

MINUTES  
**JOINT FINANCE-APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Wednesday, January 15, 2025

**TIME:** 8:00 A.M.

**PLACE:** Room C310

**MEMBERS:** Senators Co-Chair Grow, Woodward, Cook, Bjerke, Hart, Carlson, Zuiderveld, Galloway, Ward-Engelking, Wintrow  
Representatives Co-Chair Horman, Miller, Furniss, Handy, Petzke, Tanner (14), Manwaring, Mitchell, Price, Galaviz

**ABSENT/  
EXCUSED:** Co-Chair Grow

**Co-Chair Horman** called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

**Mr. Kellen McGurkin**, Analyst, LSO Budget & Policy, provided an overview of the State Independent Living Council (SILC), covering the division's organizational structure. He also reviewed the consolidated fund analysis, the five-year expenditures chart, the five-year base snapshot, and the budget enhancements for FY 2024 and FY 2025.

**Mr. McGurkin** explained the FY 2026 Governor's budget recommendations shift approximately \$12K from SILC's dedicated fund to the General Fund. He pointed out Change in Employee Compensation (CEC) and health benefit costs are dependent on statewide program maintenance adjustments; it is appropriate to shift these costs to the General Fund.

**Ms. Mel Leviton**, Director of SILC, noted SILC's only \$10K increase in the last ten years was due to the statutory requirement for an auditor. She also pointed out SILC's audits resulted in no findings.

**Ms. Alex Williamson**, Analyst, LSO Budget & Policy, gave an overview of the Office of Health and Social Services Ombudsman. She reviewed the statutory authority of this new office. She explained the FY 2026 budget enhancement request for salary increases; these requests are supported by the Governor.

**Mr. Trevor Sparrow**, Ombudsman of the Office of Health and Social Services, introduced the agency, which serves the youth of the State. He explained the agency investigates complaints filed with the Office and makes recommendations. The Office also serves the state agencies helping Idaho children as well as making investigative reports.

In response to committee questions, **Mr. Sparrow** said the Ombudsman Office will focus on the foster care system, but it will also assist with any residential agencies of children in the State being housed, including Juvenile Corrections. He confirmed short-term congregate care for foster children has ended.

**Co-Chair Horman** clarified the funding to establish the Office of the Ombudsman was allocated from the DHW budget in the previous year. The Office is now requesting additional funds for salaries to make the agency operational.

**Mr. Sparrow** stated the Office has adopted federal ombudsman standards, which is one of the reasons for the current budget request. Those standards include having a multidisciplinary team which could involve those with legal expertise, possibly nursing expertise, and social work expertise.

**Co-Chair Horman** gave a basic introduction into the new system for evaluating replacement item requests. This JFAC meeting is focused on state agency requests for replacement items. Maintenance budgets and past appropriations are available for review online.

**Mr. Christopher Lehosit**, Analyst, LSO Budget & Policy, presented the FY 2026 replacements request for the Office of the Lieutenant Governor. The Office requests approximately \$33K onetime from the General Fund for capital outlay to replace five network switches, as recommended by the Office of Information Technology Services (OITS).

**Mr. Jared Tatro**, Deputy Division Manager, LSO Budget & Policy, presented the FY 2026 replacement requests for Idaho Public Television (IPTV). IPTV requests \$42K in onetime funding to replace a full-size heavy-duty truck used for servicing emergency broadcast system hardware in mountainous terrain. The Governor also recommends \$300K in onetime funding to replace equipment at the network operations center, which includes equipment related to broadcasting and emergency communications.

In response to a committee question, **Mr. Tatro** stated budget guidelines specify the replacement cost of a vehicle this size is \$45K. However, due to the 3% budget growth cap, IPTV can only request \$42,400.

**Mr. Jeff Tucker**, General Manager of IPTV, answered committee questions. He acknowledged the difficulty of finding an appropriate vehicle at the requested dollar amount. If approved, IPTV will auction the old truck, return the proceeds to the General Fund, and carefully manage its allotment to save for a new truck if one can be found. He explained the network operations center is a conglomeration of computer equipment. The current system is four years out of date and not patchable with system updates.

In response to additional committee questions, **Mr. Tucker** explained the division between the public/private funding of IPTV. The state pays for the infrastructure system, which is necessary for statewide emergency alerts. The infrastructure system is part of Idaho Military Division's public safety work. Private funding pays for all content, including the hardware to store the content. He reminded the committee all IPTV spending, including the private funding, is transparent.

**Co-Chair Horman** pointed out this information is available in the IPTV audit.

**Mr. Noah Peterson**, Analyst, LSO Budget & Policy, presented the FY 2026 replacement requests for the Division of Brand Inspection in the Idaho State Police (ISP). ISP is requesting \$289K to replace six vehicles and outdated IT equipment.

**Ms. Janet Jessup**, Principal Analyst, LSO Budget & Policy, presented the FY 2026 replacement requests for the Soil & Water Conservation Commission. The Commission requests approximately \$41K onetime to replace a light-duty truck. In response to a committee question, **Ms. Jessup** explained budget development guidelines distinguish between different classes of vehicles; the replacement costs are adjusted accordingly.

In response to a committee question, **Co-Chair Horman** explained item requests are submitted per budget development guidelines; however, JFAC always has full discretion in adjusting line item appropriations.

**Dr. Kevin Campbell**, Senior Analyst, LSO Budget & Policy, presented the FY 2026 replacement requests for the STEM Action Center. The agency is requesting \$10K onetime to replace computer equipment and access support services associated with this equipment.

In response to a committee question, **Co-Chair Horman** confirmed different computer networks have different requirements, resulting in different replacement costs.

**Ms. Brooke Dupree**, Analyst, LSO Budget & Policy, presented the FY 2026 replacement request for the Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired. The agency is requesting \$29K onetime to replace computer equipment as recommended by OITS.

**Mr. McGurkin** presented the FY 2026 replacement request for the Idaho State Lottery. The agency requests \$177K onetime to replace computer equipment as recommended by OITS. The agency requests iMacs due to the enhanced monitors, drivers, and other capabilities used by the marketing division to create Scratch ticket designs, statewide point-of-sale materials, and signage.

**Co-Chair Horman** reminded the committee the Idaho State Lottery is funded by dedicated funds; this enhancement request will be funded by the agency's dedicated funds.

**Mr. Keith Bybee**, Division Manager, LSO Budget & Policy, reviewed drafts of the program maintenance budgets, highlighting pieces of language with each budget.

The language in the program maintenance budgets primarily falls into four categories: exemptions, allowing agencies to move funds between expense categories without restrictions; reappropriated funds, allowing agencies to carry over unspent funds from one year to the next for ongoing projects; “clear language,” specifying conditions, limitations, and restrictions for how funds must be used and reported; and accountability audits, ensuring funds are used for authorized programs and subject to audits. The categories help ensure agencies follow legislative guidelines and maintain oversight of how funds are allocated and spent.

**Co-Chair Horman** stated formerly the terms “standard language” or “intent language” were included in budgets; some agencies found these terms open to interpretation. She emphasized language included in appropriation bills is the law. Co-Chair Horman confirmed all pieces of language in the program maintenance budgets were part of the FY 2025 budgets.

**ADJOURN:** There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 9:31 a.m.

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Representative Horman  
Chair

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Alyson Jackson  
Secretary