 208-235-2806

Cell: [REDACTED]
Fax: 208-235-2820
Stephanie.Dixon@dhw.idaho.gov

Hello,

I have worked for the state for five years. When I first started I thought the pay was great, I wasn't rolling in cash but I was able to comfortably support myself with two roommates and indulge in my hobbies. But as we all know, five years is a long time.

Since then I have gotten married with a step child, bought a house (which was literally the cheapest house on the market that was liveable), very normal life changes but ones that come with extra cost, and then we all lived through a global pandemic that has tilted the whole world on its head.

My wages have not kept up with the increased cost of living even slightly. What used to be "we can handle it if we're careful and don't go crazy" became paycheck to paycheck, overwhelmed with guilt if I spend as much as 5\$ on lunch when I have forgotten mine at home. I spend 150\$ just on groceries, grabbing only the essentials which are the generic versions. I am constantly having anxiety about money for every single expense that comes up, even something as innocuous as needing to fill up the car twice this pay period instead of once.

My child offered her tooth fairy money to me because she had seen us stress about finances and tell her we couldn't afford treats for her. I declined but that broke my heart. My husband and I could only get Christmas gifts for each other this year because my Mother-in-law gave us money for that purpose.

I started five years ago at \$12.92. Five years that I have been loyal to my employer, enduring a position that had cycled through at least three people in the two years before I came along and stayed. And after those five years, I make less than I did when I started after accounting for inflation. I make \$15.02, if my pay rate had just kept up with inflation alone (let alone rewarding loyalty and dedication to the university and program I have stuck with) I should be making \$15.33.

A new person just coming into the company makes \$14.43, even less when accounting for inflation.

Your employees can't live like this. We are your citizens, we are the backbone of the government, utilities, and higher education. We raise our families here and want a better future for everyone living in this state.

If you can't even take care of us and ensure we have as much as a stable quality of life, then how can you take care of anyone else?

--

Jasmyne Jensen

Administrative Assistant | Physics

Physical Science | Room 123E

921 South 8th Ave., Stop 8106 | Pocatello, ID 83209

██████████ | jensjasm@isu.edu

Dear Christine Otto and other esteemed CEC Committee members,

I was not born in Idaho, but I have spent most of my life here and I love our state. I graduated high school in Emmett, I was awarded my bachelor's degree from University of Idaho, and I have family roots in the Ada County area. I have always seen myself raising a family of my own in Idaho and I am proud that I work for our state as a microbiologist in support of our agriculture. Unfortunately, I must be realistic about my future. It is common knowledge the spiking costs of housing/food in Idaho and the disparity between compensation and cost of living. There are many opportunities to receive higher compensation in my field elsewhere that I must consider as an educated scientist with marriage and family in my near future. **I entered my position with experience and pertinent qualifications, and, according to information I referenced from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics website, I am receiving roughly 37.5% less compensation than the average for Ada County wages** [reference link below]. I am hopeful we will continue to increase wages and move in the right direction. I am imploring you to consider setting an example that our leadership is addressing this issue by raising the wage of skilled positions in Idaho state jobs. I humbly thank you for your time and consideration on this topic.

REFERENCE: https://www.bls.gov/regions/west/news-release/countyemploymentandwages_idaho.htm

Respectfully,

Jordan Hawley

she/her

Microbiologist- Brucellosis Lab

ISDA Diagnostic Laboratory

Tel: ██████████

Lab Email: BRUCELLALAB@ISDA.IDAHO.GOV

Dear Representatives,

Thank you for the work you do in Idaho and the support you provide to the Department of Health and Welfare and its personnel; we truly couldn't succeed without you.

I would specifically like to share with you a perspective related to hiring and maintaining qualified personnel. Before my position in Public Health for the state of Idaho, I was a highly qualified secondary science education teacher and then a Supervisor of Youth

Programs for an out-of-state county Parks and Rec. I earned a Master's in Public Health Education and Promotion while working professionally because I truly wanted to be able to make a difference in the lives of youth and adolescents. I've served on executive boards and in influential non-profit positions and strive to support communities with strong leadership and using best practices.

From my experience, the most effective way to impact the health and welfare of children and teenagers comes from state-level programming; and their ability to achieve the highest quality of life comes from the support of state-level personnel.

We, state-level personnel, hold the keys to evidence-based research, informed access to resources, and impactful methodology. We also have the passion, innovation, and fortitude to best serve the state of Idaho. We look at the big picture while still maintaining empathy and equity for all communities and populations.

We need the support of our legislators and the CEC Committee to believe in our abilities and to honor the quality of our work.

Thank you,

Casie Jones, MPH, CHES®
Health Program Specialist,
Project Filter Youth/Vaping Prevention Coordinator
Bureau of Community Health
Division of Public Health
Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
Casie.Jones@dhw.idaho.gov

Dear CEC committee,

I thank you for all your efforts last year in delivering one of the largest CEC increases for state employees.

It was unfortunate that Higher Education was overlooked by legislators and only received a 5% pool when all other state employees received a pool of 7%. It was disheartening to see employees from other agencies receiving bigger percentage increases, while Higher Education fell further behind.

If you have any influence please seek to ensure all employees of the state are treated equally when voting for CEC distributions.

Thank you,

As an employee of the state of Idaho, I have been frustrated with an across-the-board change in compensation costs. When insurance costs were raised, it was raised as a whole, not based on salary. I am paid considerably less than my counterparts at U of I

and BSU, although I have many more years of experience, yet when our costs go up (i.e., cost of insurance), they go up the same amount.

There are 3 universities in this state. I have a hard time understanding why the other two are more highly compensated than this one. Seniority, years of service, experience . . . That doesn't seem to help us in the southeast part of the state. I don't know what all is included in this discussion, but unless there's equity, the state is doing a disservice to many of it's employees.

Dani Moffit

Dani Moffit, PhD, LAT, ATC, FNAP

Program Director, Master of Science in Athletic Training | Physical Therapy
Department

Reed Gym | Room 303A

921 South 8th Ave., Stop 8045 | Pocatello, ID 83209

 | moffdani@isu.edu

Good Afternoon,

I would love to take a few moments to point out a few things from the point of view of one of the call center workers in Idaho.

We were essential and did work at the same rate of pay as before. We have great benefits and work is very rewarding. Here is where it goes off the beaten path. Many of the folks here in Idaho received Pandemic benefits during these trying times. We did not. We received the same stimulus monies that all of America got. But we do not qualify for any additional help. The cost of gas and food is astronomical. Everything including rent has increased to the point of pushing some folks out the housing market.

I love what I do, but other call centers are paying more by several dollars each hour. I recently lost my second job due to health concerns – a cancer diagnosis. At this time I cannot work a second job and overtime is not offered here. I have not missed a rent payment nor a utility payment. But my diet has suffered due to the increase of groceries. I am not ashamed to say I go at least once a month to get in line for a food box. It helps tremendously with food cost. But it is disheartening to be here as an advocate for others Food security when I am struggling myself. I do NOT wish to work anywhere else, I have found a home here and believe with all my heart my job is important and the folks I cry with and fight for are my neighbors and others who are just one paycheck away from being devastated.

I will continue to be an advocate because I feel great purpose in this job. My connection on the phone to others is important to me and I hope to others. Please help us to achieve some relief in our own homes during these crazy times.

Thank you for being available to reach out to.

Meghan Hunter
Customer Service Representative
Division of Welfare/Self Reliance Customer Service Center
877-456-1233
MyBenefits@dhw.idaho.gov
www.healthandwelfare.idaho.gov

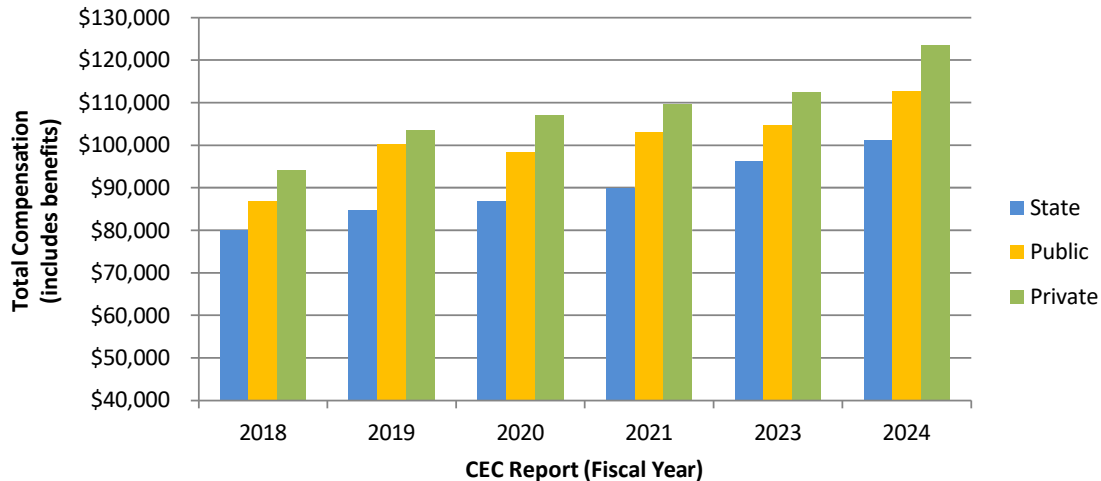


Hi, thank you for the chance to offer comments. First is the question of why instructors are not able to belong to PERSI. I have talked to HR, faculty council, faculty senate and emailed my legislators. No one is able to offer any reason why it is not a choice in the retirement option. As a side note, I will bet most of the legislators don't know we don't get it. I understand some people may not want PERSI and should not be forced to take it but those of us that want PERSI should have the option. It won't cost the state anymore to match funds to PERSI than to TIAA or VALIC. Next is a concern with health coverage and no help with hearing aids. We have help with eyeglasses and dental (with limits) and I was shocked when I called Blue Cross and they said that there is NO help with hearing. Wow not even a dime a year or anything for hearing aids. Thanks Russell

Dear Members of the Committee on Employee Compensation:

I am a state employee who shares your goal of a lean and efficient state government. Thank you for accepting my written testimony.

Please look at this graph. I have taken data from seven years of CEC reports, and it shows how even with regular increases of 2-4%, the state is **merely treading water** with regards to other employment sectors:



If Idaho is ever going to close the gap between its salary and the market, **it must award raises that are greater than inflation**. The DHR proposal of 4.5% this year and next is too timid, because inflation will just eat the gains. By the time we've implemented the program, the other sectors will have moved on, and we'll still be behind. If you want to catch up, you gotta run faster than the other guy!

Perhaps Idaho has no chance of catching the private sector. After all, government and private-sector work are inherently different. However, achieving parity with the public sector is a worthy and **realistic** goal.

With infrastructure issues, we typically present the problem as a numeric target ("\$450m needed to repair Idaho's bridges"). Please **ask DHR** to calculate the total price tag to bring state employee pay, on average, up to public sector levels. Once we have that number, we can finally see the size of the problem. With the large budget surplus, we may even have a chance of fixing it.

Excellence in state government is a worthy goal, and worth paying for. If we can't improve compensation when the economy is good, what chance do we have later?

Sincerely,

Hawk Stone
3921 Catalpa Drive, Boise

* Graph shows relative total compensation for a worker in pay grade L. The picture is much the same for other pay grades. This data was taken from the Korn-Ferry Total Compensation Survey, which appears on page 87 of the FY2024 CEC report. No report was available for FY2023.

Dear CEC Committee,

As you all know, Idaho is experiencing unprecedented growth and a robust economy. In my role at Idaho Department of Fish and Game I work with and supervise staff in the skilled labor trades such as utility craftsmen and maintenance craftsmen. Employees in these pay grades are required to have journeyman level skills in several construction trades and a CDL. The services of our program in the Anadromous Fish Screen and Passage Program provide support to most of the irrigated agriculture in the Upper Salmon Basin of Lemhi and Custer Counties. In the current economy we have had challenges recruiting and retaining skilled employees to fill these vital roles because our wages are not competitive with the private sector. As cost of living continues to increase, we are concerned that ability to maintain our workforce in these positions will decrease. State employees, like many Idahoans are feeling the pressure of inflation and rising costs of living. We appreciate any consideration by this committee to help Idaho state government provide the best service possible to Idahoans by supporting recruitment and retention of talent and a dedicated workforce.

Thank you for your service and dedication to the state and state employees. We appreciate all that you do.

Sincerely,
Windy Schoby

Windy Schoby
Staff Biologist
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Anadromous Fish Screen Program
99 Hwy 93 North
Salmon, Idaho 83467

windy.schoby@idfg.idaho.gov

To Whom it May Concern:

State employees are compensated at a lower rate then the private sector and inflation over the last 2-3 years has added a hardship in affording living cost. We are currently assisted in housing through family. The cost of housing has skyrocketed making renting or owning out of reach.

Often when we receive a CEC, it's in the amount of .50 - .75 cents, where at the same time we see an increase in the amount deducted from our paycheck for medical.

I love the agency and work beside dedicated employees that work hard every day to provide the best service to our constituents. Please help support state employees by approving a substantial wage increase in 2023.

Sincerely,

Jaime Creson

Regional Volunteer Services Coordinator
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
15950 N. Gate Blvd.
Nampa, Idaho 83687



Ms. Otto,

I would like to address the inequities in employee compensation for individuals at the Division of Occupational and Professional Licenses (DOPL). While the increase in compensation is an important issue so is the consistency of compensation within classifications.

The following individuals all perform the same duties as a Program Manager overseeing discipline for DOPL:

Berk Fraser \$69.73/hour
MiChell Bird \$48.31/hour
John Price \$37.07/hour

The following individuals all perform the same duties as a Program Supervisor overseeing discipline for DOPL:

Mike Celeste \$34.93/hour
Don Morse \$35.00/hour
Skip Liddle \$31.77/hour

Experience and tenure are not taken into account. For example, Skip Liddle has been a supervisor for several years and with the Division for 8 years. Don Morse was just recently promoted and is now making more than any of the supervisors. Also, there is a significant disparity amongst the Program Managers and their compensation.

I would hope that DHR can audit compensation to establish some equality.

Thank you for your time.



John Price

Investigations Program Manager

Occupational Licenses Bureau

john.price@dopl.idaho.gov

[REDACTED]

11341 W Chinden Blvd.

Building 4

Boise, ID 83714

dopl.idaho.gov

To Committee Members,

I am one of the two RNs remaining in the Long-Term Care survey team. Recently two RNs in our team left due to the much better compensation offered by the private sector. It has been difficult for our department to attract nurses to work for us due to very low salary being offered by the State, and because of that we have to hire the services of the contract surveyors which I believe cost a lot of money for the department.

Since I started working here, the LTC team had never been able to fulfill its required number of surveyors. Many left, the reasons they left? It's the pay being offered by the State. Yes, the benefit package is great, but with the increasing cost of living in Idaho it is difficult for us to meet these daily expenses. I have a family of four and two are going to college this year. It stresses me right now, thinking how we can afford to send them to college/university.

Thank you for this opportunity to send our thoughts regarding pay compensation.

Sincerely,

Presie C. Billington, RN
Health Facility Surveyor
Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
Bureau of Facility Standards

[REDACTED]

Presie.Billington@dhw.idaho.gov

Christine, CEC committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to interact with our representatives. I feel Idaho is in a unique position with a budget surplus and a state workforce that has worked too long in a wage deficit. We have not kept up with our neighboring states which has siphoned off the cream of our workforce with higher wages and more attractive benefit

packages. Hiring talented and capable individuals to work in our state is the goal of all managers and we need some more tools in our toolbox to attract and keep these individuals. You have the opportunity to recommend increases above and beyond the typical inflationary raise that we have seen for some time. Let's invest in our workers across the state to show Idaho is serious about getting good, qualified candidates to run this state into the future.

Thank you for your time,
Respectfully
Matt Linde



Matt Linde
Park Manager

Ponderosa State Park
1920 N. Davis Ave | McCall, ID 83638
tel [REDACTED] email matt.linde@idpr.idaho.gov

[website](#) | [map](#) | [passport](#)



Dear Change in Employee Compensation Committee,

I appreciate the opportunity to give my testimony on the State of Idaho's personnel and employee compensation.

I have been a park ranger for the Department of Parks and Recreation for the past 5 years, and I would like to suggest a 3% pay increase for all park staff. Since the pandemic, the parks have had an increase in visitation that has impacted infrastructure and staff alike. With the CARES Act assisting in improving state park infrastructure, the workload has increased on park staff by maintaining these new or reopened structures. There has been an increase in Full-time positions throughout the state to help with the increased workload, but not all parks have been provided a full-time position to help. While some of the parks have increased positions, workload has increased to a difficult point. For example, Heyburn State Park has been given a new Maintenance Craftsman position to help with the work of the park's wastewater system, but the park was also given funding to rehabilitate the Rocky Point Lodge, which will be opening in the coming year. The lodge will create a significant increase in workload for rangers and managers alike.

Along with the increased difficulty from large visitation and added infrastructure, park staff also deals with the recent inflation in our economy. Most of the parks in the state are in remote areas, which in turn means even more expensive groceries, larger amount of travel costs, and added transportation costs for the employees that don't get the benefit of living in park housing. If a 3% increase is given, I believe that it will improve employee satisfaction of their jobs as well as employee retention.

Thank you for your consideration,

Dalton Crane
Park Ranger
Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation
Dalton.crane@idpr.idaho.gov

Dear CEC Committee members,

I am an experienced registered nurse (RN) with 30 years of nursing experience, including eight years of long-term care and certified Minimum Data Set (MDS) experience. I have worked for the State of Idaho for just over two years as a long-term care surveyor in a role that requires 3-5 day trips to facilities every other week. I took a 50 % pay cut to join our team during the first year of the Covid 19 pandemic with the goal that I would help to improve the quality of care for Idahoans and receive a fair pay increase after I demonstrated my ability to make a difference.

I looked at Register Nurse's wage statistics for Idaho, our six surrounding states, and the U.S. This data was reported by the U.S Bureau of Labor statics (the most recent data was many 2021) and is provided below:

1. Registered Nurse wages in Idaho/Median hourly rate: \$36.33
2. Mean (average) National statistics for Registered Nurses
 - a. Mean hourly wages \$ 39.78
 - b. Mean annual wages \$ 82,750
3. National stats on a Percentile basis for Registered Nurses:

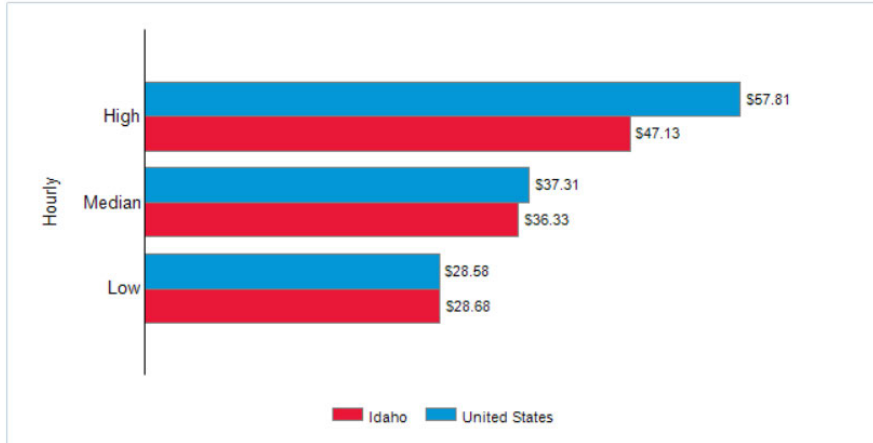
Percentile	10%	25%	50% (Median)	75%	90%
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Hourly Wage	\$ 28.58	\$ 29.71	\$ 37.31	\$ 46.91	\$ 57.81
Annual Wage (2)	\$ 59,450	\$ 61,790	\$ 77,600	\$ 97,580	\$ 120,250

Wages for **Registered Nurses** in **IDAHO**

[View Yearly Wages](#)

[View Table](#) : [View Chart](#) : [View Map](#)

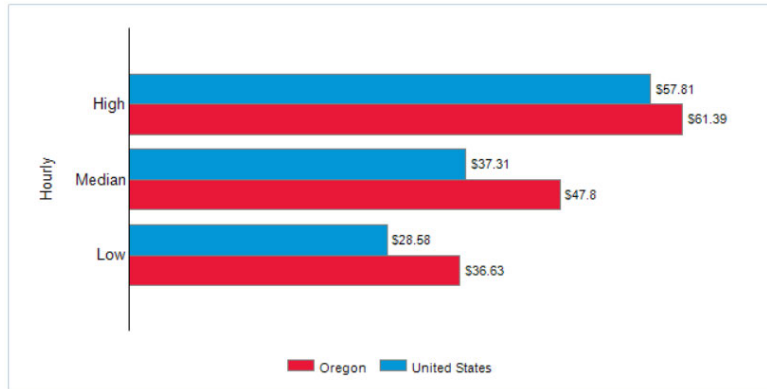


4. Registered Nurse wages in Oregon/ Median hourly rate: \$47.8

Wages for **Registered Nurses** in **OREGON**

[View Yearly Wages](#)

[View Table](#) : [View Chart](#) : [View Map](#)

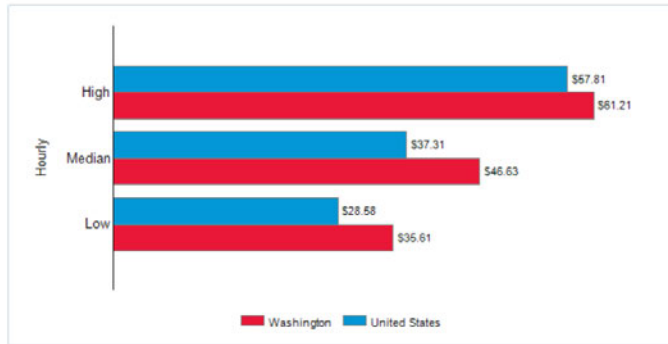


5. Registered Nurse wages in Washington/ Median hourly rate: \$46.63

Wages for **Registered Nurses** in WASHINGTON

[View Yearly Wages](#)

[View Table](#) : [View Chart](#) : [View Map](#)

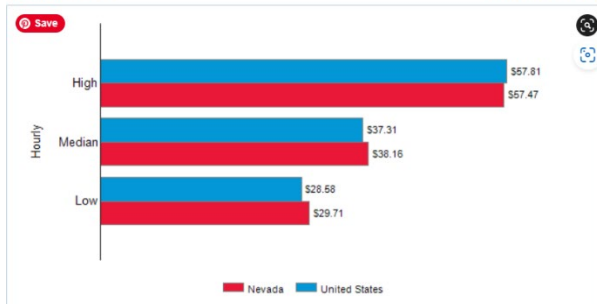


6. Registered Nurse wages in Nevada/ Median hourly rate: \$38.16

Wages for **Registered Nurses** in NEVADA

[View Yearly Wages](#)

[View Table](#) : [View Chart](#) : [View Map](#)

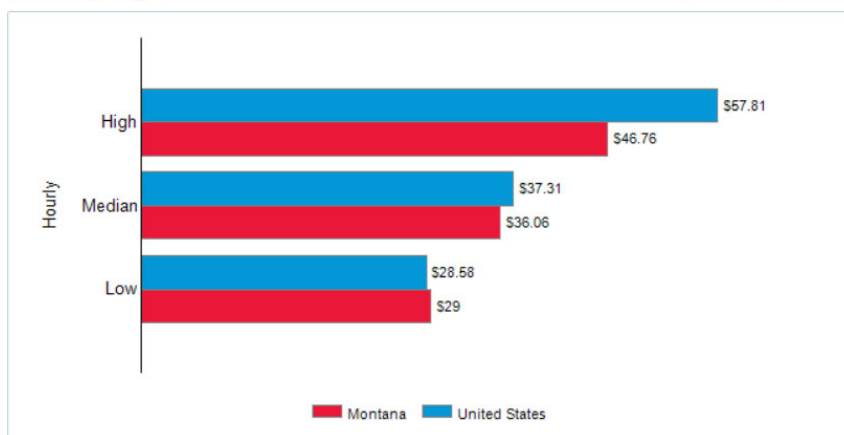


7. Registered Nurse wages in Montana/ Median hourly rate: \$36.06

Wages for **Registered Nurses** in MONTANA

[View Yearly Wages](#)

[View Table](#) : [View Chart](#) : [View Map](#)

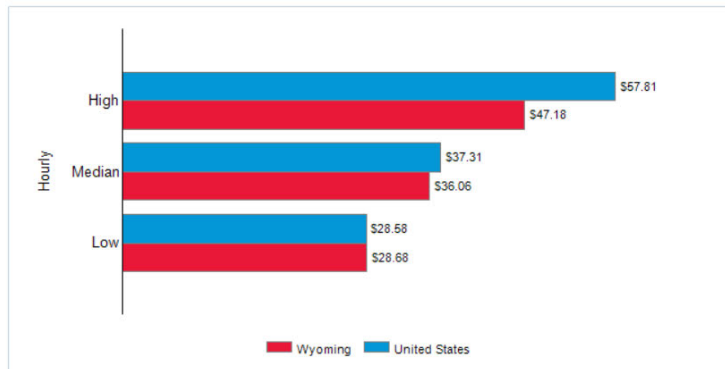


8. Registered Nurse wages in Wyoming/ Median hourly rate: \$36.06

Wages for Registered Nurses in WYOMING

[View Yearly Wages](#)

[View Table](#) : [View Chart](#) : [View Map](#)

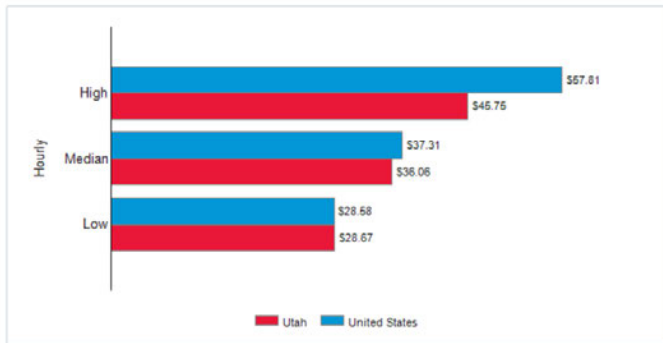


9. Registered Nurse wages in Utah/ Median hourly rate: \$36.06

Wages for Registered Nurses in UTAH

[View Yearly Wages](#)

[View Table](#) : [View Chart](#) : [View Map](#)



Reference link:

1. [Registered Nurses \(bls.gov\)](https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes291141.htm#ind)
<https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes291141.htm#ind>
2. [Salary Finder | CareerOneStop](https://www.careeronestop.org/Toolkit/Wages/find-salary.aspx?keyword=Registered%20Nurses&soccode=291141&onet=&location=Idaho&dataview=&hourly=true&national=False)
<https://www.careeronestop.org/Toolkit/Wages/find-salary.aspx?keyword=Registered%20Nurses&soccode=291141&onet=&location=Idaho&dataview=&hourly=true&national=False>

A couple of additional data:

- During my last two years of surveying nursing homes, a majority of these facilities struggled to maintain nursing staff and resorted to staffing through contracted agencies' paying a 30% to 150 % higher wage.
- Our Bureau of Facility Standards also has a shortage of surveyors. The State of Idaho is paying 3X or more (\$ 90 hourly or higher) plus travel expenses to the contracted agency to meet our surveyor staffing needs. How does the current surveyor's wage for Idaho make sense?

- State of Idaho surveyors typically travels every other week to support surveys. Registered Nurses who are willing to endure working away from home and family can easily find employment as a “traveling nurse” and are compensated anywhere from \$50 - \$100 per hour or more. Additionally, travel and housing expenses are also covered by the employing agency.

My questions are:

- 1) Why does our State not fairly compensate RNs based on their years of professional experience and certification?
- 2) What would it take for the State of Idaho to at least set RN compensation at the national median?

Best Regards,

Jasmine Hartranft

RN/ Health Facility Surveyor/ RAC-CT

Idaho Department of Health & Welfare

Division of Licensing & Certification/ Bureau of Facility Standards

P.O. Box 83720

Boise, ID 83720-0009

Tel: 208-334-6626 Option 2

Direct Line: [REDACTED]

Fax: 208-364-1888

Email: Jasmine.Hartranft@dhw.idaho.gov

www.healthandwelfare.idaho.gov

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. As the cost of new drugs skyrockets, my coworkers and I provide a valuable service to the department in reviewing new medications and developing appropriate clinical criteria.

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 and non-competitive salary offered by the state.

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. So even though they are only doing a subset of what my co-worker and I do on a daily basis, they are paid significantly more per hour.

Final point – as a medical professional, the majority of my salary is paid for with federal money (90%) rather than state money (10%). Therefore, the fiscal impact to the state budget would be minimal.

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

I would like to share some thoughts in regards to the employee compensation that is being evaluated.

I would first like to say thank you for taking the time to consider an increase in compensation for me as an employee of the state of Idaho. I would like to share some instances that point towards the need for an increase in our wage.

Since the advent of Covid-19, the landscape of the world we had been accustomed to has changed dramatically. Demand for goods such as housing, vehicles, household goods, and most everything else went up while supply went down.

I do not think that I deserve to be paid as much as a doctor but as an Idaho State Trooper who is responding to crashes, taking dangerous drugs off the street that affect our community and kids, and arresting impaired drivers who threaten to destroy innocent lives. I feel that I give a lot. My wife also works hard as a stay at home mother while also working part time outside the home.

This year my family was blessed with a beautiful baby. However, prior to their arrival, my wife and I evaluated our finances, and we determined that with my base income during paternal leave we would be short in paying our hospital bills along with our mortgage and other bills. Our mortgage is just over \$800.00 a month which is much less than most people pay. We have a single auto loan that is around \$400.00, again not outrageous. Prior to taking my leave I worked the maximum amount of overtime shifts every pay period for several months in order to save up enough money to make it through.

On top of this we were required to replace a failed HVAC system that forced us to finance an additional \$17,000. Additionally, my child had to have surgery this year, and while the health insurance is a really good benefit, there was still a lot to pay out of pocket. What savings we had has been practically wiped out. With our finances pushed to the brink. What will come next that will push my little family entirely over the edge financially?

My family goes out to eat maybe once every other month. We do not pay for cable or any streaming services. We grow a garden every year and store as much food as we

can. We save money as judiciously as we can. With the increase of prices in every corner of the market, it is incredibly difficult to buy the simple things my small family needs. I have to work overtime shifts on a regular basis in order to provide for the needs of my family. This is time spent away from my children who sometimes cry that I am working another one of my days off.

The job of a State Trooper is more than just money. It is in the lives I encounter every day, from the best of people to the worst. I am trying hard to make Idaho safer for all of us on our roadways, in our communities, and for every family that calls this great state home. I will continue to serve in this capacity as long as I am able to and as long as I am able to provide for my family.

I ask that you seriously consider an appropriate increase to the compensation package that will allow me to focus on my job and in turn allow me to take care of and spend time with my family.

