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SIXTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

SIXTEENTH LEGISLATIVE DAY
TUESDAY, JANUARY 27, 2026

Senate Chamber

President Bedke called the Senate to order at 10:30 a.m.

Roll call showed all members present except Senator Bernt, absent and formally excused by the Chair; and Senators Lent and Woodward, absent and excused.

Prayer was offered by Chaplain Doug Armstrong.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Shayla Tyler, Page.

The Senate advanced to the Third Order of Business.

Reading and Correction of the Journal

The JUDICIARY AND RULES Committee reports that the Senate Journal of the proceedings of January 26, 2026, was read and approved as corrected.

LAKEY, Chairman

There being no objection, the report was adopted and ordered filed in the office of the Secretary of the Senate.

On request by Senator Den Hartog, granted by unanimous consent, the Senate advanced to the Fifth Order of Business.

Petitions, Resolutions, and Memorials

SCR 115

BY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

STATING FINDINGS OF THE LEGISLATURE AND SUPPORTING CONSOLIDATION OF THE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION INTO THE IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES.

Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Idaho:

WHEREAS, responsible government calls for the continual evaluation of current policies and practices to ensure effective and efficient departments and agencies within any administration; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable Governor Brad Little signed Executive Order 2026-01, the Idaho Act, which directed executive departments, offices, and agencies to review all current operations in an effort to increase effectiveness and efficiency within Idaho state government and recommended combining the Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWCC) with the Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR); and

WHEREAS, the Legislature has enacted the Idaho Code Cleanup Act, Chapter 37, Title 67, Idaho Code, calling for state code to be streamlined, up-to-date, and essential; and

WHEREAS, the Idaho Legislature convened the Idaho DOGE task force on July 25, 2025, as a combined legislative body that was created, in part, to evaluate and implement strategies, merge redundant agencies, and optimize services; and

WHEREAS, on November 19, 2025, the DOGE task force unanimously approved a motion to recommend the integration of SWCC with IDWR and published material supporting further evaluation and subsequent action; and

WHEREAS, there is significant alignment of the missions of both SWCC and IDWR; and

WHEREAS, the proposed statutory realignment of the administrative oversight of SWCC warrants careful evaluation to ensure it strengthens the voluntary, locally led, and non-regulatory foundation of conservation districts in Idaho, and any realignment must have administrative and organizational structures that reinforce, rather than diminish, the unique role of conservation districts in leading locally led and non-regulatory conservation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the members of the Second Regular Session of the Sixty-eighth Idaho Legislature, the Senate and the House of Representatives concurring therein, that the Legislature supports the consolidation of the Soil and Water Conservation Commission and the Idaho Department of Water Resources.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature urges the Governor of Idaho, the Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts Board, and members of the Legislature to collaborate to ensure that any proposed consolidation of the two entities retains the voluntary, non-regulatory mission and partnership-centered focus of the Soil and Water Conservation Commission and its districts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature urges the Governor of Idaho, the Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts Board, the Soil and Water Conservation Commission and district members, the Director of the Idaho Department of Water Resources, members of the Legislature, and other stakeholders to ensure that any consolidation of the two entities is executed to ensure that there is no interference with the core mission of the Soil and Water Conservation Commission and districts in supporting locally led and voluntary conservation in Idaho.

[SCR 115](#) was introduced, read at length, and referred to the Judiciary and Rules Committee for printing.

The Senate advanced to the Sixth Order of Business.

Reports of Standing Committees

January 27, 2026

The JUDICIARY AND RULES Committee reports that [S 1231](#) has been correctly printed.

LAKEY, Chairman

[S 1231](#) was referred to the State Affairs Committee.

January 26, 2026

The RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT Committee reports out [S 1222](#) with the recommendation that it do pass.

BURTENSHAW, Chairman

[S 1222](#) was filed for second reading.

January 26, 2026

The EDUCATION Committee reports out [S 1225](#) with the recommendation that it be referred to the Fourteenth Order of Business for amendment.

LENT, Chairman

There being no objection, [S 1225](#) was referred to the Fourteenth Order of Business, General Calendar.

On request by Senator Den Hartog, granted by unanimous consent, the Senate advanced to the Ninth Order of Business.

Messages from the House

January 26, 2026

Dear Mr. President:

I transmit herewith [H 491](#) and [H 492](#), which have passed the House.

VORE, Acting Chief Clerk

[H 491](#) and [H 492](#) were filed for first reading.

