

MINUTES
JOINT FINANCE-APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, January 27, 2026
TIME: 8:00 A.M.
PLACE: Room C310
MEMBERS PRESENT: Senators Co-Chairman Grow, Woodward, Cook, Bjerke, Hart, Carlson, Zuiderveld, Galloway, Ward-Engelking, Wintrow
Representatives Co-Chairman Tanner (14), Miller, Furniss, Petzke, Manwaring, Mitchell, Price, Bruce, Harris, Green
ABSENT/ EXCUSED: Representative Mitchell
CONVENED: **Co-Chairman Grow** called the meeting of the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee (Committee) to order at **8:00 a.m.** with a quorum present.

LSO STAFF PRESENTATION: **Early Learning & Development- Department of Health and Welfare (DHW), LBB 2-019 Morgan Poloni, Senior Analyst, Legislative Services Office (LSO)**

Ms. Poloni presented a review of the Department of Health and Welfare's Division of Early Learning and Development before the Committee (see, attachment 1). The division includes three budgeted programs: Early Learning and Development, the Idaho Child Care Program, and the Southwest Idaho Treatment Center (SWITC). The division underwent a reorganization as part of the department-wide reorganization, during which it absorbed the Idaho Child Care Program. These changes resulted in noticeable funding shifts in subsequent budgets.

The division has 260 full-time positions (FTP), with 29 vacancies. Ms. Poloni provided a five-year division historical funding comparison, though it was noted that the data were not directly comparable due to division reorganization. Total appropriations increased significantly from FY 2025 to FY 2026 as a result of absorbing the Idaho Child Care Program, which included \$62.7 million in ongoing appropriations and a one-time \$14 million federal appropriation for the Governor's child care quality initiative. She provided FY 25 and FY 26 budget enhancements.

For FY 26, additional enhancements included a \$4.2 million ongoing federal increase to the Idaho Child Care Program through the Child Care Development Block Grant, as well as the \$14 million one-time federal appropriation to expand child care capacity and quality. Extended employment services funding was officially shifted to the Division of Medicaid, and agencies were required to report outcomes for all enhancements.

For FY 27, the division requested \$600,000 ongoing from the General Fund to address population forecast adjustments for court-ordered evaluations and treatment for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. It also requested \$16 million in one-time federal funding for the second year

of the Idaho Child Care Program capacity initiative, later adjusted by the Governor to \$15.496 million one-time and \$504,000 ongoing to support five new full-time positions focused on program integrity. An additional \$20,000 in one-time federal funding was requested for the purchase of replacement items.

DISCUSSION:

In response to questions from the Committee, **Ms. Poloni** provided detail related to the ICCP Capacity enhancement request, the Idaho Childcare program.

Juliet Charron, Department of Health & Welfare Director stood to answer questions from the Committee related to funds aimed at increasing childcare availability and provider capacity, requested fraud investigator positions for program integrity, and grant funds performance benchmarks.

**LSO STAFF
PRESENTATION:**

Public Health Services- DHW, LBB 2-059 Morgan Poloni, LSO

Ms. Poloni presented before the Committee a budget overview for the Division of Public Health Services within the Department of Health and Welfare (see, attachment 2). The division is located under Health and Human Services and consists of four programs: Physical Health Services, Laboratory Services, Suicide Prevention and Awareness, and Healthcare Policy Initiatives. Emergency Medical Services, formerly a fifth program, was statutorily moved to the Office of Emergency Management through Senate Bill 1416 beginning in FY 2026. The Public Health Services division has 216 authorized positions.

She provided a five-year historical overview showing total appropriations and actual expenditures, with declining appropriations largely attributed to the expiration of significant federal COVID-related funding and the transfer of Emergency Medical Services, including \$7.4 million in appropriations, to the Military Division in FY 2026. She provided the FY 25 and FY 26 budget enhancements. In FY 2025, \$20 million in ongoing funding was removed for several programs and reauthorized as one-time funding. In FY 2026, the Legislature shifted the Idaho Home Visiting Program and the Immunization Program from ongoing to one-time funding.

For FY 2027, the division requested \$4.24 million ongoing in federal funds to restore ongoing support for the Idaho Home Visiting Program. The division also requested restoration of ongoing funding for the Idaho Immunization Assessment Fund from dedicated funds. The Governor increased the recommended ongoing appropriation to \$25.4 million based on determinations by the Idaho Immunization Assessment Board and added \$2.62 million in one-time dedicated funds to cover existing healthcare provider expenses. Additional, FY 2027 requests included \$200,000 ongoing from dedicated funds for fee-for-service laboratory testing to offset anticipated reductions in public health emergency preparedness funding, \$478,700 ongoing in federal funds for HIV prevention and surveillance activities, and \$299,600 ongoing in federal funds for hepatitis prevention efforts. One-time FY 2027 requests included \$822,100 in federal funds for disaster planning and training to strengthen regional healthcare coalitions' preparedness for emerging threats and \$6.63 million in one-time federal funding for ARPA-supported multi-year grants.

DISCUSSION: **Juliet Charron, Department of Health & Welfare Director** stood to answer questions from the Committee related to HIV screening, incidents and treatment, as well as data collection for HIV, Hep C and other communicable diseases. She also answered questions related to federal public health grants and home visiting program funding.

LSO STAFF PRESENTATION: **Family and Community Partnerships- DHW, LBB 2-027 Morgan Poloni, LSO**

Ms. Poloni presented the Department of Health and Welfare's Division of Family and Community Partnerships before the Committee (see, attachment 3). The Division is situated within Child, Youth, and Family Services and is responsible for providing prevention services to children and families to help keep children safely in their homes and has 37 full-time positions.

She provided a five-year overview of appropriations and expenditures. In FY 2025, the Division received an enhancement related to change in employee compensation (CEC). No enhancements were approved in FY 2026. For FY 2027, the Division submitted two enhancement requests. The first request was \$180,000 in ongoing federal funds to for the Kinship Navigation Services Grant, which was in its seventh year and supported kinship families caring for children in order to prevent foster care placement. The second enhancement request sought removal of budget transfer restrictions imposed by Senate Bill 1108 of 2025, which limited the agency's ability to move personnel, trustee, and benefit costs between expenditure categories. Both enhancement requests were recommended by the Governor.

DISCUSSION: **Juliet Charron, Department of Health & Welfare Director** stood to answer questions from the Committee related to the Kinship Navigation Services Grant, 2025 expenditures, and transfer authority.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business before the Committee, **Co-Chairman Grow** adjourned the meeting at **9:30 a.m.**

Senator Grow
Chair

Linsy Heiner
Secretary