Cpl. B. Foster

Hello, my name is Timothy B. Gria,

I am a State certified Master Electrician. I work as the electrical foreman for Idaho State University in

Meridian, Idaho. I am writing to convey my thoughts on how I should be compensated fairly.

They are as follows:

1. I work in Ada County and am earning Pocatello county wages. There should be no difference between the salaries of one who works in Boise as opposed to one who works in ADA County.

2. The cost of living has increased greatly especially in Ada County. This fact alone should call for a substantial pay increase.

3. In order to keep good, reliable employees, they need to be paid for their knowledge and abilities. Below is information I found from *salaries.com* pertaining to Master electrician wages in Idaho.

How much does a Master Electrician make in Boise, ID? The average Master Electrician salary in Boise, ID is \$65,500 as of December 27, 2022, but the range typically falls between \$58,100 and \$74,000. Salary ranges can vary widely depending on many important factors, including education, certifications, additional skills, and the number of years you have spent in your profession.

Thank you for letting me voice my opinion. I appreciate it.

To Whom it may concern,

The most important change I could see ISU making with staff, is salary equality. ISU is currently paying less than the other State Universities for my position ([BSU 22.79 per hour](#), [U of I 21.16 to 26.16 per hour](#)), and I can only assume other positions. The cost

of living in the Treasure Valley is substantially higher than in Bannock County. I love my job, but I would be much happier with a living wage.

thanks!!

Dear CEC Committee,

My hope is for the committee to push for another 10% CEC increase this year. I am a relatively new biologist that has been at my current position for two years. I have always been fiscally responsible and I have avoided debt for most of my life. My family is debt-free and we have a healthy down payment for a house. However, the real estate prices, coupled with the rising cost of living has made purchasing a home, unattainable. I know I am not alone in this predicament and it is common issue with new state employees. I'm aware the committee is not able to change the market, but an increase in wages would allow more breathing room for all employees. I was very grateful with the increase last year, but the increase did not keep up with inflation. I appreciate your willingness to hear my testimony and I thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Sean Schroff
Regional Wildlife Biologist
Salmon Regional Office
99 Highway 93 N.
Salmon, ID 83467
(208) 756-2271 (Office)
[REDACTED] (Direct Line)



Ms. Otto and CEC Committee:

I am a proud employee of the state for the last seven years. The loyalty with state employees runs low these days because of inflation and other factors such as compensation. According to the US Labor Department the current inflation rate is 7.1%. Daily living costs have skyrocketed in the last year. The cost of eggs is over \$5, gas is still \$3.45 a gallon and my conservative grocery shopping trips cost about \$200 each week. The fact is when established state employees leave for the private sector or non-state agency's they take with them their knowledge and experience. I have witnessed employees within my agency leave after working here for 10+ years. It is not due to the lack of appreciation the agency gives but due to the compensation that allows us to live a secure financial life outside of work. My son works at Walmart and is a senior in high

school, he makes \$17 stocking shelves! Another of his friends works at Panda Express as a cook and makes \$18 an hour. When we compare the starting wages at the state in some important positions (ex. TRS1, TRS2, AA) and they pay less than fast food restaurant, we have a problem. The state (ISP in particular) looks for the cream of the crop candidates to work for them as the jobs require education, background check as well as polygraph exam. The compensation should match the effort taken to become an employee and the pay should continue to be competitive compensation to retain employees. When deciding the CEC for fiscal year 2024 please keep in mind we need to retain valuable employees with a livable wage.

Thank you for your consideration.

Melissa Owens

Technical Records Specialist II

Idaho State Police

Sex Offender Registry

700 S. Stratford Dr., Ste. 120

Meridian, ID 83642

Phone: [REDACTED]

Fax: (208) 884-7193

Good morning,

Our Human Resources Officer at DEQ invited us to provide input regarding the CEC for next year, and I wanted to take a minute to send some thoughts:

I am the primary earner for a single income household, and my wife and I have chosen to raise our family here in beautiful Idaho. We love it here, and I enjoy the work I do for the State of Idaho helping to protect public health and our environment to keep Idaho a great place to live. When we as State employees accept a position with an agency, we understand that we are not going to be amongst the top earners in our respective fields; there are other benefits to the work, culture, and agency mission that make that OK for us for various reasons, and we are willing to accept that.

However, these are unique times we live in and inflation continues to be much higher than it has been in many of our lifetimes. We are seeing it creep into daily life: the cost of groceries, household supplies, kid's clothes, gas, etc. are increasing with no sign of coming back down, forcing tough decisions to be made on a daily or weekly basis. Given the way the pay structure is set up here at the State, we rely on the annual CEC to help ensure that we are able to at least keep pace with the increasing costs of living so that we can continue to live our lives without feeling like we're getting further behind. If our pay can't even keep up with paying for our basics, it makes it more and more difficult to justify the "other benefits" of working here. After all, most of us are professionals who pursued higher education in an effort to ensure quality of life and increase our earning potential. In my 5 years with DEQ, I have seen a lot of turnover, and from what I have heard the reason behind much of that turnover is often rooted in

salary and earnings. It's hard to blame anyone for pursuing better opportunities if they become available.

I know that we had an anomalously high CEC last year, but I would like to respectfully request that the CEC committee at least consider a CEC equating to inflation (7.1% as of the most recent national data) to help us at least keep afloat in these unprecedented times. It's not too much to ask that our paychecks at least have the same spending power, never mind trying to get ahead. Better yet, additional investment in the State workforce above and beyond the bare minimum of inflation would be welcome. Especially with the sizeable budget surplus we keep hearing so much about, I think it is absolutely appropriate to invest some of that money into the hard-working people who serve the State of Idaho. Done adequately, this will help to curb the rampant turnover, and increase personnel and knowledge retention within agencies, which in the end will help us to provide better service to the people of Idaho, which is what we are here to do in the first place.

Thank you for your consideration.

Dan Smith

Dan Smith, PE | Senior Water Quality Engineer

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

Boise Regional Office

1445 North Orchard Street Boise, Idaho 83706

Direct: (208) 373-0281 Cell: [REDACTED]

Front Desk: (208) 373-0550

www.deq.idaho.gov/

***Our mission:** To protect human health and the quality of Idaho's air, land, and water.*

Vacation accrual is a paid benefit. I do my best to use my vacation time as much as possible, but there are many times that my work load and schedule do not give me time to keep my balance under my max point. I am not far from the same point for sick time. Why is vacation time above that just taken away and not paid out?

Last year the State sent out an email saying all State employees were getting a 5% raise. Then ISU sent an email saying all employees were getting a 3% raise plus performance and mid-point based raise.

According to my math, all I received was a 5% total raise. As an employee that continuously receives "continuously exceeds" performance reviews, that felt like a slap in the face, especially as millions of dollars is being pumped into Holt Arena and none of the infrastructure needs are being addressed, (plumbing, electrical, external concrete(trip hazards), Maintenance needs, etc...)

What happened here?

Monty J. Adams

Maintenance & Operations Manager | Holt Arena

Holt Arena | Room 155A

550 Memorial Dr. | Pocatello, ID 83209

Office: (208) 282-2505 | Cell: [REDACTED]

montyadams@isu.edu



Dear CEC Committee,

As a citizen of the state for which you represent, I sure hope you will be considering a substantial increase in compensation for state employees. Over the last few years, I've witnessed many of our outstanding and top-notch state employees leave their state of Idaho jobs due to the lack of compensation for the quality work they do when compared to the other in their related markets. Having talked with several former and current employees, many have mentioned the pay from the state has been insufficient compared to other states, the federal system, and the private sector for many years. While this has been the situation for decades, those I've talked to stayed in their positions because they love the state of Idaho and what they did for the state and its citizens to keep Idaho as Idaho. However, these past 5-10 years have been really difficult for employees to keep up with the ever-exploding housing costs and general cost of living in Idaho that was already occurring before the most recent inflation issues. Several folks worked for the state for several years and had to leave because their pay would not allow them to buy a house or a couple were essentially priced out of being able to afford the home they have between the 20% increase in property taxes in some areas and the drastically increased cost just to survive.

Without quality employees to do the job, services, and produce the goods the state provides its citizens, Idaho will just turn into one of these other broken system states that is everything Idaho's ideals are not. Yes, compensation costs money but with all the increased revenues coming into the state, we should have the money to pay the workers of the state a wage and benefits that are competitive with the labor markets and will afford them the means to be able to live an Idaho life in Idaho. If we do not, I fear for how Idaho is going to look in the near future.

Sincerely yours,

A concerned citizen of Idaho

Thank you for accepting testimony. This testimony is for me as a state employee; I do not represent my agency. As I am sure you are aware Boise continues to grow and the cost of living has increased dramatically. Inflation is making it impossible to keep the same quality of life we had just a year ago. The pace of growth in Idaho is difficult for many workers, but state workers are suffering with stagnant wages, that just don't keep up with inflation. The state loses great employees, who want to work for the public but have to leave 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 over 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 continues to increase. She loves this work but is facing the reality of not being able to afford to work here anymore, she is struggling to provide food for her family. 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 few 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

I am a lifelong Idahoan. Born and raised. My sons are 5th generation Idahoans. I am a career state employee. I have been in my current, professional position for over twenty years.

At no point during my career with the state have I been fairly compensated. In fact, it actually costs me to work for the state. I do NOT live lavishly, quite frugally in fact. I work full time for the state but am forced to rely on my personal credit to get from one pay period to the next. I maximize my take home pay by minimizing my tax withholdings. This of course creates a tax bill for me at tax time. Last year my Idaho tax bill was over \$800, apparently my fee for working a state job. I can no longer afford to contribute to my Choice 401k. My housing costs are nearly 50% of my monthly salary and I can't find even a studio apartment anywhere in Ada County for less than what I'm paying now. And forget about ever being able to buy a home that I might retire in. Until very recently the Governor's *housing stipend* was more than I make in a year! And the legislature was considering increasing that at the beginning of the last session!

As an employee of the state of Idaho, I feel unvalued and cheated. There is no reason the state of Idaho cannot take care of their professional, career employees appropriately and fairly. It's not because you can't, it's because you won't. Looking back over my career with the state, there have been many years where state employees have received no CEC increases (none, zero). Case in point, the period 2008-2012. All state employees made sacrifices during that tough time (and others), but it's never been made up. It's this type of inaction and indifference that causes me to characterize my career with the state as a mistake. I feel used and cheated.

I'm sure the legislature would argue that the state is not in the business of employing people. I'm sure if it were possible, the state government would be just the Governor and the legislature. But that is not possible. Your employees are vital and essential to the success of our state and the efficiency our government. You'll point to the pension and the health insurance as these amazing perks that somehow make up for the inept wages. But the reality is, when I start drawing the pension it might be just enough to buy health insurance and little else.

Governor Little has been re-elected for another term. Under his leadership, the state enjoys a massive surplus. You have my sincere congratulations. But, I implore you to make a difference in the lives of your career employees. Tax rebates and reductions are great and welcomed. But it's not enough. Please take care of us by increasing wages among your longtime and loyal employees in a significant and meaningful way.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Travis Pitkin



IDAHO STATE
**HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

Travis Pitkin, M.S.

Curator of Archaeology
State Historic Preservation Office



210 Main Street
Boise, ID 83702

Dear Legislators,

I first would like to thank you for taking up this important matter. Adequate and competitive compensation is more vital than ever as behavioral health employees play a larger role in the health and safety of our community year after year due to increase in demand for services. Clinicians have increased their workloads as population increase and structure within the department has changed. This has resulted in different roles and larger responsibilities without an increase in compensation. Behavioral health is a field that is known for high levels of turn over and competitive compensation is the way to halt that turn over and increase morale. I have witnessed several clinicians who have been loyal to the department for decades feel undervalued and consider different employment options and I believe that Idahoans deserve the best service providers possible. Again, I want to thank you for taking up this important topic and I urge you to consider increasing the pay structure to acknowledge the value of so many hardworking and loyal employees.

Megan Taylor, LMSW
Designated Examiner
Idaho Department of Health and Welfare



208-334-0788 (fax)

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

First, I'd like to thank the state for the raise structure last July. My raise was enough to combat inflation over the last year, which was no small thing. I hope that this year's raise also at least meets inflation.

I would like the state to implement a way for employees to keep their raises when moving across job classifications. I voluntarily stepped down to a lower position in mid 2019. However, when I did so, I lost every raise I had earned since I started at the Department in 2015 and was given what a new hire walking in off the street was offered. I recently got a new supervisor and she reported that due to her raise losses, she makes relatively little over what she did prior to her promotion. 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. My pie in the sky dream would be for all current state of Idaho employees who have lost raises due to moving jobs within the state get their lost raises added back into their current hourly pay, but I do realize that is very unlikely.

When I worked in retail, that company had a way for its employees to keep their raises across hourly job classifications, whether moving up, down or laterally. I would like the state to implement something similar. They had base pay bands, so, to use made up numbers, if you moved from level 3 where base pay started at \$15 with a cap of \$19, to base pay 5 where starting wage was \$17, and you'd had a total of \$2.50 in raises since you were hired, your new starting pay would be \$19.50. Conversely, if you started in level 5, had \$2.50 in raises since hire and moved to a job in level 3, you'd make \$17.50, not start at \$15 like a new hire would. If your raises exceeded the max pay cap for the pay grade you'd move to, then you'd be put at the max pay for that pay level. If you moved from one level 3 job where you were making \$17.50 to another level 3 job in a different area or department, you'd continue to make \$17.50.

I think implementing a similar system would be well within the realm of possibility for the state of Idaho and I'd love to see it happen.

Thank you,

Rachel O'Hearn, LMSW
Case Aide
Department of Health and Welfare
Children and Family Services

Myself and two of my employees are all in the current position to where we cannot afford housing near our work locations in the treasure valley area. I have worked for the state almost 10 years now and one of my other employees for IDFG about 8 years. I know this is common theme for Idaho which makes recruitment and retention of our employees difficult.

The average CEC growth for the times is not keeping up with the housing market or cost of living. Not to mention if you went to school and took student loans you are at a disadvantage.

The last position I hired stayed open for one year with very little interest. This position advertised starting pay over the new areas minimum of \$15/per hour, the position continues to have no benefits for a skilled construction worker. We have been operating in the program now with reduced staff for a period of almost 2 years with ever increasing responsibilities in the program with very few increases to staff wages or program budgets.

It is very difficult to maintain a quality program and recruit and retain employees with no to little wage growth or program personnel augments. Often CEC increases get eaten up by increased medical and benefit costs.

Thank you for reviewing the concerns,

Curt Creson

Recreation Site Maintenance Foreman

Idaho Department of Fish and Game

15950 North Gate Blvd. Nampa, ID 83687

Desk: (208) 475-2690



January 5, 2023

CEC Committee Members

State Capitol

Room EW20

Boise, Idaho

RE: Invitation to testify about the state's personnel system and employee compensation
Idaho code, 675309C

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Nancy Carpenter. I am a State of Idaho classified employee of 12 years working in higher education.

I am for the CEC committee to recommend (strongly) that the state of Idaho become competitive in the labor market. Multiple surveys spanning several years have shown the pay disparity between the public and private sector. The states response has been minimal and has not provided relief to long term underpaid classified state employees. This lack of response has created vacancies across all state organizations, vacancies that go unfilled due to poor wage offerings. Long term valuable employees are leaving for higher paying jobs. I would argue that it is more economical for the state to pay a long-term hourly employee a competitive wage than to pay hiring committees wages and training for new employees. Long term hourly employees have extensive experience, effectiveness, and efficiencies that most new employees must learn over

time. Employee turnover is costly and often disrupts the health of an organization, resulting in months and sometimes years of setbacks.

Shortly after I was hired the state issued a wage freeze. When it lifted, the compensation never made up for the loss, and since that time increases have been minimal. What I have found is that to receive sustainable increases, an employee must be promoted or change positions. Even after getting the highest marks on reviews and receiving promotions, I have never been able to meet the policy (average) rate for any position held at the State of Idaho. My experience as a classified employee is not unique.

I understand that increases are delivered uniformly across the board, but I'd like to see value placed on dedicated long-term hourly employees. I would also like to see institutions who are centered in a county outside of ADA County pay Ada County employees a wage that is equal to the difference in the cost of living associated with working and residing in Ada county.

Thank you for your time.

Nancy Carpenter

Hi Christine,

I am writing on behalf of the CEC meeting that will occur on January 11th. 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 11% less an hour than the national average of \$24.95. I do not feel that the Department of Agriculture fairly compensates its laboratory employees. Compared to the newly starting factory laboratory 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 smaller workload than what I do on a daily basis.

Many employees in the ISDA are leaving to other state agencies because they offer the same benefits, better pay, and greater work flexibility, all with fewer responsibilities. Why is the pay so vastly different for other state agencies, when the employees have the exact same job responsibilities? If you want people to stay loyal and continue to work for you, you need to properly compensate for that. Many places in our area offer the same insurance benefits as the state and comparable 401k options. This is not a unique benefit for the state anymore and people are leaving to find their new jobs offer the same, or even better benefits, and more opportunities to advance.

Wages should keep up with inflation and they have not been for the last several years. With the current inflation percentage at 7.1% 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


CEC Committee,

I want to start by saying that I appreciate the increase that was awarded last year. I truly do. I also know that I was more fortunate than some. As with last year, I'll give you my personal numbers, because well, it's a matter of public record what I make. Last year at this time I was making \$18.74/hr., I now make \$20.85/hr.; which is roughly and 11% increase. Like I said I was luckier than some.

I also want to follow up with, as someone who received the largest raise that I've ever had with the State, (more than all my previous 8 years at that point combined actually-let that sink in. I've been with an employer for nearly a decade and my largest raise EVER was Two Dollars and Eleven Cents), I can't even begin to tell you how frustrating it is to be "stuck" in State Employment. I'm an AA2, There's not really anywhere else I can move up into unless a Management Assistant position opens up, but those are so rare that I can't count on that. I'm also the insurance carrier for my family and so I'm in a "must work" situation, and even though I've received a pay raise every year, because of insurance premiums going up every year, and cost of living going up every year, I'm effectively making less than I was last year. This has been the issue year over year for my entire tenure with the State. This year, I'm finding myself in a very unique situation as I'm going to hit my 10 year mark with the State in September of 2023. I'm excited for the vacation bump that I'll receive, however, my work environment has drastically changed from this time last year, and I can't even look forward to taking any vacation because of the mountain of work that I'll be buried with upon my return, as I currently have no backup.

Yes, you read that correctly, there is not currently a single other qualified employee within my division that has been trained to support my position if I'm ever out of the office. When I'm gone; bills do not get paid, employees do not receive their work related reimbursements, office supplies do not get ordered, reconciliations for division fuel and fleet expenses do not happen, public records requests are halted; you get the point. The Admin Asst. is the central hub of any division and without a backup trained to support in

their absence, things come to a screeching halt when I'm out of the office. You see, my division specifically has lost 2 tenured employees who were trained not only in their jobs, but in support of mine as well. These two employees left for better paying jobs outside the State, and we've been unable to hire a single quality applicant for either of those positions. One position has been vacant since August 2022, and the other since October 2022. As one of only a few left in the support staff role in our office, I've been left with a skeleton crew of workers who are over-burdened, over worked, and severely underpaid for the 2+ people's jobs that myself and only 3 others are expected to fulfill along with our own duties. In listening to the CEC Committee meeting on 1/4/2023 I was very frustrated to hear that DHR is wanting to implement an 8.5% increase, but split it over 2 years. As a few of the Representatives questioned, won't this leave us behind again? Won't this keep us from staying competitive with private sector? I hate to put in these terms, but if the legislature fails to increase pay rates, and aggressively deal with compression of existing employees, they will lose more of their experienced workforce. The State is no longer viewed as a "career", but as a stepping stone. If the wage issues are not dealt with soon the public that we're supposed to serve will start to notice even longer wait times for the services that they rely upon. If the shoe were on the other foot and I was in private sector and I was waiting longer and longer for things that came from the State purely because they can't hire people due to pay rates, I'd look and laugh, because it truly is an easy fix when you think about it.

I would hate to leave my boss, but as someone who has been told time and time again, that I'm replaceable I'm finding private sector work more and more appealing. I realize that my retirement may not be as robust as PERSI, but that's hardly consequential when I'm burnt out at work because we have no help and CAN'T hire help, and then my family suffers because of it. I'm asking, no, **pleading you**, the CEC Committee, to go above and beyond what DHR is recommending. Please do not sit idly by as our State workforce continues to dwindle and more and more applicants continue to pull out of job offers due to pay.

Bethany Gaddis
Administrative Assistant
Idaho State Department of Agriculture
Division of Plant Industries
Phone: [REDACTED]
Fax: (208)334-2283
Email: bethany.gaddis@isda.idaho.gov

January 5, 2023

Brian Osborn



CEC Committee

Idaho State Legislature

Boise, ID 83720

Honorable CEC Committee Senate and House Members,

Recruitment of talent for government work is a hard endeavor. Retainment of that talent can prove even more difficult; especially in today's job environment. I am writing this letter to voice my opinion and concerns for both matters: recruitment/retainment of Health Facility Survey staff and the key role this Committee plays in this undertaking. Health Facility Surveyors for the Bureau of Facility Standards protect the health and welfare of Idahoans in multiple provider/supplier types who either receive either Medicare and/or Medicaid funds. Our surveyors play a unique role in the fact they survey not only to Idaho State rules, but also to Federal regulations set forth by the Department of Health and Human Services/ Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). These surveyors are the front-line in ensuring those providers/suppliers who receive State and/or Federal funds are held to legal and professional account in their execution of care delivery to the citizens of Idaho; some being the most vulnerable patient/resident populations.

To execute their duties, our surveyors must retain a unique skillset which sets them apart professionally from their peers. Our surveyors must hold either professional licenses and/or trade experience as a subject-matter expert. However, a competent and seasoned surveyor must also have mastery of additional skills/abilities outside the normal parameters of their chosen discipline.

Per our Bureau's mandated Federal contract with CMS, the majority of our survey staff must be Registered Nurses. To add perspective, these RNs not only need to have a mastery of their profession, but also:

- Ability to analyze, apply, and enforce Federal regulations and State rules.
- Out of town travel, up to 5 days at a time, potentially 50% of their work time.
- Ability to conduct concise and relevant investigations/interviews of potential victims and perpetrators in high stress circumstances.
- Ability for government technical writing to not only convey succinct statements of deficiencies, but to also mitigate State/Federal agencies from potential legal challenges.
- Must have a firm grasp on all levels of the healthcare delivery system to not only discern substandard quality of care provided to Idahoans, but also potential professional/legal breaches by providers and subsequent referrals to outside State/Federal agencies.

The examples above are a small portion of what our surveyors must be proficient at.

This information is relevant to this Committee because the State is struggling to recruit and retain talent due to inequities in compensation.

Since 2018, our Bureau has continued to lose staff either to retirement or salary related reasons; to say nothing of the impact of COVID-19. As of 1/05/23, only 11 of 27 total

allotted surveyor positions are filled, a vacancy rate of 59%; in which 14 of 16 surveyor positions allocated specifically to Nursing Home (LTC) survey work sit unfilled. As recently (September 2022) discussed by the Chair of the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging, Senator Bob Casey, Jr, surveyor positions are down as much as 50% or more across the nation. This leaves critical survey work to protect patients and residents undone. Idaho is listed by Sen. Casey specifically for being in the bottom 3 of all states in timely completion of survey work. The burden of completing Idaho's State and Federal survey responsibilities is currently being shouldered by the committed surveyors we have left. The strain of this crisis staffing, and increased workload have severely taxed our remaining civil servants; some of the most dedicated and selfless professionals I have ever had the pleasure of working with.

To meet our State and Federal responsibilities, our Bureau has no other option than to utilize outside contracted Federal surveyors at a greatly increased cost due to these vacant positions.

The starting hourly wage for Idaho Health Facility Surveyors is currently \$31.13 an hour. The average RN hourly wage in Idaho, including newly graduated RNs, ranges \$35.00 to \$45.00 an hour depending on specialty and experience. Some of the larger skilled nursing companies in Idaho strategically offer more, to our detriment, as 3 of the last 4 Nursing Home (LTC) surveyors our Bureau recently lost were to the same skilled nursing company. These are local examples and do not encompass the national RN shortage and lure of higher wages, travel nursing, and salaries/offers in neighboring states. Additionally, Idaho's cost of living, to say nothing of housing, has steadily increased year after year which has created an even more punctuated financial imbalance regarding outpaced salaries.

A final point to add further emphasis is that of conflict of interest. All survey staff, RN or not, are conflicted-out of working for any healthcare provider/supplier which we survey and/or have regulatory jurisdiction over. For those surveyors who wish to use their professional license in a second per-diem/as-needed capacity to offset their primary wage earnings, they are prohibited from doing so; at the State and Federal level. As an RN myself, due to my position as a Health Facility Surveyor, it would be exceedingly difficult to utilize my RN license, and earning potential, to secure secondary, as-needed employment in my professional field.

The State must recruit and retain professional talent. Compensation should never be the only reason for employment. However, it is a key factor in achieving the above recruitment/retainment goals.

I have been an RN for almost 20 years, 7 of which have been with the Bureau of Facility Standards. I have remained in my position with the State because I firmly believe in our employees and our mission to protect of the citizens of Idaho. I am overwhelmingly proud of the work we do, and I want to ensure our agency can continue to meet our State and Federal responsibilities. I am respectfully asking this Committee to partner with us to accomplish this.

Respectfully,
Brian Osborn, RN
Idaho State Training, QIES, and ASPEN Coordinator
Health Facility Surveyor

Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
Division of Licensing and Certification
Bureau of Facility Standards
CC: LT/CO

To [Change in Employee Compensation \(CEC\) Committee](#),

Regarding the employee compensation review I would like to offer my observations:

In the past year the price of fuel has increased 100%.

My average grocery bill has increased 32%.

My property taxes increased 85%.

My insurance increased 20%.

Heating costs have increased 45%.

Hay for my horse has increased 100%.

Interest rates are increasing.

These are just a few of the price increases we are dealing with daily. Even if the inflation stops the costs will not go back down. We need wages that reflect this new normal. Other companies have increased their starting wages to reflect this and the state needs to follow. I appreciate my job and want to stay in my position but I also have to be able to pay my bills without having to hold down 2 jobs. Thank you for the opportunity to express my concerns.

Toni OBrien

ISU-Senior Financial Tech.

To whom this may concern,

Idaho continues to see a rise in cost of living. From utilities bills to property taxes, the cost of living is starting to put a strain on the local community. With the additional inflation costs we're seeing at every corner, I'd like to request our compensations reflect the changes we're seeing as an economy. A [study shows we're seeing a 9.1 percent inflation rate](#), the largest increase in a 12-month span since 1981. Seeing that the Governor's office and other local offices have adjusted salaries based on this rate of inflation, it seems fair all state employees should see the same adjustment to their salaries.

Many thanks,



NICOLE COLEMAN

Associate Marketing Manager, Bureau of Communications

Idaho Fish and Game

Office Phone: 208.334.3700

January 8, 2023

By email: COtto@Iso.idaho.gov

Change in Employee Compensation Committee

Attn: Christine Otto, Secretary

PO Box 83720

Boise, ID 83720-0054

Dear Sen. Cook, Rep. Bundy, and Members of the Committee on Change in Employee Compensation:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony to the committee regarding employee compensation for the State of Idaho. As a tenured manager for the state (over 19 years in state service with 9 years as a supervisor and the last 3+ as a division administrator), I am routinely faced with the stark reality of staff turnover and the lasting impact it has on our ability to reach state and agency's goals. I would like to provide this testimony to supplement the information you already have from the Division of Human Resources FY2024 Change in Employee Compensation Report.

The technical nature of many of our positions requires a significant investment in training, with new hires typically requiring at least 6 months, more often 1 year, to reach full productivity. The average term of service for departing employees is 9 years, indicating that we are losing a significant number of tenured staff. We've estimated the cost of training and the loss of productivity for a single position may be upwards of \$50,000 per position that turns over. High rates of turnover are not only costly in terms of recruitment and training, but also result in a loss of institutional knowledge.

Specific to my experience in calendar year 2022, I had employees with 14, 17, and 20 years of service to the agency leave for better paying jobs in federal and municipal governments. This loss of experience and knowledge challenges the incoming candidates to get up to speed on multiple important issues including engineering standards, permitting, and protecting water quality. Their personal communications to me were that it was a difficult decision to leave state service, as they value the mission and vision of the agency; however, it just was not practical to stay in state service and continue to lose pay as raises to state salaries are outpaced by inflation.

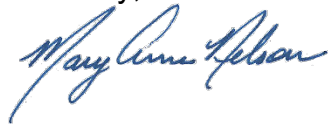
To highlight this issue of employee turnover, recent analysis specific to my agency shows that 41% of staff who have left our organization in the past year cited better compensation as the primary reason for their departure. This is over twice the rate of the second highest reason for separation. Furthermore, the *average* salary increases for these individuals upon accepting new employment was 29%. This trend has contributed to a 22% turnover rate in the current fiscal year, up from 16% in the previous fiscal year.

I want to emphasize that only 16% of separations were due to retirement. This indicates the majority of departures are voluntary and could potentially be prevented with more competitive compensation.

As Idaho continues to experience significant growth in population and the accompanying demands for services from state agencies, I hope that this information will be taken into consideration as you review employee compensation and consider ways to address this issue. It is my intention to provide you with my perspective, but this is my personal opinion and perspective and should not be taken as a position specifically taken or endorsed by the agency.

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide comments and for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Mary Anne Nelson, PhD

January 9, 2023

RE: Change in Employee Compensation

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

First, I would like to thank the CEC Committee in their work securing pay increases in the past several years. The CEC increases we have received have been greatly appreciated.

I have been a state employee in North Idaho for almost fourteen years. Like many other state employees, I have dedicated my career to public service. I am proud to work for the state that I was born and raised in. I have worked my way up and I am on my fourth promotion within the State of Idaho. With the inflation increases and the additional work loads on state employees the CEC increases do not line up. I consistently see my co-workers leaving to go to private entities, the cost of recruiting, hiring, and training staff is immense. Most state positions take two years for staff to become proficient.

I appreciate you taking all the information into consideration when reviewing the CEC.

Regards,

Angie Holick



Dear CEC Committee,

My name is Mary Hill, and I am a clinician at State Hospital South (SHS). I am dedicated to treating patients with care, safety, and in a trauma-informed manner. I get the privilege to work with an amazing team of many disciplines, who are also dedicated to the well-being of our patients and staff. The rate of inflation, which is estimated to be approximately 7%¹ causes many hardships to myself and fellow staff. Additionally, competing agencies are offering higher wages to staff. When I peruse job networking

sites such as Indeed and LinkedIn, I notice job offerings up to double my current wage plus benefits. Due to the intensity, safety, and health risks of working at SHS, SHS and many other service agencies experience high rates of burnout^{2, 3} and turnover⁴. I advocate for wages to increase for all employees to at least 7% of current wage. I advocate for additional increases based on merit to prevent turnover and maintain hardworking, dedicated employees.

