

MINUTES  
**JOINT FINANCE-APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Monday, March 09, 2026  
**TIME:** 8:00 A.M.  
**PLACE:** Room C310  
**MEMBERS:** Senators Co-Chair Grow, Woodward, Cook, Bjerke (Bjerke), Hart, Carlson, Zuiderveld, Keyser (Galloway), Ward-Engelking, Wintrow  
Representatives Co-Chair Tanner (14), Miller, Furniss, Petzke, Manwaring, Mitchell, Price, Bruce, Harris, Green  
**ABSENT/EXCUSED:** Representatives Manwaring, Green

**Co-Chair Tanner (14)** called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

**Ms. Janet Jessup**, Principal Analyst, LSO Budget & Policy, presented the FY 2027 enhancement budget for the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). These enhancements were part of the Governor's recommendations.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Miller** made a motion, seconded by **Sen. Woodward**, beginning with the FY 2027 JFAC Program Maintenance Budget, to add \$1,230,000 for remediation of the Triumph Mine site in Blaine County; to add \$1,500,000 from the Water Pollution Control Fund and transfer to the Environmental Remediation (Basin) Fund for the Superfund cleanup project; to reduce 2.00 FTP and \$181,700 from the Department of Environmental Quality Federal Grant Fund and add 2.00 FTP and \$381,700 to the IPDES Program Fund to shift personnel costs and support the agency's online permitting system; and to add \$400,000 from the Solid Waste Regulatory Fund for solid waste oversight pursuant to **H 555** of 2026. This motion included, for FY 2027, for the Department of Environmental Quality, an additional \$2,011,700 from dedicated funds and the reduction of \$181,700 from federal funds, for a total of \$1,830,000.

**ROLL CALL VOTE ON MOTION:** **Motion carried by a total vote of 17 AYES, 0 NAYS, 3 ABSENT/EXCUSED.** Senators voting in favor of the motion: **Grow, Woodward, Cook, Bjerke (Bjerke), Carlson, Zuiderveld, Keyser (Galloway), Ward-Engelking, Wintrow.** Senators voting in opposition to the motion: **None.** Senators Absent/Excused: **Hart.** Representatives voting in favor of the motion: **Tanner (14), Miller, Furniss, Petzke, Mitchell, Price, Bruce, Harris.** Representatives voting in opposition to the motion: **None.** Representatives Absent/Excused: **Manwaring, Green.**

**Ms. Jessup** presented sections of language associated with the FY 2027 enhancement budget related to cash transfers.

**UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST:** **Rep. Miller** requested and it was granted by unanimous consent, to adopt the following language:

**LANGUAGE:** SECTION \_\_\_. CASH TRANSFER FOR THE AIR PERMITTING FEES. There is hereby appropriated and the Office of the State Controller shall transfer the balance of the DEQ Air Permitting Fees Account to the Idaho Air Quality Permitting Fund on July 1, 2026, or as soon thereafter as practicable for the period of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027, to consolidate the two funds and cease to use the DEQ Air Permitting Fees Account.

SECTION \_\_\_. CASH TRANSFER FOR THE DRINKING WATER FEES. There is hereby appropriated and the Office of the State Controller shall transfer the balance of the DEQ Drinking Water Fees Account to the Public Water System Supervision Fund on July 1, 2026, or as soon thereafter as practicable for the period of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027, to consolidate the two and cease to use the DEQ Drinking Water Fees Account.

SECTION \_\_\_. CASH TRANSFER FOR SOLID WASTE. There is hereby appropriated and the Office of the State Controller shall transfer the balance of the Hazardous Waste Emergency Fund to the Solid Waste Regulatory Fund on July 1, 2026, or as soon thereafter as practicable for the period of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027.

**Ms. Jessup** presented the FY 2026 supplemental request for the Idaho Department of Lands related to fire preparedness.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Miller** made a motion, seconded by **Sen. Carlson**, for the Department of Lands, for FY 2026, the addition of \$124,900 onetime from the General Fund for the Forest and Range Fire Protection Program for fire preparedness.

**Rep. Miller** stated standby fire crews could not be funded through fire operations. Instead, General Fund moneys were needed to assemble and prepare crews until deployment. Once deployed, separate fire funding would apply. He emphasized both funding sources were distinct and necessary to ensure fire crews were adequately prepared.