The Senate advanced to the Tenth Order of Business.

Motions and Resolutions

The President announced that the Judiciary and Rules Committee report relative to the Gubernatorial reappointment of Scott Smith was before the Senate for final consideration, the question being, "Shall the report be adopted?"

On motion by Senator Nichols, seconded by Senator Semmelroth, the Gubernatorial reappointment of Scott Smith as a member of the Commission of Pardons and Parole was confirmed by voice vote.

The President declared the report adopted and directed the Secretary of the Senate to prepare a letter of the Gubernatorial reappointment confirmation for his signature, attested to by the Secretary, to be transmitted to the Governor informing him of the action of the Senate.

The President announced that the State Affairs Committee report relative to the Gubernatorial reappointment of Megan Ronk was before the Senate for final consideration, the question being, "Shall the report be adopted?"

On motion by Senator Den Hartog, seconded by Senator Ruchti, the Gubernatorial reappointment of Megan Ronk as a member of the Idaho Commission on Human Rights was confirmed by voice vote.

The President declared the report adopted and directed the Secretary of the Senate to prepare a letter of the Gubernatorial reappointment confirmation for his signature, attested to by the Secretary, to be transmitted to the Governor informing him of the action of the Senate.

Senator Woodward was recorded present at this order of business.

The President announced that the State Affairs Committee report relative to the Gubernatorial appointment of Salvador Cruz was before the Senate for final consideration, the question being, "Shall the report be adopted?"

On motion by Senator Guthrie, seconded by Senator Ward-Engelking, the Gubernatorial appointment of Salvador Cruz as a member of the Treasurer's Investment Advisory Board was confirmed by voice vote.

The President declared the report adopted and directed the Secretary of the Senate to prepare a letter of the Gubernatorial appointment confirmation for his signature, attested to by the Secretary, to be transmitted to the Governor informing him of the action of the Senate.

The President announced that the Judiciary and Rules Committee report relative to the Gubernatorial appointment of Dylan Hobson was before the Senate for final consideration, the question being, "Shall the report be adopted?"

On motion by Senator Wintrow, seconded by Senator Keyser, the Gubernatorial appointment of Dylan Hobson as a member of the Commission of Pardons and Parole was confirmed by voice vote.

The President declared the report adopted and directed the Secretary of the Senate to prepare a letter of the Gubernatorial appointment confirmation for his signature, attested to by the Secretary, to be transmitted to the Governor informing him of the action of the Senate.

The President announced that the Commerce and Human Resources Committee report relative to the Gubernatorial reappointment of Cynthia Fairfax was before the Senate for final consideration, the question being, "Shall the report be adopted?"

On motion by Senator Wintrow, seconded by Senator Lenney, the Gubernatorial reappointment of Cynthia Fairfax as a member of the Idaho Health Insurance Exchange Board was confirmed by voice vote.

The President declared the report adopted and directed the Secretary of the Senate to prepare a letter of the Gubernatorial reappointment confirmation for his signature, attested to by the Secretary, to be transmitted to the Governor informing him of the action of the Senate.

On request by Senator Den Hartog, granted by unanimous consent, [SJM 107](#) was placed before the Senate for final consideration at this time.

The President announced that [SJM 107](#) was before the Senate for final consideration, the question being, "Shall the memorial be adopted?"

On motion by Senator Lakey, seconded by Senator Harris, [SJM 107](#) was adopted by voice vote, title was approved, and the memorial ordered transmitted to the House.

Senator Bernt was recorded present at this order of business.

On request by Senator Den Hartog, granted by unanimous consent, the Senate advanced to the Eleventh Order of Business.

Introduction, First Reading, and Reference of Bills, House Petitions, Resolutions, and Memorials

S 1232

BY JUDICIARY AND RULES COMMITTEE

AN ACT

RELATING TO CRIME VICTIMS; REPEALING SECTION 19-5301, IDAHO CODE, RELATING TO DISTRIBUTION OF MONEYS RECEIVED AS A RESULT OF THE COMMISSION OF CRIME; AMENDING TITLE 19, IDAHO CODE, BY

THE ADDITION OF A NEW CHAPTER 63, TITLE 19, IDAHO CODE, TO ESTABLISH PROVISIONS REGARDING PROCEEDS DERIVED FROM CRIMINAL NOTORIETY; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