Thank you for your consideration,
Mary Hill, LMSW

References

¹Idaho Dept. of Labor (2022). U.S. Consumer Price Index. lmi.idaho.gov/cpi.

²Maunder, R. G., Heeney, N. D., Hunter, J. J., Strudwick, G., Jeffs, L. P., Ginty, L., ... & Wiesenfeld, L. A. (2022). Trends in burnout and psychological distress in hospital staff over 12 months of the COVID-19 pandemic: a prospective longitudinal survey. *Journal of Occupational Medicine and Toxicology*, 17(1), 1-11.

³Galanis, P., Vraka, I., Fragkou, D., Bilali, A., & Kaitelidou, D. (2021). Nurses' burnout and associated risk factors during the COVID-19 pandemic: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of advanced nursing*, 77(8), 3286-3302.

Idaho Division of Human Resources Submitted by: Lori Wolff, Administrator (FY 2024). Statewide Turnover Rates for Classified Employees. Total Turnover rate for FY 2022 is 21.8%.

Christine,
Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

First off let me thank the Idaho Legislature for the previous CEC increases over the past several years. As state employees our pay level is still well below the private sector for similar jobs. We are finding difficulty hiring qualified individuals and keeping qualified individuals here at the wages we are getting paid. Yes most of us love our jobs and to be able to serve the hunting and fishing communities for residents of Idaho and nonresidents as well. But, love doesn't pay the bills. As you are aware inflation is at an unprecedented rate which greatly affects the ability to pay bills, the ability to purchase food, purchase/rent a house, buy gas to get to work, and our small amount of discretionary funds remaining(if any). We can't keep up with rising prices. I realize that our individual circumstances vary. For example my wife is on SS Disability and is unable to work even though she would love to be in a physical condition to be able to. As such we are on a single income trying to make ends meet and hopefully be able to retire some day with some resource to be able to do so. Your help is greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

Don Jenkins
Natural Resource Program Coordinator
(Big Game Depredations and Recreational Access)

Idaho Department of Fish and Game
600 S. Walnut
P. O. Box 25
Boise, ID 83707



Good afternoon,

As an employee of Idaho State University, the university charged with developing healthcare practitioners and providing healthcare to all Idahoans, my pay is not commensurate with current salary standards. Notably, I live in the Treasure Valley and not in Chubbock/Pocatello; however, my salary appears to reflect the cost of living in Pocatello and not the Treasure Valley. At a minimum, there should be a pay differential between ISU' campus locations. Additionally, my salary is not keeping up with inflation and cost of living expenses.

Thank you for your time.

Kris L. Brock Ph.D., CCC-SLP

Assistant Professor | Communication Sciences and Disorders
ISU Meridian Sam & Aline Skaggs Health Science Center | Room 808D
1311 E. Central Dr. | Meridian, ID 83646

Hello my name is Trevor Pickens i am currently into my second year teaching here at ISU and i strongly believe that our college of technology faculty should be able to have the option for not just TIAA or stock market retirement plans but also for a plan that includes percy. I Strongly believe that giving us the same equal opportunity for us just like our lower campus colleagues have. This type of retirement is very beneficial to not just us as a person but it affects entire families lives and how they continue to live in this ever so day to day economy of the ups and downs. The inflation alone has crippled business and families around the world we need to start looking forward to our future and what we have in store for the future generations to come and give them choice and opportunities and we cant do that without our educators thank you.

Hello,

I am in favor of pay increases for state employees, especially those like myself that are not making very much per hour.

I feel that Administrative Assistants across the state that keep offices running deserve to be fairly compensated, especially those who have higher education, such as an associate or bachelor's degree.

Thank you,
Amanda Myers

--

Mandy Myers
Administrative Assistant 1
Facilities Services
921 South 8th Avenue | Stop 8137
Pocatello, Idaho 83209
[REDACTED] | mandymyers@isu.edu

I am very pleased with the recent calculations for compensation.

I also would like to know what took so long.

My daughter works at Lewis Clark College and a way to stop so many employees from moving on to more compensation changed many positions to Professional with a sizable raise in pay.

I used to work for the Idaho State Veterans Services and their pay per comparable position was higher than what is paid at Idaho State University. I agree that veterans deserve the best care possible, but so do our students.

Again, I am very grateful for the FY22 raise in pay, but i also support more of these.

Suzzie Morris

--

Suzzie Morris
Financial Technician | Chemistry
CliftonStrengths: Empathy | Developer | Adaptability | Restorative | Arranger
PS 3a Chemistry | Room 145
921 South 8th Avenue, Stop 8023 | Pocatello, ID 83209
[REDACTED] | suzziemorris@isu.edu

Hello,

In regard to employee compensation, I would like to advocate for better wages. I understand that benefits(i.e. health insurance) is a huge plus to being a state employee, but the truth of the matter is classified employees make the least amount of the money at any state agency and they're the employees that keep the agencies running. For example they are the ones that open and close the buildings, keep roads and sidewalks cleared, work when others take time off, work extended hours when others don't. Work more hours than any salaried or faculty member.

The pay disparity is ridiculous and oftentimes requires employees to apply for welfare or have to work another job.

In our state, in our nation, we should be paying everyone that wants to work a decent, livable wage. Minimum wage should be at minimum of \$15/hour and really more like \$18/hour so people can consider a life long career within the state agency system.

With the state budget now, all employees at poverty level up to \$50,000 should get the highest percentage raise - compared to all eligible employees.

Thank you for your time,

Suzette Porter

Suzette Porter

Management Assistant | College of Business - Dean's Office

Business Administration | Room 202

921 South 8th Ave., Stop 8020 | Pocatello, ID 83209

██████████ | suzetteporter@isu.edu



**Idaho State
University**

Hello,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input regarding future CEC considerations. These ideas both pertain to *benefits*, rather than cash compensation. I hope this is an appropriate forum in which to make these two suggestions.

1. My understanding is that the State of Idaho is already hoping to implement pre-tax payroll contributions to Health Savings Accounts for employees starting in the next fiscal year. This by itself would be an enormous win for employees (and the tax savings should be helpful to the employer/state)! **Please consider employer-funded contributions to HSAs as part of future CEC possibilities.**
2. **Please also consider an uptick in sick leave accrual.** Make it easier for employees to make the decision to stay home when they are not well.

Lindsey

Lindsey Peterson

Systems and Data Management Director | Enrollment Management
CliftonStrengths: Learner | Input | Maximizer | Belief | Individualization
[REDACTED] | lindseypeterson@isu.edu



January 9, 2023

Re: Change in Employee Compensation-Testimony

My name is April Robinson. I've been working for the State of Idaho at Idaho State University for more than nine years. I love my job and the organization I work for. I believe in the overall mission of higher education and that dependable, educated, and committed support staff is just as important as the faculty and administrators we support.

I am grateful to have a job and work for Dean Snyder and I am treated well by my colleagues in the Dean's Office. Directly because of my pay, I feel undervalued and unappreciated and am often stressed about having the money to buy gas to get to work and buy enough groceries to last until my next paycheck.

My rate of pay has not kept up with inflation. I am severely underpaid for the work that I do. In Pocatello, gas station attendants and fast food workers are making close to the same wage as I do. Plus, they are getting sign-on bonuses. I am not insinuating that I am better than the people that work these jobs. However, I believe I am not appropriately compensated for my skill level, institutional knowledge, and my education. Groceries and gas cost 20-25% more than I was paying for the same items in 2019. Mortgage rates, rent, and property taxes are also much higher. Health insurance and retirement benefits are great incentives to stay working for the state. However, it is not uncommon to find private companies offering these same benefits AND a livable wage. I sincerely hope that the Idaho legislature will demonstrate commitment and value to state employees by increasing wages for those of us that are here day in and day out doing whatever is required.

Thank you,
April Robinson
College of Science and Engineering
Idaho State University

Dear committee,

I can only talk about what I know, and that is being a senior lecturer at ISU. If there is one obvious issue standing out for me, it is the salary of experienced lecturers. Many of us have been there for more than 15 years, some of us more than 20 but new lecturers are being hired at about the same annual salary as us. It is one thing to be underpaid (being paid in the mid \$40,000 range with a master degree and 20 years experience is

underpaid) but it is completely demoralizing to be paid about the same as somebody with no experience and/or somebody who hasn't proven they are effective/valuable yet. If a salary scale could be developed to take into consideration seniority when the base salary gets bumped, that would really help the morale.

We do appreciate my benefit package.

Thank you for looking into this,

--

Annik Martin
Senior Lecturer | Math & Stats
Pronouns: She/Her

Physical Science | Room PS 328G
921 S. 8th Ave. Stop 8085 | Pocatello, ID 83209
[REDACTED] | annikmartin@isu.edu

Hello,

I am writing to provide testimony on the Idaho Change in Employee Compensation Committee. I would like to address faculty compensation in the school of Nursing. If you compare nurses with a Doctorate (PhD or DNP) who practice teaching, the salary is very low at ISU compared to other schools and also compared to wages as an RN. If you compare nurse practitioners with a Doctorate who work at ISU, the salary is about cut by a third. Idaho needs more nurse practitioners, especially in the rural areas, because we can practice independently, including diagnosing, prescribing, and treating illnesses for the whole family. At ISU, we have family and psychiatric nurse practitioner students. To teach these students, it requires another provider who is a family or psychiatric nurse practitioner.

The yearly average salary for a family nurse practitioner in the state of Idaho is \$105,290 (national average of \$199,610) per year and the average salary for a psychiatric nurse practitioner in the state of Idaho is \$106,600 (national average of \$143,240) per year. As you can see, we are already well below the national average for nurse practitioner pay, so that may explain the shortages. But, at ISU school of Nursing (SON) we only have one person qualified to teach in the Psychiatric nurse practitioner program at this time and we have been unable to recruit any other faculty for several years now. Although the psychiatric nurse practitioner program is in the most dire straights, it is not the only program in nursing that is suffering from a faculty shortage. Many evidence based studies have looked at nurse faculty reasons for staying or leaving the profession. One of the most consistent reasons given for nurses and nurse practitioners leaving the academic side of the profession is low salary. As a prior search committee chair for the school of nursing, I know the main reason given for an applicant not taking an offered position at ISU is the low salary.

Please raise the salary for the faculty in the school of nursing so that we may continue to hire quality faculty as our current faculty leave the profession or retire. The nursing

profession is already short many nurses in the state of Idaho and a quality and robust nursing faculty will be key to helping to decrease the current shortage and this massive predicted shortage.

Gina Clarkson, PhD, APRN, NNP-BC

Associate Professor, School of Nursing
College of Health
Idaho State University

Office: 208-282-3829

ginaclarkson@isu.edu

921 South 8th Ave. Stop 8101

Pocatello, ID 83209-8101

To whom it may concern:

I'm a plumbing inspector with the Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing. I would like to talk with you about wage that a journeyman plumber is make in the field and what inspectors are staring out as.

Our starting wage is \$25.50 an hour that is required to be a Journeyman in the state of Idaho.

While Journeyman plumber in the private(non union) is starting them out any where between \$30.00 to \$32.00 as a new Journeyman plumber and union Residential Journeyman is starting out at \$33.70 and a Commerical Journeyman is starting out at \$36.70 and both are a \$2.00 more for foreman.

We have had ads out for new inspectors at \$25.50 with little or no applicants responding to them.

We can't seem to get anyone with any qualification to apply. With this as our staring wage I believe we are not able to entice the Journeyman out in the field to apply. I feel that this needs to be raised to a level that would be entice them to apply.

I hope this helps

Chris Critser plumbing inspector

I have worked for Idaho State University since October 2015 and love my job at the university. As a full time employee with chronic health conditions, I depend on my employee benefits and salary to care for my needs. I think our compensation is fair and just and the benefits are appreciated. Blue Cross of Idaho is a great insurance company and I would appreciate continuing with them.

Thank you

Tamye Durrant

Administrative Assistant | Student Leadership & Engagement Center

Pond Student Union | Room 112

921 S. 8th Ave. MS 8118 | Pocatello, ID 83209-8118

 | tamyedurrant@isu.edu

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing in argument of increasing state employee compensation. As a single mother of three children I should be able to provide ample resources to my children with the qualification of a Masters level education, however due to increased housing costs I am unable to make my salary stretch far enough to meet the needs of my family. The increased population of Idaho has caused not only a housing shortage, but a crisis, in which even those of us with higher positions within the state can still barely afford to live. I am currently spending over 35% of my income on housing, before the housing rates increased I was paying only 28%.

I ask that consideration of housing costs along with increased costs of basic resources including groceries and fuel be factored into the compensation of state employees and that those with increased qualification are being compensated accordingly.

Sincerely,
Jess Sellman

Although last years CEC was more within line of what should be provided on a more regular basis I have to share that many individuals felt cheated and honestly unappreciated. When the wages were supposed to be brought more in line to the national average the way the math was done to apply the changes did not benefit the employees to the full potential due to the fact that long term employees received the lower increase in wage compared to other individuals definitely made them feel undervalued and underappreciated, and for individuals who was not within the average were supposed to be brought up to the average as well as a 3 percent raise and CEC but this was not done either, the 3 percent was used to bring them closer to the national average and then from their was placed at the average and finally received their CEC, based on how the information was provided through email none of this worked out and has made quite a few individuals who have been informed they were essential felt the

exact opposite. I feel things need to be reviewed again on a national average in addition to changes made to certain positions as we wear many hats within our careers I cannot speak on behalf of everyone but as an example of the position I hold as a Senior Landscape Technician many requirements fall within this position that are not looked at in a national average as a comparison of this position it's not placed that we also run small equipment including snow plows, sidewalk plows, skid steers and more which in comparison to an individual doing those positions the national average falls inline as a starting wage around \$17 an hour or above. I feel further research is needed to really bring people inline with proper wages as well as it needs to be explored of cost of living raises as a CEC increase does help but does not equal out to the increase of the national average of inflation and cost of living. In closing I feel the prior CEC wage evaluations as well as national average comparison needs to be reviewed and corrections made. Also hopefully inflation and cost of living should be reviewed as well in addition to CEC wages provided based on performance.

Thank you for your time,
James Rhoades

Dear Committee Members,

The Idaho State University faculty is unfairly underpaid relative to peer institutions both within Idaho and regionally. This is true even after adjusting for cost of living. (I urge the committee to examine a rigorous cost-of-living analysis.)

ISU faculty are told the ongoing salary disparity is an outcome of political decisions that were made in the 1990s and never revisited. Many times I have heard promises that this flaw would be remedied - going back to at least Governor Kempthorne who came to ISU and publicly promised that the salary inequity would be remedied across a three year period. Unfortunately, this and similar promises remain unfulfilled. The faculty of southeastern Idaho are made to feel like second class citizens relative to their peers in Boise and Moscow.

The ISU salary inequity hurts Idaho financially by resulting in faculty turnover. We train young ISU faculty members at our expense and then they leave for greener pastures. The salary inequity also leads to low morale. A common complaint is that the only way to achieve fair compensation at ISU is by working less. The greater urban area of Pocatello also loses by not realizing the economic multiplier that would occur with a better paid faculty.

I respectfully request that you give this long festering problem your attention during committee deliberations.

Sincerely,
David Delehanty
ISU Professor and University Ombuds

Committee please consider looking at the issue of: some full time faculty on the ISU Campus have never had the opportunity to get persi retirement. why is that? i have worked over 26 years at the college of technology and was offered persi many other faculty here at ISU have Persi Retirement. it seems to me that this issue is not fair to all faculty.

Hello –

I would like to begin by stating how very happy I am to be here and how grateful I am I to be employed. I am new to Idaho and to Idaho State employment. I was previously employed by, and lived in Washington state for approximately 47 years. With the cost of living increases, the housing market being outrageously overpriced and food costs skyrocketing, I was heartsick to learn what my starting pay with IDHW was. Although I was a homeowner for the past 24 years, and even after having sold my home in WA for a decent price, I am still unable to buy a home here in Idaho with a mortgage that I can afford with my income from IDHW as a single parent. I have 20 years of experiences as a Social Services Specialist III in WA state but that experience does nothing for me monetarily here in ID. I would very much like to advocate for a significant increase in wages. I would very much like to be able to own a home again and provide more for my child rather just getting by.

Thank You,

Mindy Alexander

To Whom it may Concern:

I am writing regarding the Idaho State Employee Change in Employee Compensation (CEC) request for public testimony. I have been a public employee in Idaho since I graduated from Boise State University in 2010. I have served in numerous roles since the beginning of my career. I have been promoted consistently as I have worked hard to serve the public, continued my education in Idaho's public universities, and excelled in my roles and responsibilities. I have networked and connected with numerous other state and public employees I have considered mentors and friends. Throughout my career, I have observed the impact of public employee compensation in Idaho. I have been fortunate to continue to promote and enhance my career and earnings over the years. However, CEC significantly impacts many employees' decisions to stay in public sector employment or whether to leave for the private sector or leave the state altogether.

To retain high-performing, top-tier employees, I am urging the Idaho Legislature to consider passing a CEC that makes Idaho wages more competitive with the private

sector and creates a better quality of life for employees dedicated to public service. Idaho citizens deserve to be served by the best and the brightest. Higher wages and better overall compensation packages help leverage public sector jobs and attract better-quality candidates. CEC packages that consider inflation and the significant changes to the cost of living in Idaho are necessary to retain top performers and attract new, high-performing employees.

Public-sector employment differs in numerous ways from private-sector work. Public employees forgo things like bonuses, fancy holiday parties, and even things as simple as the best and newest tools and supplies to do their jobs. They forgo these things to be good stewards of public funds and because there is an expectation that public work is done in a fiscally responsible manner. In exchange for these concessions, CEC should demonstrate that the Idaho Legislature understands the value of all public employees and the work they contribute to making Idaho a fantastic place to live and a place with educated, hardworking, and talented employees who are driven to provide excellence in service to the citizens of our state. Enhancing employee pay and benefits is the easiest way to retain and attract high performers to public service.

I am providing testimony today, not on my behalf, but as a manager within state employment. How the Idaho Legislature discusses and approaches CEC directly impacts my ability to hire, train and retain the best employees for the state. Please consider approving a CEC package demonstrating to all of our public employees how valuable their time and energy are.

Sincerely,

Laura Kiehl

Dear Ms. Otto,

I am writing today to share my concern and thoughts about Idaho's employee compensation present and future. I thought twice about submitting my thoughts, convincing myself, what difference will it make? However, the only way to be a part of positive change is to engage in the conversation. I am a current employee of Idaho. I am a mother of 3 and struggle every month to survive. The landscape of Idaho has changed, for that matter our entire country. Living in Idaho, affording the basic necessities may have been something that was doable, but is no longer. If your family income places you outside of the income limits of state programs you are part of the forgotten group. Although positions with the state are known for how great the benefits are, the compensation does not take into account the changing economy and landscape occurring within Idaho. Anytime the economy changes, like we have seen in the last year or so, it makes it very hard to survive and provide just the basic necessities for your family. I moved into an apartment in Chubbuck in 2021, after being there 1 year the property management increased the rent in 2022 by 255.00. Situations like this are

not uncommon for families in Idaho. My concern is that with the increased housing and inflation, my family and I will be pushed out of our current apartment. The stability that was once felt 10-20 years ago by state employees is quickly fading. I think with the current climate of the economy in Idaho, it is fair to say that the compensation for state employee's need to be reevaluated. I believe that not only should there be a merit increase component there should also be a cost of living raise across the board. Thank you for your time and consideration

Patti

My family includes both another faculty member and a student here at ISU. One highlight of our compensation is the Blue Cross insurance plan. It offers options to use, and we can make changes each year. The coverage available has a significant advantage because the University of Utah is a place we can go for second opinions, surgery, or healthcare for complicated issues. Same co-pay, not out-of-network. Your support for this insurance has saved lives, reduced costs by indicating surgery was unnecessary and allowed us to get world-class care. This benefit makes us better employees and is very appreciated.

Sincerely,

Ann

--

Ann M. Hackert, Ph.D.
Director of Assessment
& Professor of Finance
Idaho State University

Co-Editor, *Business Case Journal*, <https://sfcr.org/bcj>

Hello,

Thank you for this opportunity to express my views on employee compensation. I am a Network Administrator for Idaho State University. I enjoy my job and the department I work for very much. It is unfortunate that we are paid less than our peers in the same field. However the State benefits including the reduced tuition is a phenomenal benefit to employees that if taken advantage of can be like giving yourself a pay increase. I love this benefit and am currently taking advantage of it. When I am done with my degree, I will be looking for career growth and with how things are currently there isn't much room for advancement. I would be leaving where I am to obtain the career growth and income level I am looking for. I feel with the benefits the University provides I am happy how I am compensated. If the State of Idaho is looking

to increase retention and attract more competitive employees within departments, increasing the compensation will definitely help.

Thank you for your consideration,

--

Ben Mills
Networking and Communications



Re: Written testimony about the state's personnel system and employee compensation

Date: January 9, 2023

I am a long-time dedicated employee of the State of Idaho. Having worked at Idaho State University for over 23 years I understand the state personnel system and employee compensation pretty well. Working as a state employee in higher education has been a fulfilling career for me and I plan to continue to serve Idahoans until I retire. My concern with Idaho's employee compensation is that long-term employees are not valued. I have seen the minimum salary increase with no movement for employees who are making more than the minimum. In fact, the more an employee earns could lead to the possibility of a smaller merit increase than colleagues who earn less with the same performance rating. This leads to salary compression and disgruntled senior employees who leave state employment for higher paying private jobs. Each year my merit increase is calculated not only on my skill level but also by current level of pay. The more I make in relation to the midpoint of the pay scale, the less I earn for a merit increase. In my opinion, merit increases should be based on skills, experience, and performance, not an employee's current wage. Senior employees who leave for positions in the private workforce costs the State of Idaho both monetarily and through lost institutional knowledge. Since the pandemic it has been difficult to hire new employees because compensation is much lower than private sector jobs causing positions to remain unfilled and increasing the workload of remaining employees.

When determining how to compensate State of Idaho employees this year, please take into consideration the current State of Idaho workforce. It is easier to value current employees and retain them than having to recruit from a dwindling population of people who find value in serving their fellow Idahoans.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Stefanie Shadduck

--

Stefanie Shadduck

Research Associate | Institute of Rural Health
CliftonStrengths: Achiever | Harmony | Relator | Restorative | Futuristic
1311 E Central Drive | Meridian, ID 83642
[REDACTED] | stefanieshadduck@isu.edu

Dear Christine Otto,

I am a new part-time adjunct professor at ISU. While the new income is welcome, the pay is quite low, comparable to what I was making in South Africa. I am paid \$4484 per course I teach, with no benefits. If we assume I get 2 courses each fall and spring, this is less than \$18,000 a year, less than many of my students. This is unsustainable in the long term.

Other institutions I have worked for have instituted plans to consolidate adjunct postings into full-time benefited positions. While not ideal, this did represent a significant improvement. I have not been at ISU long enough to know whether some such consolidation is currently happening, but I would suggest that increased funding for this sort of endeavor would be generally beneficial.

Thank you--
--Aaron L. Beek, Ph.D.

Dear Sirs/Msdms:

I greatly appreciate the opportunity to share my thoughts on state employee compensation. I have worked for the great state of Idaho for just under a decade. I am thankful for the time. I've always understood that state worker pay increases would be a maximum of 3% depending on performance evaluations. One question I have is, how can this be deemed satisfactory when the cost of living (i.e. inflation) exceeds 3%. For example, this year's inflation rate is 8%...more than double our greatest potential wage increase. Year over year, this pushes the value of a state workers' income lower and lower.

I would also like to mention that I've observed the difficulties in getting and maintaining a quality workforce within state agencies. When trying to fill the multiple vacancies at my current agency, it seems that the personnel pool is quite shallow. Or is it that we do not offer sufficient compensation to attract a deeper personnel pool? It is my belief that there is a direct correlation between quality staff and compensation.

Personally, I like working for the State. I feel that I am helping to keep Idaho a great place to live. But, honestly, it's tough to justify working here when the compensation is so low. And, I believe that the struggles I've observed with getting and keeping quality workers is due to low pay.

The state of Idaho has a great history and was laid on an awesome foundation, yet without competitive wages, we are building a system that is doomed to inadequacies

manifested as poor customer service, high turn-over, and slow, inefficient work processes.



Corrine Dalzell, CPM®

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Idaho CEC Committee,

You have asked for written testimony regarding employee compensation. In the 4 years I have been working in the Idaho State University IT Department, we have had a complete turnover of talent. I'm sure some of this is due to early retirement due to Covid, I know for a fact at least some were due to lack of compensation. I had a co-worker leave just recently for a job that pays twice as much. He had tried to talk with management about an increase in compensation for over a year. No money in the budget, they say.

I know of another co-worker who left after working at ISU for over 15 years. At the rate inflation is going, staying at ISU would mean a wage cut year-after-year.

I don't know why we are dancing around the subject. Either pay us more or lower your expectations on what we can provide.

To Whom it May Concern,

My husband has been with the State of Idaho for 25 years and I just started in 2021. We have been thankful for the job and it provided for us to raise 4 kids with me staying at home until the last 12 years. We are located in the Boise area.

We realize that there are many more factors than just compensation that make a job viable for certain people. Which is why my husband has stayed with the State all these years and why I have now also become a State employee. That being said, the cost of living has increased significantly these past several years and many in this area, us included, are now struggling with how to make it all work. My husband takes on a

seasonal 2nd job in the evenings and I went from part time to full time in 2021 to try to continue to make it work.

I am not sure if this is the type of testimony you were wanting, but I appreciate the forum and that this will be discussed and recommendations made to the Legislature.

Sincerely,
Shari Halcomb

--

Shari Halcomb

Administrative Assistant I
ISU Meridian - College of Pharmacy
Sam and Aline Skaggs Health Science Center
1311 E. Central Drive
Meridian, Idaho 83642
[REDACTED]

Dear Chris,

Currently I am the clinical site director for the IAGD residency program at ISU in Pocatello. I have been in this position since May 2022. I have had a very difficult time finding qualified candidates to work as our support staff as dental assistants, dental hygienist and front desk/billing/coordinator. This is because the salaries associated with the position are about 30% lower than what the employees could earn in private practice. When I have a position open to hire, it can take weeks for one candidate to apply, and they have no dental experience. The job descriptions that are attached to the position are in need of updating. I am attaching a letter I submitted to the Dean of Dental Sciences to help us with this situation as an example as to the problems associated with employee compensation.

I might add my own salary of \$59/hr is ridiculously much lower than that of the program director who I job share with and do many of his tasks. I do enjoy my job and am not in it for the salary, but it is an example of poor employee compensation as well.

Best,

Peggy Walker, DMD
Clinical Site Director, Idaho AEGD
Idaho State University
465 Memorial Drive
Pocatello, ID 83209
[REDACTED]

1/10/23

Currently in the Dental Residency program, it has been difficult to find and retain staff, specifically dental assistants and front office employees. We have 3 dental assistants who are with us as permanent employees, but we need a total of 5 dental assistants to make the program successful in training our dental residents. I believe it is important to provide an educational experience that is going to develop our residents to be equivalent to a dentist who has been in practice for 5-7 years, due to the quality and content of our program. The program has to meet accreditation standards, and that includes supporting our residents with sufficient support staff. When there aren't enough employees to support the program, we have residents having to clean up and set up their rooms, sterilize their own instruments, as well as other seemingly menial tasks which take away from the intent of the program. Having to perform these tasks that a dental assist would normally be responsible for doesn't allow the residents to see as many patients on their schedule daily, and in the long run decreases our revenue as well. Our program runs on a budget that counts strictly on its own revenue to operate. I am finding the current situation is causing burnout to the existing employees as well as the dental residents.

I feel it is necessary to have two full time front office employees that are equal in nature to accomplish the front office tasks with skill and professionalism. We have had times when we have had only one front office employee, the voice mailbox has twenty messages, the patient check-in and check-out line is 3 deep, there are people asking questions about their billing, scheduling their next appointment, etc. This causes extreme pressure on the front office employee as well as patient dissatisfaction. We have 4 dentists, I believe two full time front office employees are integral to completing all tasks correctly and precisely. In addition, I feel there is a need for a third person to know the front office so in the event someone is on vacation, or there are a few extra busy moments in the day at the front office, that person can step in.

In an effort to attract and retain a professional work force in the Dental Residency program, I have written updated and accurate job descriptions of the dental assistant duties to reflect what tasks are expected of our dental assistants during a normal workday in clinic. One of the main additions is the educational component the dental assistants 2 & 3 provide to the residents in the course of their time in our program.

The residents know little to nothing about placing dental implants, adding bone grafting and membrane to the implant site, as well as the process of IV sedation. These procedures are not in the normal course of obtaining a dental degree and most residents have no knowledge of the intricacies involved in providing these procedures. The dental assistants are expected to know and impart their knowledge to the residents in these areas. The adjunct faculty does direct the teaching process, but can't be at 4 dental chairs at once, so the responsibility falls on the dental assistant.

Some of the additions I have made include educational components to the dental assistant 2 & 3 descriptions that show they provide knowledge of how to set-up and use the implant machines and drills. They teach the residents how to properly accomplish this.

We use several implant systems. The dental assistants have to know what size implants, abutments, locators and healing caps are available, keep them organized and assist the residents in learning the details.

The residents take a didactic IV sedation, the assistants are responsible for the hands-on know how of setting up and utilizing this equipment. They show the residents how to do this. Each resident performs approx. 50 sedations while they are in residency.

The residents perform several types of bone grafts in implant sites. The assistants are responsible for sharing their hands-on knowledge of how to accomplish the phlebotomy needed to successfully use the patient's own cells for the grafting.

These are only some of the educational points the assistants are responsible for.

It has been discussed between the assistants at times and then brought up to me that McDonald's starts their employees out at \$15/hr. I haven't checked those details out, but it has been brought up.

Currently we have 3 P/T DA's that are considered temp employees. 2 are ISU students who are doing their work to get into the hygiene program. They work in between classes and we will loose them once they complete their requirements for their hygiene programs. If it weren't for them we wouldn't have enough bodies. They are here for the experience to help them gain a place in the hygiene program.

Hello,

I am a recent hire at ISU - Meridian as an Admin 1 (Classified position)

I moved from a rural area in Corvallis Oregon and worked for Oregon State University. I was shocked at the starting pay per hour here in Idaho at ISU in particular. I had applied for positions at Boise State University and the payscale is very different from ISU. I did decide to accept the position here because the location is close to my Grandchildren which is why I relocated to Idaho but now see that with the cost of housing etc...

I also really like my colleagues here at ISU but there is high turnover in my department and others and many are taking jobs at Boise State leaving us with inconsistent services for our students. I find I may not be able to make it financially and may need to make a move myself if something does not change soon.

I see many hard working Idahoans in the same situation, but it seems that fast food restaurants are paying more per hour than my job, which pays me 14.43/hour. In Oregon, I made a minimum of \$20.00 hour for the same duties I perform in this position.

Thank you for your consideration,

~ Noni

Noni Scherer

Administrative Assistant | Department of Counseling

Pronouns: she/her/hers

Sam and Aline Skaggs Health Science Center

Meridian Campus | Office 516F
1311 E Central Dr | Meridian, Idaho 83642

 | nonischerer@isu.edu

January 9, 2023

By email: cecccommittee@iso.idaho.gov

Change in Employee Compensation Committee

Attn: Christine Otto, Secretary

PO Box 83720

Boise, ID 83720-0054

Dear Sen. Cook, Rep. Bundy, and Members of the Committee on Change in Employee Compensation:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony to the committee regarding employee compensation for the State of Idaho. I have served the State of Idaho for 25 years.

In the 17 years since 2005, I have record of receiving CEC 13 times and most often not at the rate of inflation. Throughout the years, inflation has risen and the cost of living has seen constant growth. It used to be the perception that Idaho's employee compensation and benefits package was superior. This package has deteriorated as it is no longer strong enough to recruit and retain talent.

I have great pride in serving the State for 25 years. I have taken on more work and responsibility and currently serve as a manager and bureau chief. During this time, I have seen valuable and vested resources leave State service to take positions with other local governmental organizations and the private sector in pursuit of higher salaries and better compensation packages. Limited opportunities for compensation advancement, historically low pay grades and constant requirement of our organization to take on additional work without additional resources have diminished employee morale. It is observable. Additionally, to keep State jobs competitive in the market, incoming employee salaries are set at the highest rates acceptable to recruit the needed talent. However, long-serving employees are left to train new staff while managing the bulk of the work for the equivalent pay of a new hire. This conundrum, while understood, is also abusive to long-serving employees. To watch the State receipts grow and still, limited resources put to those keeping the state's business in order is demoralizing.

I love this State and enjoy working as a public servant. Please help!

As someone once said, the best time to plant a tree was 50 years ago, but the second best time is now. It's a lesson that Ebenezer Scrooge teaches us well every Christmas.

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide comments and for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Julia Achabal

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

I am a current employee for the state of Idaho and have been for almost 9 years. I have been very disheartened by what previous committees have chosen to do for its' employees, with the exception of the small step forward the committee made last year. With all the surplus the state keeps having the past couple years and the cost of living going up, a tiny 4% raise won't do much to help at all, especially if you live in a major city, which most of the state employees do. You are pretty much giving us a cut in pay with all the inflation costs going up as well as utility costs rising that it is making it impossible to live in Idaho and to stay working for the State of Idaho when outside employment has kept up with those things. These measly increases have pretty much said the legislature does not care about us or what we are sacrificing for our state.

Many students that are coming out of high school and college are not seeing the State of Idaho as a place they want to work especially if they see how many people working for the state are struggling to make it by unless they're appointed by the Governor. With the wages not being competitive, we are losing great employees and cannot attract good employees to replace them. When we lose those employees, we are losing a lot of knowledge and experience that is very hard to get. These losses are being felt around the state. The state losses money for each and every interview that did not pan out, as well as, the time taken to get the new employees up to speed. The sad part is most of these employees are going to the feds or to local agencies that are paying way more within the public sector. If we cannot keep up with the public sector how do we plan on making Idaho the best state to live and work in?

I know somethings beyond just pay can be improved for employees. With the health insurance not changing for the past few years, more out of pocket for the employees has gone up. The vision insurance is subpar at best and then those with hearing issues have to pay for almost everything related to their hearing devices. The stress most employees are under has caused some health issues. I've seen coworkers have to retire early because of health reasons or they've passed away. If employees had a gym membership covered for them or something that will help them get some type of workout equipment like that it would be something to show that you value the health and longevity of your employees. Maybe provide some type of a reward for the employees after they hit certain milestones working with the state. Some of the employees want to further their career but need more education. If you made a discounted tuition it would help these employees as well as help the colleges, universities or technical schools. These can be all the ways beyond just raises to help your employees.

I know I am not the only one who feels this way. Most of the state employees 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, work with the federal government on behalf of the state, put their lives at risk, provide a service that needs to be done safely, and those who must deal highly volatile individuals. 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.

Ronnie Winks
DBE Program Coordinator

Office of Civil Rights |
ronnie.winks@itd.idaho.gov

Office (208) 334-8567

Cell ([REDACTED]

Good afternoon,

Although my tenure within the state is short, I am already proud to serve my fellow Idahoans in providing the loyal and quality work they deserve. Every state employee I've met through this career feels the same way and does not want to move positions. That being said, those same employees can't help but feel the ever increasing pressure from the marketplace. Historically, state jobs were sought after as the pinnacle of career placement for compensation, service, benefits, and more. Just in the short time I've been here, I have felt the pressure myself and have questioned if my pride and loyalty are worth the pain of inflation, without substantial pay raises to keep up with the rest of the world.

Last year's CEC did alleviate some of that pressure, but certainly not all of it. Just this year alone inflation sits at 7.1% according to the Department of Labor. As a result, any raise less than 7.1% is effectively a pay cut from the last year. All of the state employees that I know are proud, loyal, hardworking people who have earned to not only be kept at the level of inflation, but to far exceed that. These employees deserve to be compensated for their work fairly, and in a way that is livable in today's marketplace. This state expects extraordinary employees, they should be treated extraordinarily. Whenever we lose a state employee to the private sector due to wages we must ask

ourselves if it is worth the few dollars we are saving to lose years, or even decades, of experience and knowledge.

I fully intend to remain a proud employee of the state of Idaho. This is my home and I love having the opportunity to represent its interests in a safe and positive way. I hope that the CEC Committee can keep these sentiments in mind when tackling the difficult but important decision in balancing the tax payers income, and the budget for the state. I understand that things are not as simple as raising wages without consideration or consequence. I do not expect the committee to provide the entire state with a massive raise, let alone in one year. I have the utmost respect for the members of the committee and the difficult task they are presented with.

Thank you for your time and support.

James Wilson

Technical Records Specialist I

Sex Offender Registry

Idaho State Police

Direct: [REDACTED]

Fax: 208-884-7193



On May 5, 2020, Idaho State University President Satterlee sent an email to employees informing them that Idaho State University had implemented a mandatory furlough for fiscal year 2021. Boise State University, Lewis-Clark State College, and the University of Idaho also implemented furloughs due to the financial impacts of battling COVID-19.

Gov. Brad Little issued an order for all state agencies, including public and higher education, to prepare for a 5 percent general fund budget cut in Fiscal Year 2020-2021 as a result of COVID-19.

However, the state of Idaho ended fiscal year 2021 with a then-record surplus of about \$890 million, partly as a consequence of receiving \$1,094,018,353.40 in coronavirus rescue money from the federal government. This prosperity continued, with the state of Idaho ending the 2022 fiscal year with a record \$1.38 billion surplus.

Given these impressive

surpluses, the equitable course of action is to reimburse the furlough amounts withheld from university employees. Budget surpluses clearly indicate that those furloughs were unnecessary. While it could be argued that university budgets were slashed, in turn justifying the furloughs, I would again contend that those budgets could easily have been "corrected" using a portion of the budget surpluses, again making employee furloughs unnecessary.


Employee salaries at ISU are extremely low in comparison with the rest of the country. We are told that they are in line with universities of our size in this general area of the country, but faculty members are very mobile and are not subject to such artificial restrictions, making this justification moot. I realize that is the real focus of the CEC Committee, but I'd be delighted to simply receive reimbursement for the unnecessary furlough.

--

Kevin R. Parker, Ph.D.

Professor of Information Systems

Idaho State University


kevinparker@isu.edu

ePortfolio

I work in facility services and as a senior team member of the grounds crew the wage we make is no where near a livable wage. When you take into account other work places and the wages they receive, I can honestly say there are teenagers making a better wage. Some of the jobs that should be seeing higher wages keep the campus running and in working condition, as well as keeping the entire campus presentable and appealing to any potential students and their families. This includes beautification services and keeping all major and minor areas clean, safe and comfortable for all those who utilize the campus and all it has to offer. The university is a major part of the community and extends to providing employment for some of the citizens and students. Thus brings me back to my point that providing better wages to employees of all levels benefits the community and through the community the university!

Senior Landscape Technician

Travis M. Jensen

Hello,

I would like to state a few reasons I think we deserve a raise for the upcoming year. Nothing about the economy has improved in the last year. Our housing market is still out of reach with the rising interest rates. Groceries continue to increase in price, when eggs are \$6.00 or more a dozen and are one of the easiest proteins to make stretch because of their versatility that should be a sign that our economy is out of control. Many folks buy eggs because they are affordable. Not in today's market.

Also the average median income for state workers is around 52000.00 a year, I made about 39000.00 taxable income, including overtime. I work on average 10 to 15 hours of overtime on regular basis per pay period, it is always available because we have been understaffed consistently for several months. The overtime worked is to ensure we are able to service our community in a timely manner because they deserve that. If the pay was comparable for Self-Reliance specialist in other markets we would be paid a minimum of \$23.00 to \$24.00 dollars an hour. Please consider making us comparable to other markets in nearby states.

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



At the request of a state employee, I am forwarding their testimony regarding employee compensation.

Based on the retaliatory actions I have experienced as a Department of Health & Welfare employee; I have no choice but to submit my testimony anonymously.

As you consider possible salary increases, please realize that those in the lower pay grades and who are not allowed to work remotely, should receive a higher cost of living increase compared to those who have been able to reap (and some abuse) the benefits of working from home when they were sent home due to covid.

For many throughout the state and nation, gas prices and inflation have hit take home pay hard. But that is not the case for the majority of H&W (maybe all state) employees. Most don't come into the office. Many no longer incur childcare costs. Instead they're not answering calls or emails, because they are tending to their under school-age children who are home with them.

What about those who have children, but are made to work full-time from the office? What about those in the top pay grades, staying home but making those in the lower pay grades go into the office so they and those others in the higher pay grades are not inconvenienced with being in? What about the onsite staff that have to deal with the

missed calls and emails or rescheduling because the remote worker isn't available as they were when there was more accountability.

The discriminating/favoring situations are endless. And the worst offenders are those in positions of authority, earning the higher salaries.

Dear CEC Committee members,

I was asked to provide my testimony to the CEC committee about the state's personnel system and employee compensation. I know there will be many individuals who will be making statements so I wish to keep mine relevant and short. My experiences are with Idaho State University and my position is located on the Meridian Campus. I am aware of ISU employees who are struggling to survive on the wages they are paid and this is particularly true of support staff that make it possible for me to do my job. There is one admin assistant who has been very helpful and instrumental in our department but is paid less than what fast food workers are being paid in the Treasure Valley. In order to survive, she is working a second job at Albertsons chopping vegetables and makes more per hour there than she does at ISU even though she is a valued employee. I've looked into this issue and from what I see, there is a pay difference for these employees between ISU and BSU with ISU employees being paid on average less. It is more expensive to live in the Treasure Valley and I feel that the employees working for ISU at the Meridian campus should be at parity with the BSU employees also working in the Treasure Valley. Inflation is affecting all of us and I would ask you to look at those as the bottom of the pay scale as well as improving things for those of us who are more fortunate but still affected by rising costs that profoundly affect our lives.

Thank you.

Jeffery Johnson PharmD, PA-C

--

Jeffery Johnson PharmD, PA-C
Clinical Assistant Professor
Department of Physician Assistant Studies
Idaho State University
Meridian Health Science Center

I have worked at ISU for over 30 years. Due to inflation, I make little more than I did 30 years ago as an inflation adjusted wage. Simply due to inflationary factors, I believe that most ISU employees deserve a pay increase.

Hi there!

First I think I will start with saying that this is my second time working for the state. I worked for 9 ½ years right out of college. I left and owned my own business for about 15 years and then came back. In the time I was gone the department has definitely undergone some changes. While I am certain they feel this if for the better, in my opinion it has increased the work load by at least double. We are not seeing anymore clients than

we ever did best I can tell, but the amount of paper work/ESPI work on the computer is double if not triple. When I was here before I could remove kids, do the placement with foster parents and create my affidavit for court (which is due the day of removal to meet the shelter care guidelines so parents can have 24 hour notice for a 48 hour hearing) within roughly a half day. Today if I have a placement it literally takes at least 2 other workers away from their job because the computer work is so much that one individual could not possibly do it by themselves and have it done in one day. If I did not have such an amazing team I would literally have left the Department in lieu of another job due to how difficult things have become. I was put back on probation not for the typical 3 months because there is no way you can complete training in that short of time due to the amount of training required which is unnecessary as I am completing training on jobs I will never do. This would not be a problem except that it puts people in complete overload. So many trainings come so fast that if I were not a seasoned 30 year social worker I would have left. I am a safety assessor yet I have done training on case management, permanency, preventative cases and termination/adoption cases. It was literally so overwhelming that by the time I was done with those which were not even close to all the training required that I had already forgotten what was needed to just do my safety assessing job. It really shouldn't be that way. Young kids come in out of college and see the pay and say no I can make way more somewhere else doing less. They don't realize the benefit to working somewhere with PERSI for the long haul. They are too young to really process that. We have gotten so far away from the job of working with families because we spend too much time on the computer to actually have the hands on time we need with clients to do a good job. Possibly we need more money for technicians that can be uploading things to ecabinet so we can actually do our jobs. We can't type our own reports so we wait around for someone on consult to be available and then if they are sick we wait some more. I have 4 files on my desk that would be closed if I were allowed to type my own safety assessments vs. waiting for a supervisor or consult to do it with me. Things get behind and then there is a chance you forget some information so you go back and listen to a recording again spending extra time you don't have just to get the job done the first time. Then the pay isn't great. I came back as a social worker 2 even though I qualify as a social worker 3, but there can only be 2 of those so despite my knowledge and longevity I can only make \$30 an hour. I literally had to take a cut in pay to come back because despite needing workers badly we just can't pay you what you deserve. We can't keep licensed workers which has been the big thing Idaho could brag about up until now, so now we are hiring people who are not really qualified to do our jobs without a license. A new thing the state is trying because they can't afford to keep licensed people because they can make more somewhere else. Seems a little scary. We carry a license, due training each year to keep it and pay for that license. It helps to hold us accountable (ethically) and because we can't practice without it. So yes I think we need better pay. The whole system needs to be revamped or whatever you call it because if you bring new people on at a higher rate which we should then we need to also increase the pay of those who have been here longer as well.

I also feel the people who work in the office and consistently get called away from their job to translate for another worker should be paid as a translator during that time. That is not their job it is someone else's job they are doing and they have to stop their job to do it so yes they should get paid more for that time and just for the record I am not a translator, but I certainly can see their point. They deserve more. If we called the translation line it would cost us more so they should get that too.

The cost of living has about tripled in Twin Falls going from \$500 for a 2 bedroom apartment to at a minimum \$1200 for the same thing. I literally saw a client about a month ago paying \$1600 for a crap motel of about 300 square feet. Not that this is part of this, but maybe we should be making some laws so people who rent to others can't robe them blind, but that's another topic.

We have this abundance of money in Idaho so we give back \$250 to every person which has been nice, don't get me wrong, but maybe we need to focus on things that will truly help these families. We need treatment facilities and not just one or two because then they also charge too much for services because there is no competition. I struggle with a college degree to pay bills so imagine for a minute making \$15 an hour and being expected to pay \$1200 rent. I don't even know how people who make \$20 can pay the bills. If I did not own my own home I could not get by and that is what every person coming to work for the state is thinking when the pay is so low. That they couldn't make it and it isn't worth it. The cost of everything has gone up and wages need to go up with them.

Thanks for listening
Marylin Eacker

January, 10th 2023

To whom it may concern,

My name is Darcy Fonger and I am writing in regards to State Employees Compensation. To get started, January 4th 2023, will be my 6th year working for the State of Idaho at Idaho State University. While I would love to say that I have loved working for the state, I can't. One of the main reasons is our pay. As an Admin 1 with years of experience I make \$16.00 an hour at ISU and that is with exceeds expectations on evaluation. While I may be higher than others in my pay grade, which is starting now at \$14.43, its' hard to take care of one's self let alone two kids on that income. So hard in fact that I have had to take on another job on the weekend just to live.

Now, if that wasn't bad enough, the side job I obtained pays \$16.25 right off the street, no degree required, no magical talents, I simply cut fruit. This is MORE than my full-time job that I had to be "certified" to obtain in addition have put 6 years into.

In doing some research according to the City of Boise affordable rent guideline I am considered "Very Low Income" with my state job. That information is just for me, that's not taking in consideration I have children. In addition, if we take in consideration that the United States Census Bureaus has Meridian Idaho family size of 2.82 as of 2021 I find it hard to believe that we don't pay more for a job where we are expected to be professional and is considered a career.

Massachusetts Institute of Technology states for 2022 that for Ada County the livable wage for a single individual is \$16.59. With the cost of everything lately I believe it to be higher than that but it's a good start. Another place to look at is the county pay and taking in consideration that not every campus is in said counties. For instance, Meridian campus employees are paid off of Bannock county rates which is considerably cheaper at the recommender livable income rate at \$14.67 according to MIT 2022 report. This information is also BEHIND the curve of inflation.

From my understanding and what has been told to me is the state pays so low because the benefits they offer, such as insurance and PERSI, compensates. What good is insurance when you don't make enough to use it or pay the deductibles on them? What is

the point of PERSI if we are all going to die at our desks because we can't afford to retire or even see a doctor?

As a home-grown Idahoan of over 39 years WHAT are we doing? We spent MILLIONS of dollars telling people to come to Idaho and Boise yet don't pay the people who live here day in and day out, taking care of Idaho business, a livable wage?!?! We are supposed to be proud to work for the state? These are careers? Grown-up jobs? My oldest son got \$17.00 an hour for a high school internship at a local bank. Fast food restaurants are starting out at \$15.00 an hour with no experience yet for an Admin 1 we start at less than that yet require degrees, experience and professionalism. These positions are the backbone of many major entities yet we under pay and over work them with promises of tomorrow.

It sickens me to hear about the years of work others have put into these jobs and now worry they can't retire after being paid so little for years. According to PERSI, PERSI was not created to be the main source of income in retirement but for many of us it is the only one we have and can afford. I'm tired of being lied to about equality and transparency when it has been shown over and over to not be true. We seem to have money when we want it but don't use it to keep the people we depend on. Has the cost of living even been a conversation? It seems like we haven't even considered starting with a livable wage. What happened to taking care of those who take care of you? I'm tired of working a second or even third job in order to survive because my main, full-time, grown-up job is at the state and they pay crap.

See, I don't want a pizza party. I definitely don't need another free mug with a state logo. I want to LIVE in the town that I have grown up in and love. I want to see people I love happy, healthy and taken care of. Enough with the excuses.
Do Better Idaho!

To whom it may concern,

I would like to suggest that some of the more challenging positions within health and welfare, such as direct care at SWITC, should have special consideration during CEC discussions again. Raising wages always significantly helps us attract and retain quality people.

Thank you,

Melinda Eagy
Psychiatric Technician- Senior
Southwest Idaho Treatment Center
[REDACTED]

Hi there,

I would like to make my feelings known about the CEC raises. We NEED to look at raises, we are dealing with a high need and care population that cannot be treated in public and we are not staffed well enough because other places are paying equal or much more so we cannot retain staff, specially licensed staff which is what we so desperately need. We have lost 5 nurses in two months for travel nursing. We cannot take much more

or eventually we will have to stop taking in so many patients which means that's, that many more mentally ill people who need help who can't get it in a state that already does not have enough resources for this type of population. We just can't retain staff at this point with out wage increases. This also leaves the staff who are sticking it out, overworked, and mentally strained with what they are being put through who cannot stay healthy in this environment. Some even must work second jobs to get by creating an even more unhealthy, unbalanced employee. We have to catch up this pay and this would resolve so many issues that are related specifically to pay. PLEASE think about how many people this would help even outside of the employees!

Emily Golinveaux (Lish)
ADM Unit: State Hospital South
emily.golinveaux@dhw.idaho.gov
[REDACTED]
69884

To Whom It May Concern,

The cost of living in Pocatello has risen uncontrollably in a short period of time. In the course of a year, my rent alone nearly doubled, my grocery bill doubled, and my gas bill nearly doubled. As a single-income household, trying to provide for three people has become extremely difficult. As a fairly new employee, I acquired this job, not just for the good feelings I had about working for the state and the benefits, but my pay was to increase as well, but all of the increase that I had expected has been eaten up and then some. Things have become much tighter.

I'm sure that over the course of the next few days, you will have received many letters similar to this one, and I hope that some good may come of it. The cost of living has risen, and those of us who were living within the lower end of the income scale have been put into financially difficult times. I have seen many people fall under this same umbrella, and while we are all still scraping by, we are giving up our extra-curricular activities to be able to do so.

Idaho used to feel like a secure place to live for raising a family, because even if we didn't make much, we could make a lot out of what we had and what we had available to us. Unfortunately, that seems to be less and less the case anymore.

Thank you.

Stormi Jo Essman
Administrative Assistant II | PPRA
CliftonStrengths: Empathy | Achiever | Consistency | Strategic | Learner
Leonard Hall | Room 264
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Dear CEC Committee, these thoughts are candid and may cause some to question the validity of the opinions. I urge you to go out and ask any industry in the state if they feel they have enough qualified technicians and whether they will have enough for the future.

Positions within post secondary CTE programs and administration that require previous experience are egregiously underpaid. An example would be that graduates fresh out of the Nuclear Operations Technology (NOT) program are starting at \$80K to 85K per year. The program coordinator is making less than that and has a masters degree in Nuclear Engineering plus 20 years industry experience, is a gifted instructor and has completely revamped the NOT program to meet nuclear industry needs including the INL.. All of the instructors would be making more money in industry even adjusting for contract duration. The critical fields of Instrumentation, Electrical, and Mechanical Engineering Technology, Industrial Cybersecurity, and NOT have to have top notch instructors as they instructors have to invest substantial time in keeping up with new technical innovations such as Artificial Intelligence in interpreting big data. Technical ability coupled with instructional ability is rare. Additionally, by any standard, these instructors are overloaded each semester. It is vital to Idaho's Economy to have competent technicians in the fields mentioned above. These graduates need to be trained on cutting edge technology from cutting edge instructors. It is also important to realize that these technicians enter industry work ready and Industry is clamouring for more graduates from the programs. The list of international companies seeking these graduates is substantial. Phillips 66 rates the instrument program amongst the top three in the country.

The administrator for this group of programs made greater than \$160K when leaving industry four years ago and is paid a little over \$90K per year on a twelve month contract now. In order to lead the department, the administrator needs to speak the language of industry in all areas aforementioned. How will a new administrator be enticed to take over when the current one retires? In the world of tech, one must speak the tech language and have finely honed interpersonal skills. In addition, the administrator needs to have a deep understanding of technical training. The administrator not only needs to keep up on technology, but needs to be respected by industry partners and be particularly careful in listening to industry needs. The administrator also needs to ensure that people skills are taught in the classrooms and labs. A person with these sets of skills could be making over \$200K in industry today.

Finally, admins with the skills to run the day to day functions of an office are difficult to find particularly when industry jobs pay almost twice as much as state jobs in the admin area. At the wages paid by the state of Idaho, an administrator is lucky to get someone who can competently answer the phone.

Idaho needs to take the lead in cutting edge industry in the nation if we are to continue to improve and grow. This will not happen without paying for the best instructors, administrators, and admins. The antiquated pay function was built on the availability of workers during the Baby Boomer era. We have a shortage of highly trained and skilled technicians today and the only way to produce these technicians is by hiring the best technical team money can buy.

Hello my name is Lisa Wise and I am the current Staff Council President for Idaho State University. I wanted to speak on behalf of the classified and non-classified staff at Idaho State University regarding CEC and overall compensation. As a whole, there is a great

concern with the State's pay rates and the fact that they have not stayed up with the inflationary rates in the market. This has created a very significant burden in attracting talent as well as in retaining talent. As we are posting positions, the applicant pool is very diminished (in number and quality of talent) and often when an offer is made it is declined due to the rate of pay. The lack of the ability to hire as well as to retain employees has created a significant workload imbalance among existing staff. The ability to quote a great benefits package is no longer a viable argument to the gap in pay ranges between the State and the labor market. I strongly feel that this gap needs to be addressed quickly in order for State agencies to offer competitive wages and thereby maintain adequate staffing levels. It is much appreciated that CEC is being addressed.

Respectfully,

Lisa Wise

--

Lisa Wise

University Business Officer | Finance

CliftonStrengths: Achiever | Relator | Responsibility | Learner | Futuristic

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To whom it may concern,

I am a single mother with full custody of my child. I do not receive any assistance or child support from my child's father since he has moved away and refuses to work. The closest family I have live about 4 hours away. So it is literally just me and my child.

Everything in Idaho has gone up in price this last year. All of my utilities have gone up in price, and my health insurance and daycare costs have also been raised. The money I have left over every paycheck after paying all my bills is what I use for groceries. As you can imagine, that amount has shrunk, while the cost of groceries has risen. I am able to buy about half in groceries of what I could have bought in 2021.

I barely make too much, (like \$500), in my gross pay to qualify for any assistance programs. But yet I barely make enough to survive on. We are living paycheck to paycheck and with how everything keeps rising, the future does not look bright at all. My gross pay is an excellent amount, but my take home is about \$4.50 less per hour. Idaho used to be a place where we could afford to raise a family and was a pleasant place to live. But national inflation, the insanely inflated housing market, and stagnant low wages have made it a nightmare. I couldn't even move if I wanted to, as I can't afford to. I am unable to even squirrel money away for rainy day funds or even savings.

I am sure you will get many letters from people in very similar situations. Right now, anybody in a lower income bracket has no hope of ever becoming middle class. We are stuck. I plead you all to listen to what we have to say and make the changes necessary for us all to not only survive but actually be able to live.

Thank you.

January 10, 2023

To Whom it May Concern,

I am a Registered Nurse (RN) with the Division of Licensing and Certification in the Bureau of Facility Standards. My job is a health facility surveyor. To sum up my duties, I along with a team of 3 others are the sole employees who enforce federal and state healthcare regulations for over 300 healthcare providers in Idaho, ranging from a small home health agency in Preston, to the largest hospital system in the state in Boise. My team is solely responsible for keeping these providers accountable in providing safe care to their patients. Additionally, we have a highly trained, specialized knowledge base and critical thinking ability regarding regulatory enforcement. It would be hard to find an Idahoan who has not been affected, either directly or indirectly, by the rules and regulations my team enforces.

I am respectfully asking that you consider the challenges our office has faced when considering a pay raise for the devoted workers in our division. I started with the Division in August of 2019. I entered my orientation with 3 other RNs who each started on the same day as me. Currently, I am the only one from that orientation group who has not left the division.

It is easy to brush off our staffing difficulties as something "every state is dealing with" which has been iterated to our department many times. However, this is clearly not the case as Idaho ranks 2nd worse in the country in surveying our Long Term Care facilities (<https://www.mcknights.com/news/key-senator-pressures-state-survey-agencies-over-staffing-related-delays/>). I have firsthand seen the dedication our staff has to the patients of healthcare facilities in Idaho and firmly believe our poor ranking in Long Term Care work is due to short staffing. To put in perspective, our sister team who surveys Long Term Care (LTC) facilities has 3 employees to survey every nursing home in the state, over 80 of them, which are required to be surveyed annually. On average it takes 2 weeks to complete a survey. With such a small team, only 1 survey can be completed at a time. With this math it is evident why Idaho is so far behind in survey work. There is simply not enough people to do the work.

While recruitment is essential to our work, I ask that you also strongly consider retention of the current workforce to be of the utmost importance. We need continued CECs to maintain our 7 boots on the ground employees. If we lost just one of these employees, it would surely impact the health and safety of Idahoans who our work affects. The people of Idaho cannot afford to lose more employees to higher paying jobs.

Respectfully,
Molly J Lorden, RN

January 5, 2023
James Brown RN
Healthcare Facility Surveyor

I am a Registered Nurse and I work for the Bureau of Facility Standards on the Acute and Continuing Care (ACC) Team. My Team and I are responsible for ensuring compliance with federal and state healthcare and safety regulations for all Medicare certified facilities

in the state of Idaho. I understand recruitment and retention for government work is a difficult task, but it doesn't need to be. I am writing this letter to make my opinion known on how compensation plays a vital role in recruitment and retention.

As you all know Governor Little has made multiple announcements and is very proud of the budget surplus for the State of Idaho, yet our department is plagued by short staffing largely due to the pay gap between public (State of Idaho) and private nursing work. I am the subject matter expert for End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) for the ACC team and represent the state of Idaho regarding ESRD regulations, yet I make substantially less money than my former RN colleagues in ESRD providers all over the state. I took this job as an ACC surveyor over 5 years ago because I felt I could make substantial changes to patient safety and patient care throughout the state of Idaho and I have done that.

However, that task is hard to do when I am on a team of 4 RNs who oversee regulatory compliance for 300 providers throughout the state of Idaho. Ranging from small home health agencies to the biggest hospital in the state. My team of 4 and I are over the following facilities:

51 Hospitals

57 Ambulatory Surgical Centers

31 Dialysis clinics

64 Home Health Agencies

48 Hospice Agencies

7 Outpatient Physical Therapy and Speech Pathology providers

50 Rural Health Centers

Not only do we survey each of these provider types, we are responsible to know and understand the different set of 7 federal regulations for each provider type. To top it off, many of the provider types have an additional set of state regulations. There are 4 people in the state of Idaho who can do this, therefore we must retain them to maintain our workforce and uphold the health and safety of Idahoans who receive services at the above facilities.

The problem is not just recruitment, but of retention. It's hard for people to justify working a job where on average 50% of your work time is being away from home. Add in the fact that on average my team makes at least 10\$ to 15\$ less per hour than in the RNs private sector for this area with our experience.

In my 5 years at the bureau of facility standards I have seen several RN's, social workers and Dieticians leave. The number 1 complaint for those staff members from a peer-to-peer standpoint is that the compensation is not enough for the workload and the required travel.

As a nurse with 14 years' experience and 5 years at the Bureau of Facility Standards, I am respectfully requesting you take my letter and opinion to heart and work with us to help mitigate further problems with retention and recruitment of new staff.

Hello Ms. Otto,

I am writing to add my testimony to the public comment given about the State of Idaho's CEC Committee meeting.

I have worked for the State of Idaho for over 12 years and I thoroughly enjoy my job and working for the State as a whole. What I have found to be lacking is the compensation schedule. I have often been able to apply at different times in my life to various programs for persons in need- WIC, LIHEAP, SEICAA Weatherization Program, Food Stamps, etc- and qualified based on my income. In fact, I always make less than the amount listed for my household size, and oftentimes, make less than the amount listed for smaller

household sizes! I feel that the State of Idaho should be more flexible (generous?) in the wages it offers and also offer higher wage rates in general. For example, I have always been started at the lowest wage for any position I've taken with the state, even though there is always a wage range given. Furthermore, I feel the median wages are not often what most employees earn. I have thus far been a classified staff member in my various positions with the State, and I feel that there is a stigma attached to "hourly wage earners". I also have a bachelor's degree (and am working on a master's degree to improve my life and earning potential), and feel that such educational achievements should be reflected in my compensation.