S 1233

BY JUDICIARY AND RULES COMMITTEE
AN ACT

RELATING TO THE CONSTITUTIONAL COURTS ACT; AMENDING CHAPTER 16, TITLE 1, IDAHO CODE, BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SECTION 1-1626, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE THAT NO STATE COURT SHALL ENFORCE, CONSIDER, OR APPLY ANY JUDGMENT, DECREE, RULING, OR DECISION OF ARBITRATION BASED ON CERTAIN FORMS OF RELIGIOUS OR CULTURAL LAW; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

S 1234

BY EDUCATION COMMITTEE
AN ACT

RELATING TO EDUCATION; PROVIDING LEGISLATIVE INTENT; AMENDING SECTION 1-505, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE FOR LEWIS-CLARK STATE UNIVERSITY; AMENDING SECTION 33-101, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE FOR LEWIS-CLARK STATE UNIVERSITY AND TO MAKE TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS; AMENDING SECTION 33-107A, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE FOR LEWIS-CLARK STATE UNIVERSITY; AMENDING SECTION 33-107C, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE FOR LEWIS-CLARK STATE UNIVERSITY; AMENDING THE HEADING FOR CHAPTER 31, TITLE 33, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE FOR LEWIS-CLARK STATE UNIVERSITY; AMENDING SECTION 33-3101, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE FOR LEWIS-CLARK STATE UNIVERSITY AND TO MAKE A TECHNICAL CORRECTION; AMENDING SECTION 33-3102, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE FOR LEWIS-CLARK STATE UNIVERSITY AND TO MAKE A TECHNICAL CORRECTION; AMENDING SECTION 33-3104, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE FOR LEWIS-CLARK STATE UNIVERSITY AND TO MAKE TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS; AMENDING SECTION 33-3106, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE FOR LEWIS-CLARK STATE UNIVERSITY AND TO MAKE A TECHNICAL CORRECTION; AMENDING SECTION 33-3113, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE FOR LEWIS-CLARK STATE UNIVERSITY; AMENDING SECTION 33-3114, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE FOR LEWIS-CLARK STATE UNIVERSITY AND TO MAKE TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS; AMENDING SECTION 33-3116, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE FOR LEWIS-CLARK STATE UNIVERSITY AND TO MAKE TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS; AMENDING SECTION 33-3301B, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE FOR LEWIS-CLARK STATE UNIVERSITY AND TO MAKE A TECHNICAL CORRECTION; AMENDING SECTION 33-3302, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE FOR LEWIS-CLARK STATE UNIVERSITY; AMENDING SECTION 33-3701, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE FOR LEWIS-CLARK STATE UNIVERSITY AND TO MAKE TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS; AMENDING SECTION 33-3717A, IDAHO CODE, TO REVISE PROVISIONS REGARDING STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES AND TO MAKE A TECHNICAL CORRECTION; AMENDING SECTION 33-3726, IDAHO CODE, TO REVISE PROVISIONS

REGARDING THE HIGHER EDUCATION STABILIZATION FUND AND TO MAKE TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS; AMENDING SECTION 33-3803, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE FOR LEWIS-CLARK STATE UNIVERSITY AND TO MAKE TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS; AMENDING SECTION 41-4002, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE FOR LEWIS-CLARK STATE UNIVERSITY AND TO MAKE TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS; AMENDING SECTION 67-2332A, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE FOR LEWIS-CLARK STATE UNIVERSITY; AMENDING SECTION 67-5302, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE FOR LEWIS-CLARK STATE UNIVERSITY AND TO MAKE TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS; AMENDING SECTION 67-9203, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE FOR LEWIS-CLARK STATE UNIVERSITY AND TO MAKE TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS; AMENDING SECTION 67-9801, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE FOR LEWIS-CLARK STATE UNIVERSITY; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

[S 1232](#), [S 1233](#), and [S 1234](#) were introduced, read the first time at length, and referred to the Judiciary and Rules Committee for printing.

[H 491](#) and [H 492](#), by Judiciary, Rules and Administration Committee, were introduced, read the first time at length, and referred to the Judiciary and Rules Committee.

On request by Senator Den Hartog, granted by unanimous consent, the Senate advanced to the Fifteenth Order of Business.

Miscellaneous Business

On motion by Senator Den Hartog, seconded by Senator Wintrow, by voice vote, the Senate adjourned at 11:07 a.m. until the hour of 10:30 a.m., Wednesday, January 28, 2026.

SCOTT BEDKE, President

Attest: JENNIFER NOVAK, Secretary