Overall, I would urge the State of Idaho and the CEC Committee to be more equitable in their wage distribution, consider educational achievements in compensation, and provide wages that put their employees and their families well above poverty level earnings. Thank you for your time in reading and considering my viewpoints. ~Annie Mendoza, Idaho State University employee

Dear Change in Employee Compensation (CEC) Committee,

Thank you for your time and efforts with making recommendations regarding employee compensation.

I am not sure if this includes the medical compensation, but I wanted to address it.

If there is anything that can be done to improve the coverage for Diabetic pump supplies and Dexcom supplies, it would be greatly appreciated. While there is coverage, the monthly fee I pay is still high. If this can be addressed, and it part of what you do, your attention to this would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Casey Quiroz

Casey Quiroz
Deaf/Hard of Hearing Services Coordinator | Disability Services
Rendezvous Complex | Room 125
921 South 8th Avenue | Pocatello, Idaho 83209
[REDACTED] | caseyquiroz@isu.edu

Dear Ms. Otto:

This email is to express my support for an increase in state employee compensation in 2023. As you well know, record inflation has eroded the buying power our paychecks provide. At the same time, the State of Idaho has collected a record \$1.38 billion surplus. Using a portion of the surplus to keep up with inflation, and to reward the dedication of committed state employees (especially those who are high performers), will serve the state by showing its workforce they are valued, which in turn will keep more people in state jobs.

Thank you,

Steven L. Millward, Program Manager
Certified Family Home Management Team
Division of Licensing and Certification
Department of Health and Welfare


cfh.dhw.idaho.gov

To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to thank you for the time the committee is taking to consider the words of the professionals who represent IDHW and are working with the clients within the field.

I have worked for IDHW almost nine years. I began my career in Child Protection Services with FACS and spent six years in various roles. After six years with CPS, I was able to transition to the Division of Behavioral Health in June 2020, a goal I had strived for and had to interview several times to make the transition.

I am currently a Designated Examiner or "DE" as we are often referred to in the field. Our role is extremely difficult, challenging, requires extensive amounts of time on each case as we are responsible for the livelihood of the client, their family, and the safety of the community. It is not a task anyone on my team takes lightly; it has taken time away from our families to prepare for cases or to have to work on the weekends to reassess clients for court on Mondays. We do this, because we are committed and love what we do.

Over the last few years our division has seen some changes in structure, funding, and organization. As a result, several seasoned clinicians have chosen to leave IDHW-BH division due to increased workload, heightened stress, decrease in morale and wellbeing, and higher wages within the community context. I have been recruited by hospitals, private sectors, NPOs and several other entities. It has been difficult to turn down because the wage these companies are offering is significantly higher and appeals on multiple levels to benefit myself and livelihood. I am currently working as a PRN on the weekends as a hospital social worker because the cost of living has increased significantly. My current wage as a full time DE does not meet the necessary requirements to cover the cost of living. This has had an impact on my self-care, time with my loved ones, and some exhaustion on my part. I continue to do this because despite the added stressors, I thoroughly enjoy being a DE and want to continue my tenure as a DE for IDHW-BH. It has been extremely difficult to remain positive in this role because there have been several clinicians that I have trained, without the experience I have, and their starting wage is several dollars more than what I make. It is insulting and frustrating to be honest. This factor has caused an influx of seasoned clinicians departing because they don't feel valued. I share this sentiment. I personally would like to receive the wage I deserve and not have to work as a PRN or to witness brand new employee/clinicians making several dollars more than me.

As social workers or counselors within IDHW-BH, we do not enter this field for a lavish lifestyle. We do deserve to be recognized for our hard work and dedication to the population we serve and the effort we put forth. Please recognize our value, worth, time away from our families by increasing our wages to a suitable amount.

I sincerely appreciate your time and consideration,

Michelle, Andrews, LMSW

Hello,

I am writing to provide testimony on the Idaho Change in Employee Compensation Committee. I would like to address faculty compensation in the school of Nursing. If you compare nurses with a Doctorate (PhD or DNP) who practice teaching, the salary is very low at ISU compared to other schools and also compared to wages as an RN. If you compare nurse practitioners with a Doctorate who work at ISU, the salary is about cut by a third. Idaho needs more nurse practitioners, especially in the rural areas, because we can practice independently, including diagnosing, prescribing, and treating illnesses for the whole family. At ISU, we have family and psychiatric nurse practitioner students. To teach these students, it requires another provider who is a family or psychiatric nurse practitioner.

The yearly average salary for a family nurse practitioner in the state of Idaho is \$105,290 (national average of \$199,610) per year and the average salary for a psychiatric nurse practitioner in the state of Idaho is \$106,600 (national average of \$143,240) per year. As you can see, we are already well below the national average for nurse practitioner pay, so that may explain the shortages. But, at ISU school of Nursing (SON) we only have one person qualified to teach in the Psychiatric nurse practitioner program at this time and we have been unable to recruit any other faculty for several years now. Although the psychiatric nurse practitioner program is in the most dire straits, it is not the only program in nursing that is suffering from a faculty shortage.

Many evidence based studies have looked at nurse faculty reasons for staying or leaving the profession. One of the most consistent reasons given for nurses and nurse practitioners leaving the academic side of the profession is low salary. As a prior search committee chair for the school of nursing, I know the main reason given for an applicant not taking an offered position at ISU is the low salary.

Please raise the salary for the faculty in the school of nursing so that we may continue to hire quality faculty as our current faculty leave the profession or retire. The nursing profession is already short many nurses in the state of Idaho and a quality and robust nursing faculty will be key to helping to decrease the current shortage and this massive predicted shortage.

Gina Clarkson, PhD, APRN, NNP-BC
Associate Professor, School of Nursing
College of Health
Idaho State University
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Pocatello, ID 83209-8101

Hello,

I don't necessarily have a testimonial per se, but more of an observation; ISU has lost many great employees over the last couple of years due to better pay in the private sector and an increasing cost of living in Idaho. I don't think the pay scales keep up with inflation or what people can earn for doing the same job in the private sector or at other universities.

Thanks,
Susan

--

Susan MaComb, LCPC
Counselor/Outreach Coordinator | Counseling and Testing Service
Preferred Pronouns: She, Her
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To whom it may concern:

I work as a Self-Reliance Specialist for the Department of Health and Welfare and fully support increasing employee compensation. I love my job, but it is very mentally exhausting. Idahoans everyday tell us the struggle they are going through. Some are single income homes with kids, others have multiple incomes, but both are struggling to stay afloat. As for me, I am married with kids and both me and my husband work. We are having a hard time keeping up with this alarming economy and I've had to obtain a second job. I appreciate the opportunity to address my concerns and hope you can consider this increase for government employees.

Thank you
Crystal

To Christine Otto and other board members:

I am reaching out to you as a current mental health clinician for the Department of Health and Welfare. With the current economy, financial pressure has grown to unmanageable proportions. In Idaho, the cost of living has sky rocketed, the population has sky rocketed, and our case load and work demands have been congruent in growth. We are seeing a decrease in morale and mass exit for those who are not feeling valued or simply are unable to meet the financial demands of cost of living. My personal testimony is that I left a higher paying, supervisory position at a hospital to pursue my dream job and a career with the Department of Health and Welfare. Unfortunately, I took a significant pay cut in doing so, knowing the risk I was taking. I will first and foremost report that I absolutely love my currently position and know that I made the right choice to a job I love and have as my intended career path. However, the risk involving the lower compensation is certainly dictating my future. I am struggling financially to pay for housing and to put food on the table in this economy. I have heard similar experiences from majority of my colleagues, associates and community partners. With your help, we could effectively manage this financial issue which would inevitably have a positive compound effect on the community and services the state provides. An increase in compensation would increase morale, employee retention and satisfaction, and increase staffing and workload manageability. I hope you find my testimony to be motivating and helpful in this process. Thank you so much for your time and regard.

-J. Delfico, LMSW

Thank ahead of time for taking on this task, hopefully the outcome helps recruit and keep good staff.

Talking to others and gathering some of my ideas, here are a few.

Blue Cross slow on delivering care.

The best way to avoid repeat visits to the doctors is to abide to the doctors report for treatment,

Xrays MIRS physical therapy without Blue Cross dragging their feet on the recovery.

A better plan for yearly pay, to have merit years of service increase and separate cost of living increase.

Thank you.

Dear Committee Members,

Thank you for providing public servants the opportunity to provide comment on CEC.

As a manager, I have roughly 20 staff on my team who work hard to provide crucial licensing services to thousands of citizens in the state of Idaho. Having experienced and licensed professionals is necessary to keep citizens safe across our incredible state. While all state positions are of equal importance, not all positions are paid equitably and those on my staff are a perfect example. The individuals entrusted with licensing professionals make just over \$18 an hour. According to data on Transparent Idaho, as of December 17, 2022, 25% of the State of Idaho workforce make less than \$20/hr. The historic increase in inflation, rising gas prices, and skyrocketing rent have caused high turnover in lower paid positions across all state agencies. My staff are a group of dedicated individuals who strive to provide the best experience to citizens every day. Unfortunately, their positions do not provide an adequate salary which leads to staff leaving the positions they love to work for major corporations, such as Amazon, to support their families. With more major corporations entering Idaho's economy, state agencies must compete with multi-million and billion-dollar companies to hire and retain quality employees.

My hope is that the CEC Committee consider the economic struggles facing our staff when deliberating about pay increases for our public servants. Having a projected \$1.5 billion general fund surplus, a 3-4% pay increase is insufficient. With the Governor understandably considering a 10% pay increase for those at the Department of Correction, I hope the committee also acknowledges other state agency needs and proposes an increase between 5-8%. Even if the committee were to propose 8%, it would not match the 40-year high in inflation of 9.1% from 2021 to 2022; however, it would certainly bring staff closer to meeting that bar. The longer the committee postpones matching rising inflation, the farther back state salaries will be year over year. I also encourage committee members to consider that lower paid individuals will always receive a smaller monetary increase than those making substantially more than them. For example, should the committee approve a 3% increase, an individual making \$40/hr will receive an increase of \$1.20 (additional \$96/paycheck) while an individual making \$18/hr will receive an increase of just \$0.54 (additional \$43/paycheck). In the tables below you can see there is a 75% difference between the amount between the individual making \$40/hr will receive versus the amount an individual making \$18/hr will receive.

Current Pay Rate	% Increase	\$ Increase	New Pay Rate
\$ 18.00	2%	\$ 0.36	\$ 18.36
\$ 18.00	3%	\$ 0.54	\$ 18.54
\$ 18.00	4%	\$ 0.72	\$ 18.72
\$ 18.00	5%	\$ 0.90	\$ 18.90
\$ 18.00	6%	\$ 1.08	\$ 19.08
\$ 18.00	8%	\$ 1.44	\$ 19.44
\$ 18.00	10%	\$ 1.80	\$ 19.80

Current Pay Rate	% Increase	\$ Increase	New Pay Rate
\$ 40.00	2%	\$ 0.80	\$ 40.80
\$ 40.00	3%	\$ 1.20	\$ 41.20
\$ 40.00	4%	\$ 1.60	\$ 41.60
\$ 40.00	5%	\$ 2.00	\$ 42.00
\$ 40.00	6%	\$ 2.40	\$ 42.40
\$ 40.00	8%	\$ 3.20	\$ 43.20
\$ 40.00	10%	\$ 4.00	\$ 44.00

Again, I want to thank the committee for taking the time to review comments submitted by public servants. I am eager to review your report and the data used to determine your decision.



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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 4th and some of my comments are based on points made in that hearing. Please consider the following as the CEC Committee addresses this in 2023:

Although money is not the only solution, it should be the largest part. Every state employee can use an increase in pay 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. Increases in pay for state employees are still needed despite the good faith effort last year to make up for years of neglect. The most important way to make work a fulfilling experience and communicate to employees that they are truly valued is by paying them accordingly.

Perhaps another point to make is that with the budget surplus for the past two (2) years, this is an ideal time to invest in state employees. In the lean times state employees lose jobs, take pay cuts, have unpaid furlough days, and agencies have budget holdbacks. In these times of budget surplus, the state needs to take the opportunity to invest in its corps of public servants and look towards the future with an eye towards anticipating the increasing public service needs of a rapidly growing state. In the end, trying to balance the budget on the back of state employees is a poor solution. This will only increase attrition and decrease access to critical public services. Rather than seeing state employee pay and benefits as place to look for budget cuts, the citizens of Idaho are far better served by having a well-supported corps of public servants that the state continues to invest in.

An additional idea to further state employee benefits would be to sponsor a bill changing Section 67-5333(2)(a), Idaho Code, that allows eligible state retirees to convert half of their unused sick leave to a sick leave account that can be used to pay qualifying insurance premiums. Once converted that half of the unused sick leave is used to pay premiums for “such health, dental, vision, long-term care, prescription drug, and life insurance programs as may be maintained by the state.” State employees have earned their sick leave. I ask that the Legislature consider increasing the percentage so that state employees may use all of their accumulated sick leave converted for use to cover health care premiums post-retirement. Retirement is a time when many state employees could use the additional funds to access services for health care needs.

One benefit that state employees used to have was dedicated time off to be used for medical appointments (coded as MDA on timecards). Now it just comes out of vacation time, effectively reducing this benefit. Dedicated medical time off is a valuable benefit that should be reinstated.

State employees should receive an increase to help cover the current national inflation rate of 7.9% (in the West Region it is higher) and the cost of living is rising quickly. This doesn't cover the increase in property taxes and housing costs across the state but would help with these costs. State employees are falling further and further behind financially, which contributes both to low morale and attrition. While we support the 4% merit increase for state employees proposed by DHR, we think this should be higher due to cost of living.

State employees feel undervalued by our legislators. The strategy from year-to-year in the past seemed 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. 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. We are valuable. And many of us are still leaving...

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 be incentivized to stay. Please know that I love my job and I want to stay - Motivate me to stay. More 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
[REDACTED]

To whom it may concern,

My position with the State of Idaho is Construction foreman with the Fish and Game. I oversee a crew in the screen shop.

The number of turnovers in this program is embarrassing to say the least. We require the crew to be at a journeyman level in at least two trades and competent in two others. Any one of these four trades pay far beyond what we can offer them in wages. I still have an excellent rapport with many that have left us due to cost of living increase and our low wages, so I'm confident that them informing me that their reasoning for leaving is in fact, due to lack of adequate funds.

I probably will not go through many more hiring processes, I have a great crew as of late that want to stay, Please consider my concerns about this programs future. A pocket full

of Degrees will not keep the wheels turning but better wages will certainly help keep people employed with us.

Thanks for your time.

Daniel Jones

I was curious as to what the legislature passed last year on raises. We were promised a 5% increase along with a 3% increase from the University. That did not happen. With the cost of living the way it is and the lack of competitive pay working for the state I feel my only option is to find employment elsewhere. I see on a daily basis the amount of money being put into the Holt Arena with none of those funds actually addressing the real issues of this building. Plumbing, electrical, and the exterior. Things that would make my job easier to do and make for a safer experience for our patrons. When I look up the average pay for my job I am severely underpaid and when combined with the building issues it is hard to come up with a good reason for staying. I can make so much more money in the private sector for doing the same job.

Thank you for your time,

Matt Curtis

Concession Manager I.S.U.

January 10, 2023

Dear CEC Committee Members,

I am providing this written testimony to be considered by the Committee regarding state employee compensation. I am fortunate to work for the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG). I take the responsibility of representing the State of Idaho very seriously and I enjoy the work we do. I enjoy interacting with the public and my co-workers, educating and being educated along the way. I recognize that public sector work (especially at the state level) cannot compete with private sector wages, and that's okay. Most of us know that going in. Prior to my transition to being a wildlife biologist, I owned my own granite countertop and tile business. The recession in 2008 forced me to make some difficult decisions. Not knowing how long we would have to scrape by and weather that storm, and not knowing if I would be able to put food on the table and a roof over my family's head, I chose to close my business, get a full-time job, and go back to school. After 7 years of undergraduate and graduate work, I earned B.S. and M.S. degrees in Wildlife Biology and was able to secure a habitat biologist position with IDFG in 2017. I am grateful to have been selected for that position and I'm grateful to work for such a great public agency. I recognize that we have "cool" jobs here at IDFG and that brings a certain level of satisfaction and prestige.

In 2022, with the intent to improve my family situation, both financially and geographically, I competed for and earned a promotion, which came with a pay increase. It's worth noting that I was the only IDFG employee to apply for the job and there were only 3 other applicants with only 2 of them choosing to interview. I believe this is because it's very hard to attract talented people from other regions in the state, or from outside Idaho, when the cost of living in the Boise metro area has skyrocketed like it has in the last couple of years. The promotion required a duty station move to the IDFG Regional Office in Nampa which takes me out of the field where I have loved to work and puts me in an office. Still, the move was appealing to my family because we lived in a very rural area of southwest

Idaho and we wanted to be in a better location for schools and extracurricular activities for our children, and job opportunities for my wife (she is currently a teaching assistant at a public Charter school). I knew it would be difficult to find affordable housing considering the market at the time, even with the pay increase. In addition, inflation has increased the cost of just about everything, so, even though my wife and I are earning more money than ever before, the items we all need to survive and participate in the world in a normal way (groceries, gas, toilet paper, laundry detergent, etc.) are more expensive than ever before. We are not making the financial progress that we hoped would come with promotions and through the effort we put in to be great at our jobs. We got lucky and found a home to rent in Mountain Home for a lower rental rate, which means I commute to Nampa. We hope to move to the Boise metro area after this school year so our son can make the transition to high school and finish off his schooling there. The housing market has cooled somewhat, but it is still growing and with rising interest rates, making that move to help my family situation seems daunting and somewhat unachievable.

As I said before, we recognize the limitations of public service. Certainly, there are federal jobs and private jobs in our field that pay more. We know that and many of us choose to stay and do this important work anyway. We are not asking to be millionaires; we don't need to drive the newest fanciest cars or live in giant homes. We can live modestly (not in poverty) and be happy with that. Our jobs are certainly very cool; however, I can't walk into a grocery store and fill a cart or fill my car with gas and wave at the clerk while I walk by saying, "It's ok, my cool job will cover this." It would be nice to do our work, for the benefit of the people of Idaho and others, without the constant worry about how our bills are going to get paid or whether we can afford groceries that week. We have been fortunate to have regular CEC increases over the last several years and those increases are greatly appreciated. An increase in employee compensation again this year would also be greatly appreciated, and in my mind, necessary if the State of Idaho wants to attract and retain talented individuals in the public sector. Idaho is a great place to live and work and I want to stay here, with IDFG, for my whole career. Please help make that desire a reality by continuing to support significant CEC that can make a difference for working families like mine.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and thank you for taking the time to read and consider my comments.

Sincerely,
Brandon Flack
Mountain Home, ID
[REDACTED]

Esteemed Compensation Committee Members,

I am writing to you today regarding my feelings about Idaho's employee compensation. I am a professor at Idaho State University in my second year. It has been my pleasure to work for the university in this capacity and I have loved the opportunity to teach future healthcare professionals. However, to be honest, I left a very lucrative career at a local hospital to take this position. The paycut was extreme, totaling nearly \$20,000 per year. I realize that this was my choice and nobody twisted my arm or coerced me into making this decision. However, my point is that to produce the best students, you need the best teachers and this comes at a price. I have over two decades of hands-on industry experience making me an expert in the courses that I teach. This is the reason I jumped at the opportunity to share my knowledge with students. Unfortunately, it's quite

disheartening that upon graduation, my students will enter the workforce making almost what I do thanks to the wisdom that professors like myself have imparted to them. While I understand that I am a newcomer to education, the mastery of my field should also be reflected in my salary. Continued incongruence can only lead to a lack of teachers that are truly content experts and the students are the ones that will ultimately suffer. There has to be a way to become more competitive in regards to pay while recruiting and retaining educators that truly give their students the content mastery they deserve. Thank you for your time and consideration,

--

Breezy Bird, MHA, RT(R)(M)
Clinical Assistant Professor
Radiographic Science Program
Beckley Building (66)
Office 225
921 South 8th Ave., Stop 8002
Pocatello, ID 83209
[REDACTED]
breezybird@isu.edu
<https://www.isu.edu/radiography/>



Employee Compensation Committee,

I have been working as a Designated Examiner with DHW for approximately one year. In that time, I have made a couple observations regarding employee compensation that I feel are worthy of your time and consideration, which I will list below:

Employee responsibilities have increased, but compensation has not.

Rate of pay seems more related to when you were hired vs. experience and skill level. For example, I as a new employee am paid about 3-4\$/hour more than the person that trained me. Employees hired 5-6 months after I are making 2-3\$/more than I do. My coworker, that's been with DHW for approximately 10 years makes 4\$/hour less than I do.

The cost of living has increased in Idaho and our compensation has not been keeping up with those changes. As a result, many of my co-workers have had to take on 2nd jobs in order to meet basic needs, such as housing, clothing, or food.

The lack of fair compensation and increasing workload has caused many to reconsider their employment with DHW and affected employee morale. Some have already left for better opportunities in the community.

There needs to be more incentive for professional growth. Whether I'm a Licensed Master Social Worker or a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (which is a much more experienced Social Worker, requiring years of experience, supervision, cost, and testing) the pay doesn't change.

Once again, thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely
Paul Lloyd LMSW

Per the state of the State address state employees stand to get a 4% pay raise this year (if all goes well). While higher than the average a few years back (3%+/-) it isn't and hasn't been keeping up with inflation.

So factoring in inflation, state employees get a net pay cut.

How are our agencies expected to retain and/or attract good people when we won't pay them competitively?

This is just the general numbers for all state employees. Don't get me started on how far behind wages are in IT.

Respectfully,



Kurt Hinrichs
Idaho State Police
IT Department · AppDev
Software Engineer III
[REDACTED]
Kurt.Hinrichs@isp.idaho.gov

calculator to evidence my claims (<https://www.bestplaces.net/cost-of-living/pocatello-id/boise-id/66000>). The Boise/Meridian area compared to Pocatello is 35% more expensive overall, and housing alone is 115% more expensive. According to these calculations, my current salary of \$66K should actually be \$89,096.00 to be considered an equitable salary match.

As Meridian faculty, we have the same level of job responsibilities for daily work and tenure, yet we do not have the same resources as being on the main campus. In my department, our Meridian student enrollment continues to increase, yet we have less faculty to meet these growing demands. And we continue to lose faculty and staff in droves on both campuses each year, due in large part to compensation concerns.

ISU is a health-centered university, and the department of counseling is housed under the Division of Health Sciences, in the College of Health. Since the pandemic, mental health has been recognized as an essential service; our enrollment numbers and client caseloads reflect this epidemic. Our profession is vital to the health of our local and national communities. However, our salaries do not accurately reflect this urgency. If I left the university and stayed in the Boise area, I could gain employment at other universities, agencies, or practice collectives and my starting salary would be far greater.

Given these contexts, our university and our department are having notable difficulty retaining quality faculty and staff, especially on the Meridian campus. Our wages are not competitive regardless of campus, but they are simply not sustainable in Meridian. No one should have to live paycheck to paycheck. However, this is the reality for many faculty and staff - myself included. We have advanced training, unique areas of expertise, and a passion for the work we provide and the communities we serve -- please consider our plea for ethical compensation for the important work we provide. Otherwise, the state will continue to lose valuable talent.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Warmly,
Dr. Renée Howells

Renée C. Howells
Empathy * Positivity * Input * Woo * Restorative
Ph.D, LPC, NCC (She/Her/Hers)
Assistant Professor
Idaho State University - Meridian Campus
Department of Counseling
1311 E. Central Drive, Rm# 516C
Meridian, ID 83642
Office Phone: 208-373-1944
Need an appointment with me? Click: <https://rhowells.youcanbook.me>

To whom it may concern,
I have been an employee of the State of Idaho for over 7 years. I believe employee compensation is more important than ever for Behavioral Health. It has long been a concern that state pay structures cannot compete with community provider pay, yet state employees are tasked with supporting the most vulnerable populations across the state. As our population has grown and our cost of living has increased, it has been difficult for me and many others to continue to do the work we do while still maintaining our own households. I believe that the work we do is valuable, needed, and important and that the employees of the State of Idaho deserve to meet their own needs while they support others in our community. I believe that an increase in pay not only allows us to work more effectively but reflects the value of the services we provide. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Thank you,

Ana Barnes, LMSW
Clinician, Designated Examiner
Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
Region IV Behavioral Health
1720 N. Westgate Drive, Ste. A-1
Boise, ID 83704
E-Mail: Ana.Barnes@dhw.idaho.gov
Cell: [REDACTED]
Fax: (208) 334-0788

Dear Christine Otto and other esteemed CEC Committee Members,

I have been with the state- specifically at the department of agriculture- since I graduated from university in 2019. I first got my foot in the door with a part time seasonal job, I returned season after season for a few years until an opening in a fulltime benefited position became available- I currently still hold that position. I am also going back to school part time at BSU for a secondary bachelor's degree to be able to stay working with in the state and have more mobility within my career. I am extremely proud to be a part of the department of Agriculture and the State of Idaho.

The financial toll of not only the cost of living rising in Ada County but also of BSU tuition and fees has put strain on my finances. I would love to be able to stay with the state for as long as possible but as cost of living continues to rise, I am left often with the choice of staying with in the State and taking a pay cut or going to the private industry just to be able to receive better compensation.

A story out of KTVB, published in April of last year I thought highlighted the cost of housing and its disparity against what renters can afford well: "The average income per capita in Ada County is \$37,333, according to the most recent US Census numbers. No more than 30% of income should go toward the rent bill, according to financial experts. This means the average person in Ada County can afford around \$935 a month. More than half of Boise rentals go for more than \$2,000, according to numbers from Rent.com. Only 3% of rentals cost less than \$1,000 - the price point the average Ada County resident needs."

I currently make less than the average Ada County resident cited in that article. I would love to be able to be building towards a future here- save up to one day purchase a house and support a future family- but currently that is outside of my financial reality.

I am very hopeful that the committee will act with integrity towards their employees as well as help set a precedent to other employers on how to best build a workplace of mutual respect. The best way you can show your appreciation and respect towards the employees of Idaho is to fairly compensate them. I firmly believe this would also assist in our state's various departments that are not fully staffed (Apologies I do not have a resource to site here, but I do remember last year when the legislature listened to testimony from the various department heads speaking to their 20-30% vacancy rates across the board when there were talks of the last raise).

I trust you all to act with in this state's best interest.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Best,

Angie Goslin

She/Hers

Lab Tech- Brucellosis Lab

Bureau of Laboratories, Animal Health Lab

Idaho State Department of Agriculture

Phone: [REDACTED]

Fax: (208) 334-4619

Email: Angie.Goslin@isda.idaho.gov

Lab Email: BRUCCELLALAB@ISDA.IDAHO.GOV

I just wanted to make our legislature aware as well as the State, I am a long hauler with COVID. I have been accepted to the Long Hauler Clinic through St. Luke's in Boise. They have seen huge improvements with patience who have been able to access Pulmonary Respiratory Therapy. Our insurance does not currently cover Pulmonary Therapy. I have had to go to Physical Therapy for treatment, but it has not been even close to the same as the Pulmonary Therapy. I truly feel since we were expected to work during COVID just as Dr's and nurses were, this should be covered for us. I was diagnosed with COVID in September of 2021 and I am still having lingering effects and still attend the COVID Clinic in Boise. I know I can't be the only state of Idaho Employee who has been impacted by the COVID epidemic. I hope everyone will take this into consideration when working on our insurance policy for this next year.

Thank you,

Jessica Adamson, LMSW
Case Manager Social Worker 3
(208) 734-4000 - Office
[REDACTED] - Cell

Employee Compensation Committee:

I have been working as a Designated Examiner with DHW for approximately one year. In that time, I have made a couple observations regarding employee compensation that I feel are worthy of your time and consideration, which I will list below:

Employee responsibilities have increased, but compensation has not.

Rate of pay seems more related to when you were hired vs. experience and skill level. For example, I as a new employee am paid about 3-4\$/hour more than the person that trained me. Employees hired 5-6 months after I are making 2-3\$/more than I do. My coworker, that's been with DHW for approximately 10 years makes 4\$/hour less than I do.

The cost of living has increased in Idaho and our compensation has not been keeping up with those changes. As a result, many of my co-workers have had to take on 2nd jobs in order to meet basic needs, such as housing, clothing, or food.

The lack of fair compensation and increasing workload has caused many to reconsider their employment with DHW and negatively affected employee morale. Some have already left for better opportunities in the community.

There needs to be more incentive for professional growth. Whether I'm a Licensed Master Social Worker or a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (which is a much more experienced Social Worker, requiring years of experience, supervision, cost, and testing) the pay doesn't change.

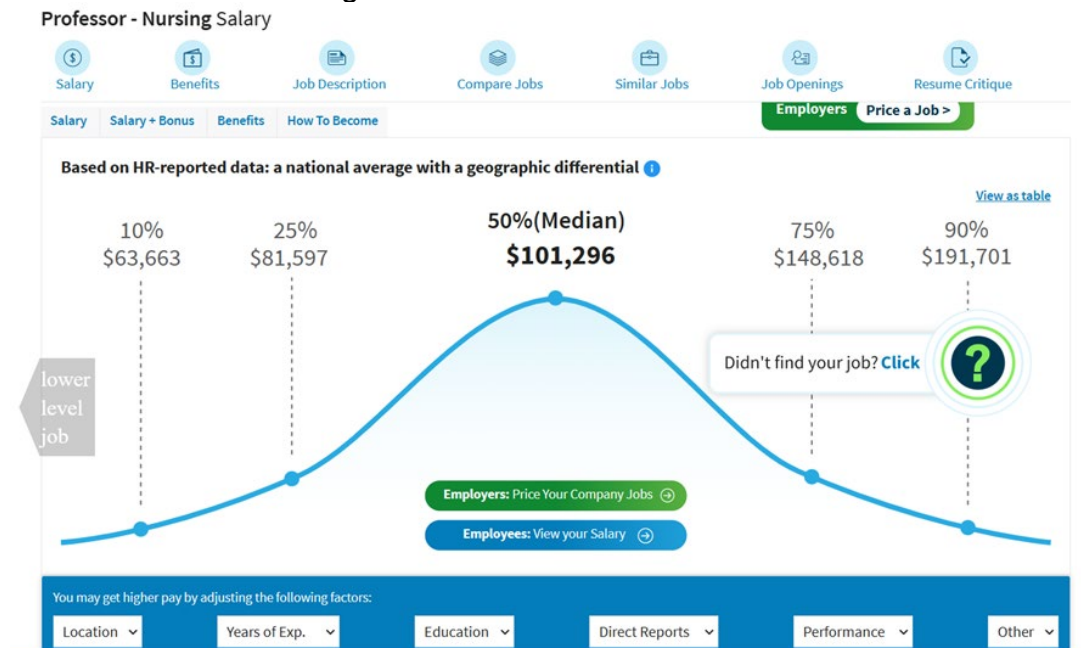
Once again, thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely
Paul Lloyd LMSW

Dear CEC Committee:

This letter is in regards to your request for testimony in regards to the state's personnel system and employee compensation. I can be assured that each letter you receive will likely indicate that as faculty at a state university we are grossly underpaid. At ISU we are compensated less than our colleagues at Boise State University, although I suspect they are underpaid as well.

When looking at compensation, you need to look at several factors. The biggest factors are likely supply and demand which I am sure many of you are familiar with in day to day life. It is well known that a lot of faculty are aging out of the profession of teaching and the supply to replace these faculty members is limited and very competitive throughout the country. When we have a good candidate for an open position they are likely also to be courted by other institutions that are able to compensate at a higher rate. This makes it difficult to get solid, high achieving educators to our university. The attached graph shows the median range for nursing salary and we are definitely at the 10-15th percentile area. A further supply issue that relates to clinical faculty, which is deeply important to a healthcare educational program, is that it is hard to give up a job clinically that provides a salary of over \$100K for one that gives around \$65K to start (this is at the graduate level and might be even lower at the undergraduate level). With this scenario, you often get faculty who are at a place in their life where they are ready for the lifestyle change that comes with this decreased salary, but that alone is an issue in itself as they are also closer to retirement, necessitating potential sooner replacement. That compounds with teaching in a program that produces graduates that automatically make more money than those who are educating them.



Sincerely,
Michelle Anderson, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, FAANP

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Michelle Anderson, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, FAANP
Clinical Assistant Professor | Graduate School of Nursing
Clifton Strengths: Strategic | Achiever | Learner | Input | Positivity

Sam and Aline Skaggs Health Science Center | Room 847 J
1311 E Central Drive | Meridian, Idaho 83642
[REDACTED] | michelleanderson@isu.edu

Dear Christine,

This is my written testimony regarding compensation.

All I have to say is it would be nice if Idaho could bring it's salaries more in line with neighboring states.

I've worked for IDFG for 22 years and have seen many the employee leave this department to go to work for Wyoming, Colorado, Oregon, etc..

Thank you.

Bruce Barnett
Fisheries Data Coordinator
[REDACTED]

My name is Janet Renk, and I have been employed with Idaho State University in Meridian in a classified position (AA I) for the past six years and am writing from that perspective. Over that time, the gap between our pay and the cost of living has widened dramatically, especially in the last three years with the huge increases in living costs in the Treasure Valley. Additionally, the pay is not commensurate with the skills and experience required to perform classified positions. The State of Idaho has spent years recruiting outside business to relocate to our state, which I support, but I now find myself, a lifelong Idaho resident, unable to afford the cost of living while a state employee. It saddens me that our state has not done more for her current employees.

While the state benefits are an important part of the compensation package and I truly appreciate the benefits, they don't put food on the table. Currently, I know several classified employees who have taken part time jobs to make ends meet and can't afford the deductibles and co-pays. A personal story: my 21 year old daughter recently found clerical employment in Boise. Walking in off the street, with no prior clerical experience, the starting pay was \$18.50 an hour plus full benefits including PTO, paid holidays, and excellent health insurance. The starting pay for FY23 for Pay Grade H is \$14.43. While the state has never been on par with private businesses, this difference is huge when you consider I have been employed for six years with the same agency, all performance evaluations are the highest, and I make \$16.90 an hour.

A common complaint is that we can't find good employees. Current AA I positions are remaining vacant. In talking to candidates, the pay is the number one reason they choose not to work for the state. In my department we have lost several classified employees to outside businesses due to pay. It seems it should be more important than ever to retain loyal, dependable, high performing employees. To that end, the state needs to seriously consider increasing the pay scale for classified employees and fairly compensating the current employees.

Thank you for your consideration.

Janet Renk

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Janet Renk

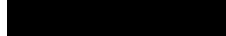
Administrative Assistant I | College of Pharmacy

Pronouns: she, her, hers

CliftonStrengths: Learner | Input | Connectedness | Intellection | Achiever

Sam and Aline Skaggs Health Science Center | Room 756

1311 E. Central Dr. | Meridian, Idaho 83642

 | janetrenk@isu.edu

CEC Committee Members,

My name is Rylene Nowlin and I am the laboratory manager of the Idaho State Police Forensic Services laboratory in Meridian, Idaho. I would like to thank the legislature and your committee for allowing for and considering employee comments and for all of your support in years past and your continued support of state employees.

Whenever I am asked what is my favorite thing about my 20 years in forensic science with the Idaho State Police laboratory my answer is always the same and is never one I have to think about. It is the people I work with. I have had the privilege and the honor of working with some of the most hard working, dedicated and brilliant scientists in the country in my 20 years with the state. These individuals must meet very stringent educational requirement prior to being considered for employment and could go into many other scientific fields. They choose forensics to provide unbiased scientific analysis to support the criminal justice system and the citizens of Idaho. They don't do this for the accolades, the public recognition, or significantly higher pay they could achieve in other fields but to be of service to their community. They never hesitate to give up evenings and weekends when a rush case or crime scene callout comes in despite not receiving additional overtime pay or on call pay for giving up time with their families. Everything they do is done in the background to help further investigations. They will never be the ones standing in the spotlight as that is not why they do what they do. They are daily exposed to hazardous chemicals, hazardous drugs, and biological hazards. They respond to crime scenes, attend autopsies and testify in court. All of these can be hazardous and trauma inducing but our staff maintain their professionalism and commitment to excellence through it all. They continue to be one of the best forensic laboratory's in the nation and are a forensic laboratory system Idaho can be proud of.

Based on current data available from surrounding states, Idaho pays their forensic laboratory staff on average 25% less than our neighboring states across all laboratory job categories. This makes it increasingly difficult to recruit qualified applicants and to retain scientists after they have completed training. The increased cost of living in the state without a commensurate raise in pay has also compounded these issues. Unfortunately we have a very high turnover rate as our amazing scientists leave for higher paying jobs in neighboring states and in private forensic labs in order to provide for their families. This is a financial loss to the state as the money and time put into training these individuals now benefits another agency. These losses also increase the time it takes to complete cases due to fewer staffing resources.

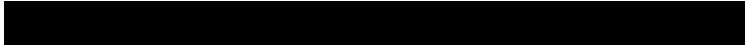
I will not include a lot of detail in this e-mail as I know your committee is very busy and has a lot of feedback to consider. I am happy to provide any additional detail or specific examples that might be needed. I close in asking you to consider raising the

salaries of Idaho State Police Forensic Services staff to improve our ability to retain and attract the best and the brightest forensic scientists and laboratory support staff. They work hard each and every day for the citizens of Idaho and will never ask for recognition but I ask you to please keep them and the work they do in mind as your committee deliberates.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Rylene

Rylene Nowlin
Forensic Lab Manager
Idaho State Police
700 S. Stratford, Suite 125
Meridian, ID 83642


rylene.nowlin@isp.idaho.gov
www.isp.idaho.gov



CEC Committee
Idaho State Legislature
Boise, ID 83720

Honorable CEC Committee Senate and House Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to voice our individual and collective concerns in relation to recruitment/retention of Health Facility Survey staff.

I am a Registered Nurse and Co-supervisor over the long-term care program which oversees regulatory compliance in nursing homes.

The Health Facility Surveyors in long term care have underwent a tremendous increased workload with the pandemic. They were required to enter facilities with large outbreaks of COVID-19, often weekly and at times twice weekly to survey to infection control. These surveyors traveled locally and to the far reaches of rural Idaho to ensure the health and safety of residents in nursing homes. These surveyors risked their own health and spent time away from their home and families.

While conducting these surveys for infection control, other important survey work was suspended which included surveying for overall compliance with recertifications and complaints. Now that the required infection control surveys have decreased, the yearly regulatory surveys and investigations of complaints are far behind. Many of the long-term care surveyors left looking for jobs with more pay and/or less demand. The long-term care survey team is budgeted for 13 surveyors to complete the required federal and state regulatory oversight in nursing homes. Presently the team has 2 surveyors and are relying on the assistance of acute and continuing care teams and contracted staff. However, these teams and resources are also experiencing a lack of resources to ensure facilities are meeting the minimum standards of care.

In the last 6 months, 3 of our new health facility surveyors have resigned their survey positions to accept jobs in the health care industry for as much as \$20 more an hour. While they have expressed there is great reward in surveying, the time away from families and the increase in demand of their time and growing economic costs, they are opting for the higher wage.

Health Facility Surveyors must have a professional healthcare license (registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, dietitians, social workers) or other expertise in the health care industry. These surveyors also must have expert knowledge outside of their specific discipline to survey proficiently in health care facilities to identify regulatory non-compliance.

These individuals are difficult to recruit and retain due to the inability to offer them a competitive industry wage.

As one of my colleagues stated in his letter to the Committee to help provide more context:

“As recently (September 2022) discussed by the Chair of the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging, Senator Bob Casey, Jr, surveyor positions are down as much as 50% or more across the nation. This leaves critical survey work to protect patients and residents undone. Idaho is listed by Sen. Casey specifically for being in the bottom 3 of all states in timely completion of survey work. The burden of completing Idaho’s State and Federal survey responsibilities is currently being shouldered by the committed surveyors we have left. The strain of this crisis staffing, and increased workload have severely taxed our remaining civil servants; some of the most dedicated and selfless professionals I have ever had the pleasure of working with.”

I have been a nurse in healthcare for greater than 25 years and came to work with the State of Idaho nearly 6 years ago as a Health Facility Supervisor for long-term care. I took a \$20,000/year pay decrease as I believe in the Department of Health and Welfare’s mission to protect the citizens of Idaho. I have witnessed amazing work from our surveyors and received feedback from residents and facility staff about their appreciation when care and services were improved in the nursing homes as a result of the surveyor’s work.

Again, I am grateful for the opportunity to express my voice as a citizen and a healthcare worker for the State of Idaho.

Respectfully,



Belinda Day, RN
Long Term Care Supervisor

Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
Division of Licensing and Certification
Bureau of Facility Standards

Hello Ms. Otto,

As a matter of introduction, my name is Kristin Bartz and I am the current management assistant for the Office of Information Technology Services. I have been with the state off and on since 2009, also working as a program specialist with the Soil & Water Conservation Commission, Department of Administration, and Boise State University. I also spent six years as a board member with the Occupational Therapy Licensure Board through the Division of Occupational & Professional Licenses.

I know there has been significant discussion about retention and pay for professional-grade or specialized positions and the delta between the private and public sectors. I am aware there is currently a plan in place with Division of Human Resources to address these. Since positions like nursing and IT are already being addressed, I am writing today to advocate on behalf of business operations positions, which I believe are the backbone of state functions. Positions such as administrative assistants, financial specialists, program specialists, and even customer service jobs like technical records specialists and liquor store clerks are the reason the state can do its day-to-day business. IT professionals, water quality analysts, and ITD project managers wouldn't be able to do their jobs if not for this intricate and underpaid sector who process their timesheets, make sure the agency bills get paid, and create the documents required by each agency. Even as a board member with DOPL, we could see the board secretaries were paid a paltry amount to support the work we were doing.

Many of these positions require a degree or several years' experience, depending on the needs of each agency. This is no different than what is required for specialized positions.

When I started with the state in 2009, I was making approximately \$16/hr. By the time I left Boise State in 2014, I was just up to \$22/hr. Today, eight years later, I'm making just over \$26/hr. My take home each pay period averages \$1300 after deductions; if I removed all the voluntary deductions, my take home would be \$1700/mth. Median rent in Boise as of January 8, 2023 is \$2125 for a 3-bedroom apartment. If I use the 30% guideline of rent to income ratio, I would not be able to afford rent at my current salary. Additionally, the voluntary benefits currently available are very much only accessible to those who can afford them. If I were not married, I would not be able to afford the health insurance, 401K, the FSA, or other voluntary benefits. My pay has definitely not kept with the pace of inflation.

Administrative, clerical, fiscal, and other support positions also deserve to be paid a living wage. State salaries have been underfunded for years and while we appreciate the 7% CEC afforded by the legislature last year, the only ones who truly benefited from it were workers making over \$30/hr. Directors, Administrators, bureau chiefs, and other upper-level positions really hit the jackpot with large salary increases. Due to the proportional increase of taxes and PERSI, and the significant health insurance premium increase, my CEC was a whopping \$26 per pay period in my pocket.

I tell you this to demonstrate how CEC only marginally impacts the support positions and to ask for the committee's consideration to provide us with a proportionally higher CEC this year. I don't have enough data to provide a 100% solution, but I would suggest looking at job classes historically underfunded as a start.

Thank you for your consideration and please let me know if there are any questions.

Kristin Bartz
Management Assistant
IT Services (ITS) | Executive Office of the Governor
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[REDACTED]

Kevin Christensen, Infrastructure Manager, ITS

Thank you for taking the time to hear my testimony on the State of Idaho employee compensation. I have 19 years working for the state and I have never been more concerned with the current pay rate for our employees compared to the private sector. I currently manage 25 employees within ITS and have discussed this with each on an individual basis recently. Most state employees have long accepted that the pay working for the state is a little lower in exchange for the flexibility, stability, and good benefits. Many feel the stability component was lost when ITS was created and they had to reapply for their jobs, many lost their jobs through the first two phases. This is continuing with the current ITD consolidation phase.

With the cost of living in Boise increasing nearly all my staff feel that at some point in the near future they will have no choice but to leave the state to the private sector to support their families. Working from home has helped this but is not a fix all solution as it allows them to save a lot of money on commuting. A large part of my team has been long term employees of the state, but they have been very frustrated that over the last few years they have been told the salaries will be evaluated but nothing has changed aside from very small increases. I believe the level of frustration is cumulating to the point that many are ready to walk away from their long-term state employment. When we have lost team members, we have found it very difficult to replace them anywhere near the level talent we had before. I have had many applicants decline the interview when they learn that we cannot go above the advertised pay scale. The bleeding of talent is beginning to pick up steam and I am very concerned at the level of frustration. This is the one issue that keeps me up at night.

Thank you for listening and I would be happy to answer any follow up questions.

Kevin Christensen

Data Center Infrastructure Manager

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(Cell) [REDACTED]



IDAHO FREEDOM FOUNDATION

January 10, 2023

Subject: Change in Employee Compensation recommendation; written testimony submitted by Fred Birnbaum of the Idaho Freedom Foundation

To Members of the CEC Committee:

Summary

The Idaho Freedom Foundation supports the general 4% CEC because this is consistent with the broader economy in this period of inflation. We believe that the additional 6% increase to public safety officers should be paid as a bonus and not an ongoing pay increase until further review of the consultant's work is undertaken in an interim or follow-on committee.

Process is more one-sided than ever

Having provided testimony to this committee since 2017, I am quite familiar with the process. And respectfully, it has not improved over the years. Public (verbal) testimony used to be taken, but for several years only written comments have been allowed. And this year, written comments were due on the first full day of the legislative session when very little supporting materials were available.

For example, the permanent statewide pay change report is not posted, nor is the bonus report. Based on the committee's schedule for completion on Jan. 18, it is not clear that these reports will be available in a timely manner for the committee. They certainly won't be for the public due to the Jan. 10 comment deadline.

Very little time has been provided for critical analysis of the 198-page FY24 CEC report.

As we have pointed out in previous years' comments, we have a situation where advocacy for state employees is not balanced with advocacy for taxpayers, self-employed individuals, and small businesses.

Bonus payments in lieu of larger CEC until more review and public input allowed

- The recommendation of a two-year salary restructuring based on consultant evaluations should be put on hold pending a more thorough review with public input. Public input cannot be said to have occurred with only written comments submitted by the second day of session. Creating three new salary structures without a thorough review is premature. Setting an expectation for FY25 is not wise given economic uncertainty.
- We support the FY24 CEC recommendation of 4% for all employees.
- We would suggest that the extra 6% to public safety officers in FY24 be paid entirely as a bonus or a pay-line exception pending a more thorough review of compensation studies. Clearly some public safety officers are under market when compared to other states (for example, troopers, probation and parole and corrections), but page 132 of the CEC report noted some of the positions were paid competitively. In addition, it is not clear why rehabilitation specialists and technicians should fall into this public safety category.
- We would note that too much emphasis is placed on total separations, which includes retirement. The category of voluntary separations is a better measure of overall dissatisfaction. Appendix R of the FY24 CEC report, starting on page 169, shows a huge range of voluntary separations by agency. A study of separations over multiple-years should also include a review of positions with low turnover by agency and grade level. While the four separate salary structures arguably are designed to address turnover, it is not clear how the national “great resignation” that took place during Covid has impacted various positions.
- With an economic downturn on the horizon, it is also not wise to suggest what the CEC should be in FY25 as part of a recommendation that will set expectations for state agencies and employees.
- We would also note that the comparison of total compensation with the private sector can't measure the value of job security. The CEC report notes that compared to the private sector, Idaho's state workforce is 15% below market for total compensation. However, according to Appendix U of the CEC report, only 2.2% of state employees who separated in FY22 listed taking a private sector job as the reason. This is not an outlier; it is consistent with FY21's separation rate to take a private sector job of 1.6%.

To Sen. Lori Den Hartog, Rep. John Vander Woude, Rep Jason A. Monks and whom it may concern,

First, I would like to express my gratitude for the years of pay raises that counteracted any costs of living increases as well as benefits (increased leave time) in 2020 when my baby girl was in the NICU and I was in the hospital. And when she was finally able to come home 140 days later, I could then be home with her with no fear of retaliation just lots of understanding and support.

I wish to discuss mostly about my family's situation with my career as a forensic scientist at Idaho State Police. Since I started in 2014, my husband and I have come to the understanding that I will be more of the "bread-winner" of our household, my health insurance is better here. However, since I began with ISP, I finished my Master of Science in Forensic Molecular Biology, as well as being certified in Molecular Biology through the American Board of Criminalistics. In order to be certified, I took my young daughter (1 year old at the time) to Boise State University libraries and study groups, as well as studying for this exam during my lunch breaks since I was told I could not study during work hours (this has since changed). There has been multiple overtime requests to get cases out quickly and to help with contractors by working 10 hours a day, in my position as a Forensic Scientist 2 any overtime work is done at straight pay not the time and a half pay. I am also part of the crime scene response team and can be called out at any time and for scenes all over the state of Idaho. This takes me away from my husband and two young daughters, and puts me in mental, emotional, and physical stress when I go out to crime scenes.

My youngest daughter, like I previously stated was in the NICU for months, but once she did get out, we found out has a global delay disease and will need years of therapy, doctors' appointments, and other services. Again, the support has been exceptional. However, recently my husband and I have had to purchase a newer, more reliable car to take her to these appointments and with inflation and the salaries of forensic scientists in the surrounding areas, my salary of \$61,200 doesn't compare fairly (\$67,000 base pay +additional pay) nor is it sustainable for living in Idaho with increased housing, transportation, and childcare costs (https://www.glassdoor.com/Salaries/forensic-scientist-ii-salary-SRCH_KO0,21.htm).

To finish with, I greatly appreciate your time and attention with this letter I have written and only wish that you keep us in mind during this crucial time and thank you for your work.

Lorianne Welch
Forensic Scientist-DNA Database
Idaho State Police
700 S. Stratford Dr.
Meridian, Idaho 83642


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As a Self-Reliance specialist, I hear Idahoans voice every single work day. This current economy that we have is insane and sad. Idahoans complain each day of not being able to feed and support their family as everything went up when it comes to groceries/gas/mortgage/rent etc. But what's more crazy is that some (if not most) of these people are earning more than we do as government employees. With that being said, I fully express my support in increasing employee compensation. Thank you for hearing us!

Much respect,

Suzette S. Gunter

SRS-Reg6, [REDACTED]

Suzette.Gunter@dhw.idaho.gov

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 during this legislative session:

- We often hear the phrase, “Money can’t be our only solution.” Perhaps, but 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 or a certificate of appreciation. These don’t pay the bills. 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 and provide valuable services to the citizens of Idaho.
- State employees should receive an increase to help cover the current inflation rate of 7.9% – and the associated rapidly rising cost of living. Even if state employees would get the full amount of DHR’s recommendation, it doesn’t even cover the increase in the cost of living for 2022. 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 (i.e., people leaving state service). While we support the 4% merit increase for state employees proposed by DHR, it is clearly insufficient.

- Legislators seem to think that the benefits for state employees 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.
- An idea for restoring state employee benefits would be to sponsor a bill changing [Section 67-5333\(2\)\(a\), Idaho Code](#). This statute currently allows eligible state retirees to convert only **half** of their unused sick leave to a sick leave account that can be used to pay qualifying insurance premiums. Once converted, that half of the unused sick leave is used to pay premiums for "such health, dental, vision, long-term care, prescription drug, and life insurance programs as may be maintained by the state." State employees have earned **all** their sick leave. I ask that the Legislature change this statute so that state employees can use **all** of their accumulated sick leave converted for use to cover health care premiums post-retirement. Retirement is a time when many state employees have increased health care needs – this improved coverage will help them afford the maintenance of their health.
- One benefit that state employees used to have was dedicated time off to be used for medical appointments (coded as MDA on timecards). Now it just comes out of vacation time, effectively reducing this benefit. Dedicated medical time off is a valuable benefit that should be reinstated.
- 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 state service in record 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, burnout, 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 near or above experienced employees who have provided years of dedicated service? State employees with deep institutional knowledge and long experience need to be incentivized to stay. There must be a balance.

- With the current budget surplus, this is an ideal time to invest in state employees. In the lean times state employees lose jobs, take pay cuts, have unpaid furlough days, and agencies have budget holdbacks. In these times of budget surplus, the state needs to take the opportunity to invest in its corps of public servants and look towards the future with an eye towards anticipating the increasing public service needs of a rapidly growing state. More increases are needed and this would help every state employee.
- In the end, trying to balance the budget on the back of state employees is a poor solution. This will only increase attrition and decrease access to critical public services. Rather than seeing state employee pay and benefits as places to look for budget cuts, the citizens of Idaho are far better served by having a well-supported corps of public servants that the state continues to invest in. We need to incentivize folks to join state service (and stay with it), not leave it.

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](#))


e-mail Frank.Powell@dhw.idaho.gov

Employee Compensation Committee:

I am an Adult Behavioral Health Clinician, who has been working as a Designated Examiner for approximately 2 years. In that time, I have had difficulty managing a disparity in the overall rate of compensation, and livability of wages provided.

I, personally, have had to work 1-2 additional job for my family to only break even. I, no longer can qualify for a home loan, due to the low rate of compensation, and rising costs of housing. Though the cost of my rent has steadily increased, my rate of compensation has not. Need I mention the cost of goods and services has also increased?

As a single mother of 3 children, who does not qualify for subsidies, it is difficult to focus on my career with the State of Idaho, instead of looking for better paying opportunities elsewhere. Consequently, I am pushed to seriously consider relocation to meet the needs of my family, even though I am a 4th generation Idahoan who loves my career, and the services I help provide.

On a final note, the Division of Behavioral Health needs to be able to compensate their employees for their time in service, workload and level of responsibility, not to mention rewarding those who have worked to achieve additional credentialing.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Mary Wurtz, LCSW

Mary Wurtz, LCSW
Clinician, Designated Examiner



Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
Region IV Behavioral Health
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To whom it may concern,

I hear a lot of people talking about the cost of living vs. inflation in Idaho. The most crucial difference between the cost of living and inflation is this: Cost of living is subjective and can be individual. While you can measure the average cost of living among groups of people, especially in the same geographic area, it's ultimately a personal finance concept that measures how much an individual's living costs are. Inflation is universal and tied to specific economies. It's a macroeconomic concept that measures how the price of goods and services changes for everyone.

Inflation can cause living costs to rise, although this isn't a one-to-one relationship. When prices rise for necessities, such as medication and rent, inflation almost always pushes up someone's living costs. When prices rise for discretionary spending, people will often balance their lifestyle choices with cost-cutting. Put another way, they will adjust to a rising cost of living by reducing their standard of living. Inflation occurs when prices rise for the same set of goods and services. The cost of living is how much you spend on those goods and services to maintain your standard of living. Inflation can push the costs of living up by making things more expensive, but it isn't a direct relationship. Inflation should not be looked at on a state level; however, more of a geographical area (i.e., Boise vs Pocatello).

What we have witnessed in Idaho over the last 20 years will not change. Idaho will continue to show growth, and for this reason, Idaho will have higher inflation. The people of Idaho have made this a great state, and it will continue to be a mecca for many people.

I would ask the committee to look at the salaries for its professional workers and ask myself if anyone could afford their current housing on the salary you are making. Even if you could “technically” afford it, would you like the lifestyle that would come with that sacrifice? The answer to this is resounding, no! Idaho has seen an explosion in housing costs of 36%+ in just the last year alone, yet our compensation stays relatively stagnant. The exception to this was last with last year’s CEC, however not to be forgotten the **many** years (6+ years) when we received no CEC. Our civil servants deserve more; we do not deserve to tread water with a consistent fear of drowning.

Idaho is a great state, and this is 100% tied to its civil servants. I implore you to look at **any** study, and you will find that compensation is the number one driver of employee turnover, with no less than half of employees leaving for jobs with higher compensation. If you want to keep our state employees engaged with their jobs, **competitive compensation** needs to be **THE** priority. Giving raises at or below inflation is a disservice to our great state. I currently make ½ of what my current market value would fetch in the private industry (this is adjusted for my benefits package). We must keep Idaho great by retaining its civil servants with adequate salaries.

Thank you for your time.

V/R

Devin Delaney | Hazardous Waste Compliance Officer

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

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<http://www.deq.idaho.gov/>

To whom it may concern,

I would like to recommend a raise of employee compensation. I am a single parent living off of one income. I am very proud that I have been able to do so without assistance. The cost of everything is increasing and I can barely afford to clothe, feed, and transport my child. I often go without eating to ensure there is enough food in the house for him.

I need to purchase a reliable vehicle to get back and forth to work and am unable to afford even the smallest payment along with all my other household bills. My rent is currently half of my monthly income and my bills the rest. Soon student loan payments will resume and that will make things even more difficult.

Each time an increase has been given, the cost of our health insurance increases as well, cancelling out the increase. I've met long term employees that make less now than when they started.

It's getting harder to stay with the State and not go elsewhere, even though positions with higher compensation have been offered. I feel quality employees should be well compensated to avoid high turnover and the need for your employees to search for

second jobs. I am a single mother that takes care of her child 100% of the time and cannot leave them unattended for 12+ hours to work two jobs.

I appreciate your time and consideration,

Nicole Nelson CPhT

Pharmacy Data Inventory Specialist

Department of Health and Welfare



Nicole.Nelson@dhw.idaho.gov

To whom it may concern,

I would like to humbly beg for your help. I have worked for Idaho State University in the Grounds Department for over 15 years. In my time here, I've endured 6 years of raise freezes and the raises we do get are miniscule and demoralizing. Despite my hard work, commitment and consistently receiving top scores on my evaluations, I continue to be undervalued. I love my career and want to continue doing what I do best, however, I still barely survive on my meager earnings. For some perspective, when I was hired I made \$10/hr, and after 15 years I make \$16.63/hr. This is just over a dollar more than my coworkers who have only been here one year.

This work is very hard on the body and becoming even harder on the soul. I wish everyone could see the very many hats we wear here. We require knowledge in everything from horticulture to operating front end loaders and other various equipment to computer skills and customer service. We are intelligent and hard working people who contribute something very valuable to our University. Please, I beg you, help us be valued in our important work.

Thank you, sincerely, for reaching out for this input. I am hopeful for change!

Jeanette Rose
rosejean@isu.edu

Dear Senator Cook, Senator Guthrie, Senator Burtenshaw, Senator Carlson, Senator Ward-Engelking, Representative Bundy, Representative Holtzclaw, Representative Kingsley, Representative Wheeler, and Representative Gannon;

My name is Jodie Carney and I work for the Idaho State Police Forensic Services in the DNA Database unit in Meridian. First, I want to thank you for the CEC raise we

received last year. It was a generous amount that really showed me that you care about the work that state employees do.

I love my job and the fact that I work in the public sector supporting the safety of the state of Idaho. I am proud of the work that my colleagues and I do. I see my colleagues going above and beyond every day for the people of Idaho. I see our casework biology/DNA unit come together to work rush cases as fast as possible – sometimes working their weekends, long hours, and staying late into the night to ensure that results can be issued as fast as possible. I see colleagues on our Crime Scene response team pulling way over 40 hours in a week as they travel to and from scenes. Please keep in mind that serving on the Crime Scene response team is an additional duty on top of a forensic scientist's normal job – yet these individuals manage to do both with integrity, accuracy, and the due diligence that each requires. Forensic scientists perform this extra work beyond the required 40-hour workweek receiving straight pay for any overtime hours, not the time and a half that other positions receive. I believe that this dedication that every individual in Forensic Services has and shows – it deserves to be rewarded.

The cost of living here in Idaho has increased significantly in the 12 years I've lived here. When I moved to Idaho, the cost of a 2 bed, 1 bath apartment was approximately \$650 – now you are looking at approximately \$1400 for a 1 bed, 1 bath apartment. When I got groceries last week it was \$5.28 for a dozen eggs. Property taxes have continued to go up as well. And while I am so, so very grateful for the health insurance that we have here at the State Police, I'm certain that the premiums on that will be increasing as well. According the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics – the consumer price index is up 7.1 percent from January 2022-November 2022 ([Consumer Price Index up 7.1 percent over the year ended November 2022 : The Economics Daily: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics \(bls.gov\)](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/nci.nr0001.htm)).

As you go forward with your work for the state legislature, all I ask is that you keep in mind all the work that I and my colleagues do. I thank you for your time and attention to these words that I have written here. I also thank you for the work that you are doing in the state legislature for the people of Idaho.

Sincerely,

Jodie Carney
Idaho State Police Forensic Services
DNA Database
700 S. Stratford Dr.
Meridian, Idaho 83642

[REDACTED]
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www.isp.idaho.gov

Dear Employee Compensation Committee,

I am writing to share my perspective on the benefits package and compensation offered by the State of Idaho. Our benefits package is wonderful with the combination of sick and vacation leave, paid holidays, state retirement, and insurance premiums that outshine others that I am aware of in the state. I encourage you to keep this benefit package as is or include any enhancements that may be suggested by others. As far as compensation, workforce shortages are being experienced in many sectors and the department is not exempt from this challenge. Being chronically understaffed has led to significant increased workloads for existing staff who remain dedicated our mission of strengthening the health, safety, and independence of Idahoans. The Department has put forth concerted efforts in creating a great workplace culture which is a key component of retention and I commend the work they have done and continue to do in this area. As state employees, we are limited in incentives we can offer (e.g. private businesses can offer extra vacation days, bonuses, food for lunches/celebrations, etc.). The legislature has the opportunity to help support our staff in continuing the work they do by recommending and approving compensation increases.

Best,

g.

Gina Pannell, MPH (she/her/hers) | Bureau Chief
Bureau of Rural Health & Primary Care, Division of Public Health
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O: 208-332-7212 | C: [REDACTED]
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W: ruralhealth.dhw.idaho.gov

Congressmen and Congresswomen,

Hello, my name is Wyatt Barie. I currently have the pleasure of working with the Idaho State Police in Forensic Services. I am currently a Forensic Scientist I as part of the DNA/Biology section as well as a member of the Crime Scene Response Team and have been working there for approximately 2 years. I have moved across the country leaving almost everything and everyone to come work here, but I absolutely love my job and am honored to work with some of the most amazing people I know. I currently live alone in an apartment that I rent, and as the cost of living and housing increases in the state of Idaho I find my future becoming more and more uncertain and find myself with mounting worries that I may not be able to continue to afford to live in

Idaho. I wholeheartedly appreciate the changes in CEC that were passed last year, however; I still find it a struggle to maintain paying for rent, food, gas, and other necessities while also trying to put money into savings in order to one day be able to afford a house and start a family here. With all these considerations, I find it discouraging that the governor has decided to suggest a 4% increase in our wages, especially when other sections within ISP are being suggested more than double that.

As a forensic scientist and member of the crime scene response team, my job takes precedent over almost anything else in my life. Several times throughout this past year I have dropped everything in order to go respond to a scene or ensure that rush casework has been completed as fast as possible. In many cases this has required me to come in on my days off and work a multitude of overtime. While I gladly do this to help serve the people of this state, I do find it takes a toll both physically and mentally, especially with the nature of what needs to be done at crime scenes. I've also had to travel to several different states in order to receive the training needed to perform my duties to the best of my ability. I appreciate being given these opportunities, though all the travel adds even more strain to the job. However, despite these sacrifices, as my position as a forensic scientist, we aren't afforded the Rule of 80 for retirement, and I will lose the ability for time and a half overtime on becoming a Forensic Scientist II. Therefore, all this extra time does little to help ease my worries about what the future may bring.

I again want to thank you for the changes that you passed last year, and once again want to ask you to consider all the effort and sacrifices that me and people like me have made this past year while still struggling to make ends meet.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Wyatt Barie

I neglected to mention another issue in my testimony sent to the Committee on Wednesday, January 4, 2023. The issue I previously failed to mention is compression, the hiring of new workers at wages exceeding those of staff who have served the State of Idaho and Idahoans for one or more years. We had two specific cases of RNs, Health Facility Surveyors, where the hourly wage rate of three newly hired individuals exceeded that of survey staff who had been with our department from one to three years. Those who had been fully trained and working in our department felt as if their time and contribution serving the State of Idaho and Idahoans was not valued based upon being paid lesser hourly wages than the newly hired staff who had no experience as Health Facility Surveyors in our department. As wage increases are considered, I believe this issue must also be addressed to assist in retaining current staff, some who have been with the department for many years and have experience to share with newly hired staff. Thank you again for your consideration.

Lynne Given

Technical Records Specialist 3
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(208)334-6626, Option 5

To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you in advance for the opportunity to testify in the CEC Committee. I am Leslie Villegas and my title is Self-Reliance Specialist (SRS) and have been working for the Treasure Valley Processing Center (TVPC) for a 8 years and 4 months. I have never replied to an invitation like this before so I am going to do my best in expressing our hope in CEC changes for every dedicated employee. I have been very fortunate and grateful for the raises that occur each year, but there is always room for improvement. Throughout time and especially during the pandemic, we have demonstrated passion and loyalty to our jobs and in turn we have the opportunity to work from home, which is a great plus in many ways and I love it. I am extremely happy that this was considered to keep on a permanent basis. I have twins that are delayed and allows me to fit in time and in being a part of their development and among other things too, like cutting down on commuting- gas, wear and tear on the vehicles etc, which are all fantastic savings. Last year, the CEC amount allotted for workers was one of the greater percentages that I have seen since working here; came around at a great time. But now we have the inflation happening, which is a big hardship for many people. We work very hard to maintain a great standing within the state in order to qualify and earn the CEC. To me it is like a wonderful bonus or a savings that I am waiting on to receive each year. I look forward to it more than the taxes. Since I am the breadwinner for my family, the increase in pay is huge for us.

For this year, I do hope that the Legislature takes into consideration the massive changes that we have experienced this past year in terms of food prices, gas etc. and keep the CEC percentage better than what it was last year. In addition to this, I am not sure if what I am about to say has been brought up in the past or not, but it is a very special request. I have been speaking to my supervisor about this and agrees on the terms. We are hoping for some type of merit raise or differential for those of us who are **Bi-lingual Speaking and/or have other specialized skills**. It's difficult to not make comparison's but other locations, including other state agencies and private sectors, do offer these differentials for bi-lingual speakers. In the area that we serve, there is a huge need for this assistance, and in comparing with what an interpreter is paid for per hour is by far no where near what we are paid per hour. We are not asking to match this pay (would ne nice), but to consider an additional compensation for our skills. Working for the State of Idaho has been a privilege and I enjoy it each day and I would like to maintain my current role or if given the opportunity, work within the state. The work that I do allows me to help Idahoans in times of desperate needs and that is the best satisfaction that one can have. I take pride in my work each and every day and it shows

in my yearly reviews that enables me to earn the CEC pay increase, which again, I do appreciate very much.

Apart from my other qualities, the one thing that stands out mostly are my bilingual skills. I enjoy very much making great use of the translations in helping those who do not speak the English language. However, as much as I enjoy what I can bring to the table and how much I am told that I am appreciated, it's still not enough in a sense. The job that we do is very hard and requires a lot of determination, dedication and commitment, which I believe a lot of us do show and provide. The State of Idaho is a desirable place to work for and I am humbled to be a part of this great establishment, but I do believe that the state can do better in recognizing those of us that have the specialized skills and compensate us in addition to the regular pay increases. The thought of this even being a possibility is such an amazing feeling. Whatever the Legislature decides for this term, surely will be well thought out and to even be considered for raise this year is truly humbling and hoping again to be apart of it. I am self -taught. I am not trained professional. What I present to you is, speaking from the heart. I do hope that it's enough to help make a difference in some way, not just for myself but for every hardworking state worker. We are living in such uncertain times and every little bit helps.

Thank you for your time,

Leslie Villegas
Self – Reliance Specialist
Division of Self- Reliance

www.healthandwelfare.idaho.gov



Good Afternoon,

Last year I wrote in and pleaded for help, along with many other employees and it didn't seem to matter. Even with inflation and hundreds of emails there were still members on your board that said that we did not even need raises! One member stated, "you can give employees money easily but its much harder to take it away" when inflation is going to come down. Then inflation continued to rise and has not come down! State employees are worse off now then last year. But we keep being told how we should be happy that we received such a "large" raise last year, mind you that did NOT bring state employees up to match inflation. The State used to be Careers that were sought after, good pay, good benefits, good retirement. Now the State is just a job to fill the time before you find something better. We keep getting asked for recommendations that will help attract employees to come and stay as a State employee, that is not pay. The problem IS pay though. You can not offer enough "perks" if your employees struggle at the grocery store. Thank you for your time.

First, I would like to thank the members of the CEC committee for their time and efforts. I currently work in the Idaho State Police training division. I am in a unique position because I get the privilege of working with ISP instructors, and troopers, from every corner of the state. I get to hear all the great things that we do as troopers, but I also get to hear their frustrations. The top of all conversations seems to be pay, manpower, and retention.

Pay- This topic is always a hot issue. To put it bluntly, Troopers that come from the more populated districts such as Coeur d'Alene, Idaho Falls, and the Boise area, see what the surrounding agencies are paying their officers. Coeur d'Alene Police Department, Bonner County Sheriff Department, Idaho Falls Police Department, Blaine County Sheriff Department, Ada County Sheriff Department, and Boise/Meridian/Nampa Police Departments all pay significantly more than the Idaho State Police. Many of these departments have over a \$12 per hour advantage when comparing equal rank and years of service. The afore mentioned agencies are just a few examples.

Most recently is the new pay increase for the Canyon County Sheriff's Department which is to take effect October 2023. I have attached their new pay scale. As you can see a five-year Deputy will be compensated at \$39.06 hourly, which is an increase of \$8,986 annually. (To give you an idea, a newly promoted Sergeant within the Idaho State Police makes approximately \$40.00. On average, a newly promoted Sergeant has at least 5 years of service.) Entry Deputy level will be \$26.10, approximately \$2 more than entry level troopers at ISP. A five-year Trooper will be paid approximately \$10 less per hours.

During fiscal year 2022, the City of Caldwell got a city wide \$10 pay increase. This raise put a 5-year police officer approximately \$2-3 higher than a 5-year ISP trooper. This does not include a quarterly longevity check which can exceed over \$10,000 annually (based on hourly pay, hours worked, and years of service). They are currently working on a budget to compete with Canyon County for fiscal year 2023. A five-year Trooper is currently being paid approximately \$2-3 less per hour.

Within the past 2 months ISP has lost two experienced troopers to the Canyon County Sheriff Department and the Caldwell City Police Department. Each received approximately a \$5 immediate pay increase. The Trooper we lost to Caldwell Police Department was a recent lateral transfer from that agency and had just complete ISP academy. It costs ISP approximately \$100,000 to train a new trooper starting from the academy until he is finished with FTO. Losing both those two Troopers was a great loss to ISP.

Nampa Police Department currently has an announced opening for a certified police training coordinator, like my position at ISP. The starting salary is \$26.93-\$39.38 plus a 5% specialty pay increase. Nampa is accepting a 1-1 ratio for a lateral transfer. This means Nampa Police Department will match each year of service completed from other

agencies for pay compensation. I will not provide my current pay, but Nampa's wage is significantly higher than my current wage.

The biggest issue I see here, in the Treasure Valley, is trying to compete with the other Treasure Valley agencies. Other than the very small surrounding agencies, Idaho State Police Troopers are the lowest paid officers in the valley. Troopers do not expect to be the highest paid officers in the valley, what I do hear is they wished their wages were comparatively competitive to local surrounding agencies.

With the current proposed pay increase, which is GREATLY APPRECIATED, ISP will fall further behind the other Treasure Valley agencies. I believe if ISP can get competitive pay, in relationship with other immediate surrounding agencies, it will help with recruitment and retention.

I want to end by stating all these Troopers I speak with love working for ISP, they love the work they do and serving the citizens of Idaho.

I have attached two verified documents from Nampa City and Canyon County.

Sincerely,



Randy DeLeon



Specialist Randy DeLeon - 459
Idaho State Police | Training
700 S Stratford Drive Meridian ID 83642
Cell: [REDACTED]
Tel: (208) 884-7298
Email: randy.deleon@isp.idaho.gov
<http://www.isp.idaho.gov>

8:23 📶 🔋

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Nampa - Training Division Instructor/Coordinator

Job Overview	
Department:	Nampa Police Department
Type:	Certified
Job Title:	Training Division Instructor/Coordinator
Salary:	\$26.93 - \$39.38 + 5% Out Of Assignment Pay
Deadline:	Jan 19, 2023 11:59 PM Eastern
Contact:	skoglundl@cityofnampa.us
Location:	Nampa, ID

Canyon County Sheriff's Office Sworn Personnel Pay Scale/ Schedule

Min	Deputy	Max	
\$54,288.00		\$90,230.00	
YIP	Year Increase	Salary	Hourly
Year 0	Entry-Level	\$54,288.00	\$26.10
Year 1	1,797	\$56,085.10	\$26.96
Year 2	3,594	\$59,679.30	\$28.69
Year 3	5,391	\$65,070.60	\$31.28
Year 4	7,188	\$72,259.00	\$34.74
Year 5	8,986	\$81,244.50	\$39.06
Year 6	1,797	\$83,041.60	\$39.92
Year 7	1,797	\$84,838.70	\$40.79
Year 8	1,797	\$86,635.80	\$41.65
Year 9	1,797	\$88,432.90	\$42.52
Year 10	1,797	\$90,230.00	\$43.38

Min	Corporal	Max	
88,369		94,554	
YIP	Year Increase	Salary	Hourly
Year 1	Entry-Level	\$88,368.52	\$42.48
Year 2	1,546	\$89,914.89	\$43.23
Year 3	1,546	\$91,461.26	\$43.97
Year 4	1,546	\$93,007.63	\$44.72
Year 5	1,546	\$94,554.00	\$45.46

Min	Sergeant	Max	
96,445		103,196	
YIP	Year Increase	Salary	Hourly
Year 1	Entry-Level	\$96,445.00	\$46.37
Year 2	1,688	\$98,132.79	\$47.18
Year 3	1,688	\$99,820.58	\$47.99
Year 4	1,688	\$101,508.36	\$48.80
Year 5	1,688	\$103,196.15	\$49.61

Command Staff			
Position	5% Deviation	Salary	Hourly
Sheriff		\$150,000.00	\$72.12
Chief Deputy	0.95	\$142,500.00	\$68.51
Captain	0.95	\$135,375.00	\$65.08
Lieutenant	0.95	\$128,606.25	\$61.83

To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for taking these comments and making considerations and decisions on behalf of all State Employees and to benefit both employees and The State. It's a daunting task, for sure.

I enjoy my position at ITS greatly and feel blessed daily that I have the privilege to work with a fantastic group of people and working on forward thinking projects. I'm also extremely thankful for the benefits provided to us and wanted to acknowledge this in regards to my following comments.

That being said, it is becoming increasingly difficult, as a single person, to pay the basic rent and bills. Rent for a one-bedroom apartment in Meridian (corner of Meridian Rd. & McMillan) alone is over \$1500.00/mo. Finding less expensive options is doable but, in my case, because I had a window of time I needed to relocate in, I wasn't able to wait out the applicant list for available units.

As I'm sure you're all also experiencing, utilities, gasoline, and especially groceries are skyrocketing. If my rent goes up in May, which based on the history at my complex in the last two years is sure to do by \$150-\$200/mo., I will not be able to afford my one-bedroom apartment. At 50 years of age, I'd really rather NOT have to cohabitate with another.

I mentioned above that I do really love my job. I have seen talented and driven coworkers leave State employment over the past couple of years with job offers making significantly more for the same positions elsewhere and in some cases their salaries are doubled. Of course, that isn't feasible but please take into consideration how drastically and quickly the actual cost to live in Ada County has become and put forth a recommendation that is not only feasible for the State but is also fair compensation for the State Employees.

Respectfully,

Michelle Santurro

Business Operations Specialist

IT Services (ITS) | Executive Office of the Governor

P.O. Box 83720 | Boise, ID 83720-0042

Michelle.santurro@its.idaho.gov



CAUTION: This email originated outside the State of Idaho network. Verify links and attachments BEFORE you click or open, even if you recognize and/or trust the sender. Contact your agency service desk with any concerns.

Dear Christine,

I appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback to the committee regarding CEC in Idaho. I'm sure you have a lot of comments to consider so I will try to keep my remarks brief and to the point. I would implore you and your colleagues to consider significant changes in compensation to faculty and staff working in universities in the State of Idaho, especially in areas with a higher cost of living. Without changes I fear our institutions of higher learning will struggle to recruit and retain quality faculty and staff, which is imperative to providing excellence in education. I have been a faculty member at Idaho State University for over 16 years and have taken on the leadership role of Associate Chair for my department. Below are some of my observations over the past few years as we have tried to expand our program and maintain high quality standards, which begin with our faculty and staff. I work on the Meridian campus at ISU, and we have had tremendous turnover during the last four years. A primary cause of this turnover is due to an inability for new faculty to live comfortably in the Treasure Valley, and likely in other areas of the state. New faculty who are unpartnered have needed to face the challenge of finding housing that they could sustain with their one income. With many studio apartments running over \$1500/month this has been a source of frustration for these individuals. We lost one person two years ago, and I fear another will leave at the end of this semester. Even our married faculty have struggled. One of our newest hire's spouse is currently working two jobs in order to rent a home that would accommodate their family's needs (this is not an extravagant home). This faculty member has already turned in her resignation. While I realize the economy has created difficult situations across regions and across disciplines, faculty who have left our department and institution have been able to find better compensation and living conditions than ISU provides.

With a recent expansion of our program, we were granted the opportunity to hire an administrative assistant on the Meridian campus. This was very exciting and we all saw the ways in which we would benefit from having much needed help. The recruitment and hiring process proved to be very challenging given the extremely low pay afforded to our classified employees. For example, for the first search we conducted there were two viable candidates, we were lucky to hire one of them, as the third was employed at a local smoke shop and did not have any administrative experience. While I'm sure this person had many good skills, this is not the type of applicant pool one would hope to have to support academic programs in a university setting. Our staff are invaluable to the success of our programs, and when the McDonald's across the street is offering higher wages, it is no wonder we fail to attract the applicants we are hoping to hire. Given the central role they play, our classified staff deserve more compensation for their role in the success our programs. I mention our first search for an administrative assistant because this person left after two months on the job after her husband got a higher paying position in another state. I believe she would have stayed with us longer without his opportunity and speaks to how our admins are reliant on their spouses salaries to earn a living. Our second search was as sparse as the first and we hired a

very well meaning man with some solid skills but unfortunately had mental health issues that precluded him from the stressful nature of the job. We knew he had a inconsistent work history but because there were no other qualified applicants in the pool and our need to fill the position he was hired. The low pay for classified staff is not limited to administrative assistants. As another example, one of the custodians assigned to our department is a military veteran who is now living with his father because his salary is not enough to allow him to find adequate housing.

As an Associate Chair, I feel protective of my employees and am seeking to advocate for their needs which will, in turn, allow us to meet the needs of our programs and local communities. As I mentioned earlier, inflation and the poor economy have hit everyone hard, and there are so many folks who are genuinely suffering. I do not count the majority of academics employed at universities to be among them. We are a privileged bunch who are lucky to work with students and educate the next generation of professionals. Having said that, I believe there is work to be done to raise salaries so that Idaho Universities can maintain the excellence that our students deserve. With ISU as a leader in healthcare, and my own discipline serving the mental health needs of the community, I believe we should invest more in our educators and those that provide support to them.

Respectfully,
Liz Horn

--

Elizabeth A. Horn, PhD, LCPC

Professor

Department of Counseling

Idaho State University

[REDACTED]

She/Her/Hers

Normally I don't submit anything regarding our CEC, but this year I felt compelled to give my thoughts. Not that I feel like it is going to do any good, but here we go.

So with that being said, I'd also like to remain anonymous

I hope legislature not only takes in to consideration the cost of living, but also the fact that not receiving CEC in 2020 has had a big impact on many state employees, in addition unlike private corporations we do not get overtime pay or any type of monthly/quarterly/annual bonus.

I gave up working for a private corporation 8 years ago to come work for the state because I wanted a more rewarding job. And by rewarding I wanted to feel like I was actually appreciated by my employer and doing something to help people. However when I left the private sector 8 years ago I was making almost \$25/hour, 8 years later with the state I still do not make even close to that. Yes it was my choice to make this change, but I feel that the state should not only be competitive in wages, but also show appreciation and reward tenure, which in my experience it has not. I currently make the same hourly rate as a brand new person starting, how does that make me feel appreciated? It doesn't, it tells me the state doesn't give two cents for people who choose to stay with the state. I think employees with tenure should be making more than new hires

To address cost of living, my landlord has raised my rent over \$300/month in the last 6 months, I now pay more than 65% of my income to rent and utilities. How is this even right, don't even get me started on the lack of housing laws Idaho has, it is so crazy. But the fact is I can barely afford to feed myself. The mission of DHW- Dedicated to strengthening the health, safety, and independence of Idahoans – feels like it fails to include individuals such as myself. A single person with no children trying to support themselves on their own (I live in an 720 sq ft apartment, so having a roommate is not an option), this is quickly becoming impossible. \$1800/month for rent is so crazy, this is not including utilities. Mind you I bring home little over \$2400/month. Because I have to pay so much to keep a roof over my head, make my car payment (and BTW I drive a 2012 GMC, so not a new car by any means) and car insurance, and pay on a couple of credit cards, I have no money for groceries or gas. I am now forced to eat poorly because I can not afford nutritional food and have to charge my groceries to a credit card as well as my gas. So I am basically digging myself into a hole because I can not afford to pay off my credit card because I don't make enough money to even support myself.

Since I am single with no children and have a job, I do not qualify for any type of assistance, not food, medical, or housing. Not even our insurance will cover the procedure I need in order to try to have a healthier life. Not to mention our insurance will most likely go up as will other as they usually do every year.

Receiving a pay increase is imperative for me to avoid becoming homeless and being able to try to keep my independence and not have to move in with my parents at 45 years old

So in short I hope the legislature thinks about people like me who are just trying to survive, I feel like single people always get the short end of the straw because we never qualify for any assistance and if our employers do not pay us a decent wage then our life is not enjoyable at all. I spend all of my income on surviving, I have not taken a vacation in the 8 years I've been a state employee because I can not afford it. My mental health is deteriorating because I'm constantly depressed and have contemplated suicide many times because then I'd no longer be stressed and hating my life. We need more than a 4% raise. I think our raise needs to be comparable to what we

received last year, but also anyone over 5 years tenure should get an additional percentage or two

Good morning,

Thank you for asking for input from state employees regarding compensation, it is appreciated.

I was grateful for the significant raise last year, but must admit to being disappointed that this year's probable compensation will not even match the rising cost of living – a bit hard to swallow knowing the state has a large surplus. I do understand the need to be rather conservative with money, the entire surplus should not be spent, I believe in having money for a rainy day, but for most of us, it IS a rainy day! When we work at rates below the private sector not getting a cost of living raise to match rising costs is painful ... things have had to change at home due to the significant rise in living costs.

Have we done a deep dive to look at how much money is spent on recruitment and training as staff leave? I think if each position were evaluated we would see that we would actually save money by raising our wages – especially for the forensic scientists and others that can easily make much more money in the private sector – we see a revolving door in so many departments. I honestly feel the state needs to become a 'destination employer' – the place everyone wants to work, that benefits and wages make it highly desirable not only to hire on, but to stay and make a career at the state – it would allow us to keep good people, and give us the ability to hire the 'cream of the crop' – we'd have enough applicants to be choosey and hire only the best.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my suggestions.

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]

To whom it may concern,

I have been a State Inspector for over eighteen years now. I would like to make a few observations regarding the State Employee compensation. As a professional, I take pride in being thoroughly trained and competent in the areas that I

am responsible for. I have also appreciated through the years some of the many benefits that are offered to State employees. I acknowledge that these benefits add value to my paycheck. I personally took on a significant cut in my household income, from working in the private sector as a contractor, and the only reason that I felt I could even justify and consider the move was because of the benefits. That being said, I have felt some frustration, especially in the last few years, with the States inability or unwillingness to keep up with the rising cost of living. Everywhere I go, I encounter unskilled laborers often making more than I do and sometimes significantly more.

I have noticed, especially in the last couple of years, the increased turn over and challenges that the State has had in retaining and attracting qualified individuals. All too often I see them moving to the private sector because the State simply is not able to compete with the current pay structure.

I have personally been approached by a number of contractors, asking why it is that the State can't see how important it is to have enough qualified and competent individuals to meet the increased inspection demands. They complain that it literally costs them thousands when they are not able to receive timely inspections. When they inquire about why it's so hard to keep good inspectors and ask about what the pay is, they have almost without exception expressed that the starting pay for a qualified inspector is insulting.

I recognize that there are budgetary constraints, but when one hears about the budget surpluses in Idaho, it makes one wonder why the State can't allocate some of that surplus to compete a little better with the rest of the working world in our area.

Again, I have appreciated my employment throughout the last 18 years but sincerely hope that the powers that be will seriously evaluate and restructure the current pay. I truly believe that if the State wants to attract good and qualified employees, they will have to be able to compete more closely with the private sector.

Sincerely,
Jeff Harris
DOPL
Industrial Safety Advisor

Jeff.harris@dopl.idaho.gov

Greetings,

I wanted to share my comments on compensation. As a member of the Faculty Senate I get to hear a lot of input from other faculty. A comment which I heard more than once was that during the COVID crisis faculty and staff lost compensation due to mandatory furloughs, while at the same time elementary and secondary educators received additional COVID pay. This sent to an unattended message to the faculty here that their role in education was not as important as those teaching at the K-12 level.

Also, raises given last fiscal year to state employees was greater than to employees at ISU. Again, I understand there are budgetary reasons for this. However, many felt undervalued by the state.

I hope this fiscal year faculty and staff at ISU will be treated with more equity with regard to compensation by the state. I, like my colleagues, feel our contributions to the well being of people of Idaho are at least as important as other educators and state employees.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Dan Cravens

Dear Christine Otto and other CEC committee members,

I would like to keep this short and sweet as I feel many of us employees feel the same. With the overall rate of inflation being around 8% and the proposed raise only being around 4% it simply is not enough. The state struggles with employee retainment because the employees are simply trying to make a living. I enjoy what I do, and I really like the people that I work with. Unfortunately, the salary just simply does not pay the bills. It is with sincere sadness that I too will have to be an employee that moves on when/if the opportunity presents itself to make a livable wage. I truly hope that there is significant change soon. Best of luck!

Alicia Curry
Lab Tech – Brucellosis Lab
Bureau of Laboratories, Animal Health Lab
Idaho State Department of Agriculture
Phone: [REDACTED]
Fax: (208) 334-4619
Email: ALICIA.CURRY@ISDA.IDAHO.GOV
Lab Email: BRUCELLALAB@ISDA.IDAHO.GOV

Hi,

I wanted to provide some feedback for the CEC committee to present to the legislature.

I have been with the State of Idaho for 2 years this June. I have gotten Exceeds Expectations on all my performance reviews thus far, even my probation review which my manager told me he has not given to someone in 13 years. I am currently a Database Administrator with ITS and I make \$37 an hour, I have over a decade of experience as a DBA and IT in general. This rate is SIGNIFICANTLY below market rate, even considering the PERSI benefits and health insurance perks.

As a comparison, I interviewed at a few local companies and received offers, the first offer was \$100,000 plus bonus at a small tech consulting company. The second offer was a Data Engineer with the City of Boise for \$102,000 plus the same PERSI benefits and health insurance. The final offer was small company in Oregon for \$115,000 plus bonus. I declined all of these because they weren't quite right for me, but I will be in the market again soon. The state's pay is not competitive and seems to be based on pay rates from the early 2000's. With rapid inflation impacting us all there is no reason to stay here any longer.

How does the state expect to retain GOOD talent with such low wages? When we post jobs, it takes months to fill with 0 applicants and when we finally get one, it's a very low qualified candidate and we almost have to hire them out of desperation. We were working with one state agency this past year to fill a vacant DBA position that was empty for well over a year with no applicants because of the pay. They finally found a candidate almost 1.5 years later but they were not well qualified. They hired this candidate as a business analyst instead.

Jason Ingersoll

Database Administrator III

IT Services | Executive Office of the Governor

State of Idaho, USA | <http://its.idaho.gov>

 | jason.ingersoll@its.idaho.gov

As the State is reviewing employee compensation, I would like to share a few concerns and solutions that I have regarding the medical clinic staff that support Idaho State University training clinics. Many of our clinics operate as regular outside medical clinics where we bill insurance and treat ~29,000 patients per fiscal year.

As it is structured currently, there are really limited classifications for our current office staff to ensure they are compensated appropriately. There are 3 classifications that our staff usually are assigned: Admin 1; TRS I and II, and Dental Reception Coordinator. The salary minimums for these positions are very low and it's difficult to staff them with qualified individuals due to the low pay associated with those classifications. We have tried to move most of our staff into the TRS II classification as the work they do is much more technical and critical thinking and attention to detail is needed for dealing with insurance billing and collections. Our lowest paid staff wage is ~\$14/hr compared to private medical offices who pay \$18 to \$25 per hour depending upon experience. McDonalds and other fast food chains are now paying more than what we pay our professional medical staff. This doesn't even take into consideration the cost of living in the Treasure Valley which has become almost unsustainable for many low income earners.

I would like to advocate for the development of new classifications for state clinic personnel which would include classifications for front office, back office billing, and clinical providers. These classifications would be more tailored to the detailed work that

is done in the clinics and compensation that is more in line with what is being paid in the private sector.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to present my ideas and I look forward to the possibility of discussing this issue in more detail if needed.

--

Cindy Rock

Clinics Director of Operations | Kasiska Division of Health Sciences

Sam and Aline Skaggs Health Science Center
1311 E. Central Dr. | Meridian, ID 83642

 | cindyrock@isu.edu

Good Afternoon CEC Committee,

My name is Dan H. and I work for the Idaho Transportation Department and have been an employee at the State of Idaho for a little over a year. After listening to the annual Human Resources report to the Transportation Board and also the Governor Little comments at the State of the State, I have been pondering certain ideas that might be helpful in the realm of personnel retention. I have worked for the City of Nampa (union), Ada County, and now the State of Idaho so I have seen all types of benefit packages on the government level. One thing that was consistent through all of them was PERSI which is a fantastic benefit and the reason many people initially choose to work for the government. Another benefit that was available at every level of the government but not the State of Idaho was a company 457 match of 3%. I know for a fact that many younger employees just starting a career have their 457 in close thought as it is important to build on it sooner rather than later.

I believe adding this to the current state benefit package would be a HUGE retention selling point. I just believe strongly that this will not only help retain good talent but draw talent in from the private sector as we will be even more competitive.

On top of the 457 match idea, I do believe a stronger than normal CEC will be needed to retain and recruit proper talent statewide. The current proposed 4% CEC results in a pay decrease when compared to the current market trend of CPI and inflation reports. I understand that inflation will eventually decrease but this will take time to come back down. During this time with the fight against inflation, State of Idaho employees will

suffer to make ends meet and provide for their families. Please consider at least matching the current inflation of 7% statewide for the State most valuable assets.

Thank you,

Dan H.

Hello,

I am emailing to testify for Change in Employee Compensation. In case this won't be read, please review the bolded sentences.

Everyone wants a raise, am I right? However, there is quite the gap between government work and private business work. Those of us that are natural resource-based and work for the government understand that we won't get paid nearly as much as we would in private practice; we choose government employment because we like the job description, and we have a personal interest in protecting the environment. That being said, it has become extremely difficult to remain employed by state work because of the extreme cost of living increases over the past several years without substantial cost-of-living increases. For example: I recently began working with Parks and Rec here in Idaho, and I heard that it took around 5 years to implement a standard \$0.50 raise per year for our full-time employees. If you take a look at the [Bureau of Labor Statistic's data](#) (which I'm sure you all have and could understand much more than I), then you know that the average weekly wages for all industries here in Ada County is \$1,087 whereas the U.S. has an average weekly wage of \$1,294. The West is typically more expensive across all categories for multiple reasons, so reading that our average hourly wages are all below what the U.S. average reaches is panic-worthy. That's not even the scary part – here in Eagle, I am making a few hundred dollars less than the average weekly income. After being here for less than 6 months, I have already had to move out of my townhome and downsize to a tiny house because the commute from Caldwell (and the TRAFFIC) was running my family into the red. The stats show that over the last year, [all costs went up 7.1%](#) on average in Idaho. In 2014, the average home cost was around \$201,500; in March 2022, that average reached over \$530,500! So then if you look at rental costs since a house is completely out of the question, the rental price (if you can actually find a place to rent in your price range) has gone up almost 40% over the last 3 years. **With the average rent in the Boise area [being \\$1,962 per month](#), that's over 84% of my net income for the month.**

My occupation as Park Ranger isn't even recognized in Labor Statistics, and I know why: it's because we do EVERYTHING. The toilets stop working in a restroom? I am a plumber for that day. A herd of cows gets into my park fields? I am a ranch hand that day. A Girl Scout troop wants to come to the park and have an educational program put on and it's 2 days before they arrive? I am an environmental educator. We are jacks and jills of all trades and we do it because we love it. But, again, loving something can

only go so far. In 2012, the average pay of a Biological Technician (this position is comparable to a seasonal employee, non-benefitted and I am FT, benefitted) was \$17.62; an Environmental Science and Protection Tech was paid \$20.67; Maintenance and Repair Workers (General) were paid \$17.12 – take your pick on which one is most applicable. Fast forward to 2021, 9 years later, and the average pay of a Bio Tech jumps to \$20.11, a \$2.49 increase; Environmental Science and Protection Tech to \$27.98, a \$7.31 increase (I wish); Maintenance and Repair Worker to \$19.11, a \$1.99 increase. So, while cost of living has increased substantially, the pay has not. I make less than \$21.00 an hour, and I have a 4 year degree and years of experience. A \$0.50 raise per year is about a third of what I would need to keep up with a 7.1% increase in all costs per year. While I am no genius when it comes to income and cost of living data, I do know that my pay does not equate what I make, and I cannot afford to continue to do this amount of work for the current pay. **We constantly experience staffing shortages and like everyone else, it is so difficult to find people, especially when you only have 3 full-time employees to wrangle the 600,000+ visitors per year and your seasonal worker starting wage is \$11.00.** We only pay seasonals \$11.00-\$14.00 because that's what our budget allows; who will work cleaning bathrooms and picking up dog poop for \$11.00/hour when they can stand in one spot and make food at McDonald's starting at \$14.00 or \$15.00 an hour? This is not sustainable. **Not only do the full-time workers need an increase, but the seasonals need a starting wage comparable to what other entities are starting at OR we need to be able to offer something more like reduced benefits.**

Speaking of benefits – when I started my job, Human Resources told me: “well, we can't pay you in money as much, but we CAN pay you in good benefits”. Yes, the benefits are great. They would have to be, or you would have lost your workforce by now. The benefits still are not an adequate substitution for the needed cost-of-living increases. And no, Parks and Recreation is not at the top of the list for prioritization, I know where the environment and green spaces stand in the scheme of happenings in Idaho. However, I also know that having an excellent network of state parks in this state generates a lot of money for Idaho's economy and local businesses. During the pandemic, Idaho was overrun by travelers and Parks and Rec employees were deemed “essential staff” necessary for everyone else to escape COVID. We had to stay open, and we didn't receive any additional compensation for that. Yet again, we do it because we care. We are over 97% self-funded as a Department, and that is pretty impressive considering a majority of our income is from a \$7.00 entrance fee that people don't feel they need to pay because “their tax dollars pay our salary”.

Why am I even writing this email? I know that it will be lost or not read among the many testimonials you will have to go through, and most of my “research” is probably just the footnote of all the things that you as a committee must look at to make a decision. I do not envy you nor your task. My point is this: you may lose great employees to private sectors, non-profits, or to different regions in the country because the cost of living here in Idaho compared to the average income of certain government workers is not possible. Working for the government is ideal with the benefits, the resources, and the people that come with the job. If monetary benefits are not possible, we need something

else. Housing is an impossible situation for so many Park Rangers because of pay and location. I complain about Boise because it's incredibly expensive to try and attain housing while someone working in Harriman State Park complains because there simply isn't any housing, or you have to buy a home (which again, is not possible on our salary). State Parks bring in billions of dollars to Idaho, and we just want somewhere to live so we can continue to work in Idaho state government. Tiny homes, folding homes, trailer homes, RV/camper trailers, money to buy materials to build our own homes, nice yurts, or other alternatives would be fantastic. I know that Fish & Game, Department of Lands, and other similar departments are going what we are going through, and that the governor is aware that it is an issue. We love our jobs, and a lot of Rangers become managers and retire with the Department. This new generation of Rangers, however, will never be able to own a home here unless we have a partner that makes a higher wage. **Please just give us some housing options, that's really what we need.**

Thank you for your time, it is appreciated.



Kelsea Goettl (She/Her)
Park Ranger
Eagle Island State Park
165 Eagle Island Parkway | Eagle, ID 83616
tel [REDACTED]

[website](#) | [map](#) | [passport](#)

January 16, 2023

Change in Employee Compensation Committee
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0054

Dear Sirs/Madams of the CEC committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony supporting an increase in state employee compensation. As you are aware, recruitment and retention of employees, especially healthcare professionals, has changed and become immensely challenging over the last three years during the SARS-COVID19 Public Health Emergency. Across the state, as well as the nation, there has been a tremendous struggle to recruit and retain Health Facility Surveyors who work in the Department of Health & Welfare, Division of Licensing & Certification, Bureau of Facility Standards.

The Bureau of Facility Standards is the State Agency who works with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to ensure providers are meeting the minimum standards to provide quality care and services to all Idahoans per the funding they receive. Our staff is comprised of Health Facility Surveyors who are required to travel all over the entire state of Idaho to perform survey and investigations of all providers who are certified to receive Medicare/Medicaid funding, including hospitals, critical access hospitals, ambulatory surgical centers, dialysis centers, hospice agencies, home health agencies, intermediate care facilities, skilled nursing facilities, etc.

The Health Facility Surveyor is required to travel a minimum of 50% of the time to meet the requirements set forth in federal regulations and IDAPA rules. They must be well versed in interpretation and guidance of regulations and state rules, investigation techniques, technical writing, and legally defensible documentation of notes and reports. We are also required to have at least one Registered Nurse on each team.

We currently have seven surveyors to perform this work. The Bureau has 15 open Health Facility Surveyor positions, a 59% vacancy rate. Due to retirement of long-term state employees, increased workload, and offers of up to \$20/hour more than the state pays we struggle to fill these positions. This struggle is not new but rather it has been exacerbated by the PHE and rising cost of housing, gas, food, and daily expenses. We have worked with our human resources department to increase our hourly wage to attempt to be competitive in today's market. While we do not expect our state wages to come up to the level of the private sector, we have not even come close in the last 8 years I have been employed.

Since 2015 the Bureau has contracted with a CMS approved agency to supplement our lack of survey staff to complete our mandatory workload. We use funding from the open positions to pay for these services. The cost of these services is astronomical but necessary to continue to receive funding from CMS and meet our obligations in our contract, the 1864 Agreement, with them. The cost of using this service includes not only an hourly rate for a qualified surveyor, which is about three times what our staff earn, but also travel expenses including airline, hotel, rental cars, and per diem. The average cost for one of these contracted surveyors to perform one survey is around \$8,500. Unless there are changes, we will have to continue to pay these prices to help us complete our work.

The reason I chose to work for the State of Idaho and the Bureau of Facility Standards was to effect change at a higher level. I experienced the challenges of being a caregiver and advocate for both of my deceased parents with often horrific care in clinics, hospitals, and skilled nursing. We perform this important work each day to ensure the quality of care and services does not rise to this level for every Idahoan to the best of our ability. Please help us to continue this important work and to meet the mission, vision, and values of the Department of Health & Welfare.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Laura A. Thompson, MSN, RN, CEN

Dear Change in Employee Compensation Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on future changes in compensation. I have been a classified state employee for a little over a year and was a seasonal employee for three seasons prior to that. When I finished graduate school and started working as a biologist, I was very excited to start my professional career with Idaho Department of Fish and Game. However, that excitement quickly faded when I realized how difficult it was to support myself in the Treasure Valley on a state employees' salary. Compensation, particularly at entry level positions, has not kept up with the cost of living. Idaho has one of the fastest growing populations in the nation and with that comes an increase in demand and costs for housing, gas, groceries, etc. The reality is, Idahoans making Idaho wages currently cannot afford to live comfortably in Idaho. I am not competitive in the housing market with my current salary. It is sad that a government employee, a public servant, cannot afford the American Dream.

Additionally, it is difficult to attract high quality candidates and retain them at current salaries. I love what I do and care about the resources I am responsible for. However, the reason I work is to support myself and that is very difficult to do at my current salary. Please evaluate the increase in the cost of living and compensate employees appropriately. Lower-level positions in particular need an increase in pay.

Thank you for your time,
Darcy McCarrick

Darcy McCarrick
Fisheries Research Biologist
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Nampa Research Office
1414 E Locust Lane
Nampa, Idaho 83686
Phone: 208-854-8922
Cell: [REDACTED]

January 9, 2023

Change in Employee Compensation (CEC) Committee

% Christine Otto at ceccommittee@iso.idaho.gov

To the members of the CEC Committee,

I am writing to testify to the need for adjusting employee compensation for nursing faculty Idaho. Not only is there a vacancy rate of approximately 19%, salary is the #1 reason that qualified applicants decline job offers at our universities and across the nation (2022 Special Survey on Vacant Faculty Positions for Academic Year 2022-2023, American Association of Colleges of Nursing). At Idaho State University School of Nursing, we have had several offers declined due to the allowable salary structure. According to the May, 2021 U.S. Bureau of Labor statistics, post-secondary nursing instructors in Idaho earn a median (50th percentile; \$74,990) with the 75th percentile only \$2,450 more at \$77,440 and the average salary (\$74,930) lower than the median (<https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes251072.htm#st>, indicating there are significantly more faculty with lower salaries and/or very few with higher salaries. The national salary average is \$82,040 and 75th percentile is \$98,680. Note that nursing faculty are required to have a graduate degree with doctoral prepared faculty preferred and required when teaching at the doctoral level for programs such as the DNP and PhD. Nursing salaries of those with advanced degrees such as Nurse Practitioners on the other hand average \$105,290 with the median \$102,060 and 7th percentile of \$128,550. As one graduate prepared nurse working in the clinical setting said, "Why would I want to go into education when I can make so much more by staying where I am?"

In clinical practice, the average salary for all RNs in Idaho, regardless of preparation, is \$75,992 (2022 Idaho Nursing Workforce report, available at <https://idahocfn.nursingnetwork.com/page/98107-idaho-biennial-nursing-workforce-report-june-2022>). New RN graduate median salary nationally is \$70,000 (<https://www.bls.gov/careeroutlook/2018/article/bachelors-degree-outlook.htm#Healthcare%20and%20science>). Thus, new RNs, without experience are often making more than experienced, graduate prepared faculty.

Making the issue more complex, the Nurse Educator population in Idaho is aging with the majority being older than 50 and Idaho having an existing 19% nursing instructor vacancy rate (2022 Idaho Nursing Workforce report; AACN 2022 Faculty Vacancy report). Thus, not only are wages non-competitive and a barrier to hiring faculty, the faculty shortage will grow over the next 5 years due to retirements unless this cycle is broken. Not having enough faculty results in the inability to meet the nursing workforce needs for Idaho, of which there is already a deficit.

I also want to state that the personnel system used is cumbersome with multiple layers required for approval of job postings, hiring and performance evaluations. The job posting and recruitment processes delay timely hiring not do they allow for succession planning, particularly for Classified staff. The hiring processes delay a new hires' ability to perform job responsibilities. The performance evaluation processes do not address employee behaviors (unless in protected categories) that are critical to a supportive, successful and positive work environment. I am happy to provide examples of each should the Committee request.

In closing, the preparation of Professional Registered Nurses (RNs) at the baccalaureate and graduate levels is a responsibility and commitment to the healthcare of our future. Thank you for your consideration of this information and request.

Respectfully,



Susan S. Tavernier, PhD, APRN-CNS, AOCN
Director of Graduate Studies in Nursing (MSN, DNP, PhD) Idaho State University
School of Nursing
tavesusa@isu.edu

I am writing to express my concerns about the low CEC recommendation suggested for 2023. I have been a state employee for 23 years and have worked for 3 different agencies during that timeframe. I have left each one because I could make a little bit more at the next agency. I am 48 years old and am single with my children over the age of 18, so thankfully I only have to support myself. That being said, I work multiple jobs to survive. I currently work full time for the State, 16 – 20 hours as a gig worker and part time as a W-2 employee for another organization. I don't live outside of my means. I have little credit card debt, pay \$225 a month for my vehicle, do not have cable, pay my regular bills and rent half of a duplex. I DO try to put at least \$50 every two weeks in a savings account and I do live off \$80 a week for food, groceries and entertainment so that I can go on a vacation occasionally. I don't think that those should be outside of the average person's reach.

I am getting tired of working 70+ hours a week, 7 days a week. I believe in hard work and working for what you have, but I would also like to take a weekend off. I have learned to budget to the penny and to save everything I can, but I also would like to breathe again. I have my degree and have looked elsewhere for employment that would allow me to work a little less, maybe just one or two jobs. What keeps me in Idaho has been the pension. That is it right now. I recently applied in other states for both public and private sector jobs, both of which pay more than what I am making here and have a lower cost of living. I interviewed last week for one job I applied for and I am torn. I would like to continue with the State of Idaho and I am good at my job, but having a savings account and getting to spend more than \$80 a week on food and gas should not be a luxury for someone who works.

A 4% CEC does not begin to cover the cost of living anymore. And a 4% is not guaranteed, it is for scoring the highest level on your evaluation, so for some employees that achieve or receive a solid sustained, they will not necessarily receive a 4%. I ask the CEC committee to really look into what you are asking of state employees and what you think they are worth. We already have over 2000 open positions in the State and it would be a shame to lose more valuable employees, but at some point employees have to do what is going to pay the bills. The power company, gas company, landlords, etc.

don't care that we are hardworking, loyal and doing our best... they want paid. And I would like to sleep in some days.

Jami Davis

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear Committee Member:

The Director of DHW invited employees to provide a letter to you regarding CEC for state employees. I know the state has several employees whose job is compile financial data for the state. I am confident you have reviewed this data and know how far state wages lag behind cost of living.

I work for the Bureau of Facility Standards. We conduct compliance surveys (audits) for federal medical programs (skilled nursing homes, hospitals, ESRDs, Hospice, Home Health, ICF/IIDs, etc.). It was difficult to hire staff prior to 2020, but now it is impossible. We have been in a staffing crisis since 2020. We have not been able to hire or retain staff over the last 2 years because we cannot offer a competitive salary. We have lost several surveyors to the public sector who pay \$10 to \$20 dollars more an hour. The people remaining, which are very few, have a diehard commitment to ensure residents in LTC facilities and those accessing various medical providers in the state are receiving a professional standard of care. Even though money isn't everything, there comes a time when it no longer feasible to stay. People need to meet their family's needs. Two years ago, you could buy a dozen eggs for \$1.00 and now it's \$5.00 to \$6.00. Rent for a 2 bedroom was \$800 now it's \$1800. You could buy a small home for \$200K not it's \$500K to 600K.

We hire mostly medical professionals due to the federal regulations for surveyors and they must travel 50% of the time within Idaho. The wages for new hires have not kept up with the market even though they have been raised by \$2.00 since 2015. The increased pay for new hires unfortunately had a negative impact on many long-term employees who are making the same or less than people newly hired. This occurred due to the many years when there were wage freezes. This created an environment of dissatisfaction and people began to look for private employers who can compensate them for their experience and knowledge. This inequity has caused a significant knowledge and experience drain on our department.

Due to our staffing shortage, we are not able to conduct annual recertification surveys (audits) and investigate complaints related to abuse and neglect, and lack of quality of care. For Long Term Care Skilled Nursing facilities, Idaho is third in the nation for being behind on annual recertification surveys (audits) because we do not have the staff to

conduct surveys and investigate complaints in a timely manner. To our dismay, the Department of Health and Welfare is not able to meet their mission, vision and values for the citizens of Idaho, especially in skilled nursing facilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you.

Melanie Shaw

Co-Supervisor Long Term Care



fsb@dhw.idaho.gov

www.facilitystandards.idaho.gov

Program websites:

[ICF/ID \(Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities\)](#)

[PRTF \(Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility\)](#)

[Long Term Care - Nursing Home Facility](#)

[Idaho Nurse Aide Registry](#)

I believe employee compensation is insufficient in our program and those that are similar to our own. We have all struggled finding competent, qualified instructors due to pay. Anyone that is qualified instantly drops out because of the pay. I am not sure where they get the numbers to come up with our pay, but it is insufficient to get qualified instructors. It may be because there is such a large pay gap between good highly qualified technicians and new technicians, but the Idaho median salary is not a good place to start the salary at. The median salary is around \$45,000-\$50,000, but a good technician makes more like \$65,000-\$100,000, especially those that are trained and experienced with hybrid and electric vehicles.. We don't want new or inexperienced technicians teaching our students, we want the best technicians and \$50,000 is not going to draw the best technicians.

Another point that is concerning is that new hires often make more than those that have been working at ISU for much longer. Often new instructors come in making 5 to 10 thousand dollars more than other employees. These employees should receive raises to exceed or at least match these new instructors. The old instructors have proven themselves and are already a valuable part of the team and deserve to be treated as such.


I am about to complete 22 years of working in forensics. I have a Bachelor of Science in Biology, am a certified Latent Print Examiner and a certified Crime Scene Investigator through the International Association for Identification. I have spent over half of my career at Idaho State Police Forensic Services.

I was unable to negotiate my salary. While ISP gets the benefit of my experience, there is no structured way to be compensated for the years of knowledge and experience I have. My salary has never been reviewed to determine if it is appropriate and commensurate with my education, experience, and training. Because I started at a lower rate than I should have, when I get percentage raises (CEC), I continue to be behind.

I have attached a job posting from Oregon State Police. I have 22 years of experience, and I am making less than their entry level person would make. I have seen similar postings for Washington State Police.

Asking to be paid a fair amount given the cost of living, cost of housing, etc. is not unreasonable. We will lose employees if we can't rectify this issue.

Jennie Ayers
Crime Scene Coordinator
Latent Print Section
Idaho State Police
700 S. Stratford Dr.
Meridian, ID 83642





Posting Title: Forensic Scientist 1 (Forensic Scientist Entry Underfill Option) – Field Investigation and Latent Print Disciplines — REQ-99195

Salary Range: \$6,477.00 - \$8,781.00

Initial Posting Date: 06/23/2022

Application Deadline: 07/13/2022

Agency: Oregon State Police

Location: Pendleton, Oregon

Do you have experience performing laboratory procedures and want to assist the Criminal Justice System? Do you have keen attention to detail and possess excellent analytical and organizational skills? Do you desire to work both independently and as part of a skilled team in an accredited forensic laboratory? Do you thrive in a fast-paced environment that is respectful and accepting of diversity—where talents, abilities, and experiences are valued? If so, please consider joining our Forensic Services Division team and apply today!

The Oregon State Police Forensic Laboratory in Pendleton, Oregon is hiring for one (1) Full-Time, Permanent Forensic Scientist position.

If you require an alternate format in order to complete the employment process, or to request a copy of the position description, please contact osp.recruiting@osp.oregon.gov and reference REQ-99195.

What will you do?

In this position, you will perform technical and scientific functions as they relate to the Criminal Justice System and in accordance with the policies of the Department of State Police, Forensic Services Division, accreditation procedures, and the laws of the State of Oregon. This position requires objective scientific thinking by someone capable of independent planning and problem solving related to the analysis of evidence.

As the Forensic Scientist in this position, you will:

- Perform independent casework in the Field Investigations discipline, which includes responding to crime scenes in the field and participating in the response rotation as outlined in the Oregon State Police Officers Association contract, while meeting the quality standards of the Division.
- Perform independent casework in the Latent Print Processing discipline, while meeting the quality standards of the Division.
- Perform accurate and timely analysis of evidence according to Division policies and procedures.
- Prepare and maintain accurate records, laboratory notes, and analytical reports to conform to accreditation standards, Division policies and procedures, and court required procedures.
- Maintain individual productivity, as measured by requests per unit of time and based on percent of available analytical time, at a level consistent with Division standards.

- Manage assigned caseload, including appropriate and timely communication with law enforcement partners.
- Provide casework support and perform technical reviews in the Field Investigations and Latent Print Processing disciplines to ensure quality. Support OSP analysts by acting as a resource for the discipline.
- Monitor incoming phone calls from attorneys, investigators, or other law enforcement personnel regarding cases that have been previously worked.
- Receive and provide training related to assigned duties.
- Perform other duties as needed or requested by the Laboratory Director or other supervisors of the Oregon State Police and assume added responsibilities as authorized.

To learn more about the Forensic Services Division, [click here](#).

Minimum Qualifications for Forensic Scientist 1: (\$6,477.00 - \$8,781.00) (these must be addressed in your resume for full consideration):

Five years' experience as a Forensic Scientist in an accredited Forensic Laboratory
AND

A Bachelor's degree in a natural science such as Biology, Chemistry, Microbiology, Biochemistry, Physics, Forensic Science, Pharmacology, Bacteriology, or a closely related field.

For applicants that are not yet at the full performance level, we are offering an underfill opportunity as follows:

Minimum Qualifications for Forensic Scientist Entry (\$5,498.00 - \$6,804.00) (these must be addressed in your resume for full consideration):

A Bachelor's degree in a natural science such as Biology, Chemistry, Microbiology, Biochemistry, Physics, Forensic Science, Pharmacology, Bacteriology, or a closely related field.

Note: If you are selected to move forward in the selection process, you must provide official transcripts from all institutions of higher education that were used in the award of your degree.

Preferred Skills (these must be addressed in your cover letter for full consideration):

- Ability to communicate both general and scientific information verbally **AND** in writing, with a diverse audience to provide information in a clear, effective, and professional manner.
- Demonstrated experience performing laboratory procedures.
- Ability to excel as a team member in stressful environments and demonstrate high levels of emotional intelligence.
- Ability to analyze information objectively and make reasoned, unbiased decisions, sometimes in time-sensitive situations.
- Ability to self-initiate tasks, effectively manage time and triage competing demands with minimal supervision.
- Ability to think creatively, critically, and logically.

Special Qualifications:

- Must possess and maintain a valid Driver's License.
- Must be able to provide credible sworn testimony in a criminal or civil proceeding arising from the performance of duties. This includes cogently, accurately, and appropriately qualifying and explaining any results, conclusions, and opinions so their significance is understood.
- As a condition of employment and / or to routinely work in any of the Forensic Services Division's laboratories in any capacity, all individuals are required to provide appropriate samples for inclusion into the Confidential Staff DNA Identification Index.
- Must pass a urine analysis drug screen.

How to Apply:

- Please visit the [State of Oregon Job Opportunities - Workday Webpage](#) to submit your application for this position, including your current resume and cover letter.
- Apply in Workday by the deadline listed above, failure to submit your application by 11:59PM of the above listed date will result in automatic disqualification of your application.
- You must submit a **resume** demonstrating your experience as it relates to the minimum qualifications for the position.
- In addition to a resume, you must submit a **cover letter** – no more than two pages in length – addressing how you meet each preferred skill for this position.
- **Failure to attach a resume addressing the minimum qualifications and a cover letter addressing the preferred skills will result in disqualification of your application.**
- Please submit these documents in either MS Word or PDF format.
- Documents submitted in formats other than MS Word or PDF will not be reviewed and will result in disqualification of your application.
- *Please only attach documents that are requested in this posting. Any additional documents that are submitted at this stage, will not be reviewed.*
- After applying be sure that you answer the questionnaires related to citizenship and Veteran's Preference points. In order to receive Veteran's Preference points, this is a required questionnaire.

Additional Information & Benefits:

The salary listed is the non-PERS (Public Employee Retirement System) qualifying salary range. If the successful candidate is PERS qualifying, the salary range will reflect an additional 6.95%. Please review the [Classification and Compensation](#) page for more details.

Prior to applying you should ensure all sections of your *Workday Job History* page is accurate and complete. This information is utilized during the pay equity analysis phase. Please monitor your Workday account, as communications will be sent to your Workday account. You may be asked to submit additional information after the initial application. If you would like to retain a copy of the job announcement, please print this page for your records. Once your application has

been processed, you will no longer be able to review the announcement. Additionally, Workday will timeout after 20 minutes of inactivity.

Eligible Veterans who meet the qualifications will be given veterans' preference. For further information, please see the following website: [Veterans Resources](#), or call Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs at: 1-800-692-9666 NOTE: If claiming Veterans' preference please be sure to check your Workday account for pending tasks or actions under your "My Applications" section.

OSP does not offer visa sponsorship. Within three days of hire, applicants will be required to complete I-9 documentation and confirm authorization to work in the United States. If your employment authorization and documentation is contingent on sponsorship now or in the future, you will not meet DAS employment eligibility standards.

This position is covered by an OSPOA Collective Bargaining Agreement. Current OSPOA employees who meet the minimum qualifications of this position will be given preference in the selection process. Current OSP employees should refer to the Filling of Vacancies policy for additional information.

This recruitment announcement will be used to establish a list of qualified candidates to fill the current vacancy and may be used to fill future vacancies as they occur.

Helpful Links & Resources:

Learn more about OSP [here](#). View our recruitment video [here](#).

View our [competitive benefits package](#).

Background screening information can be found [here](#).

OSP does not offer Visa Sponsorship. To view information on work authorization and find out about acceptable documents, [click here](#).

[Oregon Job Opportunities Webpage](#) | [How to Set Job Alerts](#)

[Workday Applicant FAQ](#) | [What You Need to Know to Get the Job](#)

[Pay Equity Information & Resources](#)

The Oregon State Police is an Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action employer committed to Workforce Diversity and Inclusion. At Oregon State Police, our Mission is to serve the State of Oregon with a diverse workforce dedicated to the protection of people, property and natural resources. Our values are Honor, Loyalty, Dedication, Compassion and Integrity.

My name is Henry White, and I have been employed in Custodial for nine years. In that time I have seen this department improve by leaps and bounds under the stewardship of Sheila Leukenbill. Yet no matter how much we improve, it is clear that custodial is not being valued, and there are ramifications of this.

The post-COVID job market is a highly competitive one, and ISU isn't trying to compete. We are losing our better employees to jobs that offer higher wages, and we are constantly in rounds of hiring because there's little reason for people to stay.

After 9 years here I just took a promotion to a foreman position. Since the wage increase would only be 60 cents, I asked for an additional 40 cents to make it an even one dollar raise, which I think is entirely reasonable. Yet they didn't want to give me that 40 cents and my boss had to go to bat for me to get it. Think about that. After 9 years here, and working 7 days a week for over a year during COVID to keep the campus disinfected and sanitized, I'm not worth 40 extra cents, a total of \$832 per year. But when Laura Woodworth-Nye got promoted, there was no hesitation about granting her an additional \$100,000 per year.

The message is clear: ISU values me at less than 1% of what it values an administrator. I can only imagine how little ISU values a base level custodian. The result is that nobody with any skill or dignity wants to stay in this department, and it is difficult to attract quality workers when they can do better elsewhere.

Before I worked at ISU I spent a year working as a dishwasher in a restaurant. At first glance you might think the dishwasher is the lowest rung on the totem pole in a restaurant, but anyone who has worked in one will tell you that the dishwasher is the linchpin that holds the whole circus together. If you run out of dishes then the cooks and servers can't serve anything. You can be short a server or short a cook, but you cannot be short a dishwasher.

Custodial is no different. There isn't a single job on campus that would continue to operate without custodial. If we stopped cleaning your toilets and picking up after you it would only be a matter of weeks before these buildings would be on their way to being condemned. Yet you pay us like we're disposable, and you fight us for every single penny like you have zero respect for us.

But we see how cavalier you are about administrator salaries. We see how wasteful you are every year when you get a new budget, and especially at the end of the year when you're blowing your loads on things you don't need so you can keep the same budget next year, even though it's clear you didn't need all of it in the first place. We see you throwing mountains of money at a football team that never wins. We see you. You might not see us, because you think we're beneath you, but we're right here, watching. And we're waiting for you to pay us like you respect and value us. Maybe then we could attract more quality talent, be more selective about who we hire and who we keep at the end of the probationary period, and retain our talent for longer.

Best Regards,
Henry Thomas White

I work at SHS. My pay is for \$5 to \$6 below average wages. Right now most of our RN's are working as travel nurses on the side, getting \$112.00 an hour. With inflation we can't get by on the wages we have now.

The state of Idaho has 1.5 billion dollar budget and they need to put that money towards mental health. Too many patients don't have places to go because there is so few of them available. Most are homeless. We are behind other states in buildings forensic facilities.

Thanks,
Tiffany Pickett

With the recent loss of staff at SHS we have been critically understaffed. We are losing staff to travel nursing, demands from our nursing management, and due to high acuity in our milieu. We are frequently disallowed from calling in sick due to staffing shortages, meaning staff are made to come into work to take care of patients with temperatures and other symptoms which may be contagious. In addition to this, staff are told they are responsible for transmission of illness to patients, which is difficult to avoid when one is sick and forced to work. Staff are becoming more and more burnt out with very little relief, staff continue to struggle due to these issues. Staff retention is not made any easier with low wages in a high cost of living area. An increase in employee compensation would dramatically increase staff morale and ability to thrive in such a high acuity and stressful work environment.

Sincerely,
Paige Arundel, PT
State Hospital South
Admissions Unit

Good Morning,

The State Hospital South is experiencing staffing shortages which are creating an excess of work for existing employees. We are losing staff to travel nursing, demands from our nursing management, temporary staff running out of workable hours, and due to high acuity on the units. Personally, I have been denied vacation requests sent out, guilt-tripped for calling in sick, or told I must come in to work while ill. We are frequently disallowed from calling in sick due to staffing shortages, meaning staff are forced to come into work to take care of patients with temperatures and other symptoms which may be contagious. In addition to this, staff are told they are responsible for transmission of illness to patients (including Covid-19), which is difficult to avoid when one is sick and forced to work. Staff are burnt out with very little relief, staff morale is extremely low with little feelings of respect or appreciation from management or administration, staff continue to struggle due to these issues and many more. Staff retention is not made any easier with low wages in a high cost of living area. An increase in employee compensation would dramatically increase staff morale and ability

to thrive in such a high acuity and stressful work environment. With such high expectations, higher wages should be an expectation rather than a request.

Thank you for your time,

Kyra Hardin, PT
State Hospital South
Admissions Unit