**Rep. Petzke** voiced his opposition to this motion. He supported funding fire and standby crews but opposed restoring the 2% cut. He noted unspent funds and approximately \$8.5M in dedicated fire funds. **Rep. Petzke** supported allowing cash transfers from other programs to provide flexibility, similar to the Department of Health and Welfare, and noted recent increases for bonuses and hazard pay for fire crews.

In response to committee questions, **Mr. Dustin Miller**, Director of Idaho Department of Lands, explained the Forest Practices Act fund was restricted to forest management enforcement and could not be applied to firefighting. He stated the Wildland Equipment Replacement Fund was funded through reimbursements and used solely for replacing equipment, not for operational expenses. **Dir. Miller** noted prior-year reversions occurred due to a mild fire season, with many small fires requiring minimal preparedness spending. He clarified suppression and standby costs were covered by separate funds and confirmed neither fund could be redirected for firefighting operations.

In response to another committee question, **Dir. Miller** stated the Eastern Idaho Forest Protective District was mostly funded with General Fund moneys due to pressure on its dedicated account. Funding had been approved for essential staff, but fiscal uncertainty delayed the hiring of 12–15 seasonal firefighters. He added other areas, including the North Idaho booster crew, were also impacted, and without these resources, the State may need to rely on federal assistance for wildfire response.

**ROLL CALL VOTE ON MOTION:** **Motion carried by a total vote of 14 AYES, 4 NAYS, 2 ABSENT/EXCUSED. Senators voting in favor of the motion: Grow, Woodward, Cook, Bjerke (Bjerke), Hart, Carlson, Keyser (Galloway), Ward-Engelking, Wintrow. Senators voting in opposition to the motion: Zuiderveld. Representatives voting in favor of the motion: Tanner (14), Miller, Furniss, Mitchell, Bruce. Representatives voting in opposition to the motion: Petzke, Price, Harris. Representatives Absent/Excused: Manwaring, Green.**

**Ms. Jessup** presented the FY 2027 enhancement budget for the Idaho Department of Lands.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Miller** made a motion, seconded by **Sen. Carlson**, for the Department of Lands, for FY 2027, the addition of \$140,400 onetime from the General Fund for the Forest and Range Fire Protection Program for fire preparedness.

**ROLL CALL VOTE ON MOTION:** **Motion failed by a total vote of 13 AYES, 5 NAYS, 2 ABSENT/EXCUSED. Senators voting in favor of the motion: Grow, Woodward, Cook, Bjerke (Bjerke), Hart, Carlson, Keyser (Galloway), Ward-Engelking, Wintrow. Senators voting in opposition to the motion: Zuiderveld. Representatives voting in favor of the motion: Tanner (14), Miller, Furniss, Mitchell. Representatives voting in opposition to the motion: Petzke, Price, Bruce, Harris. Representatives Absent/Excused: Manwaring, Green.**

The majority having failed to vote in the affirmative in the House Appropriations Committee, the motion failed.

**Ms. Jessup** presented a section of language associated with the FY 2026 enhancement budget.

**UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST:** **Rep. Petzke** requested and it was granted by unanimous consent, to adopt the following language:

**LANGUAGE:** SECTION \_\_. EXEMPTIONS FROM PROGRAM TRANSFER LIMITATIONS. The Forest and Range Fire Protection Program is hereby exempted from the provisions of Section 67-3511(2), Idaho Code, allowing unlimited transfers into the Forest and Range Fire Protection Program from other programs within the Department of Lands for all moneys appropriated to it for the period of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026.

SECTION \_\_. CONDITIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND RESTRICTIONS. Appropriations made pursuant to this act are subject to the conditions, limitations, and restrictions specified in this act.

**Ms. Jessup** presented a similar section of language associated with the FY 2027 enhancement budget.

**UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST:** **Rep. Petzke** requested and it was granted by unanimous consent, to adopt the following language:

**LANGUAGE:** SECTION \_\_. EXEMPTIONS FROM PROGRAM TRANSFER LIMITATIONS. The Forest and Range Fire Protection Program is hereby exempted from the provisions of Section 67-3511(2), Idaho Code, allowing unlimited transfers into the Forest and Range Fire Protection Program from other programs within the Department of Lands for all moneys appropriated to it for the period of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027.

SECTION \_\_. CONDITIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND RESTRICTIONS.

Appropriations made pursuant to this act are subject to the conditions, limitations, and restrictions specified in this act.

**Ms. Jessup** presented a section of language associated with the FY 2027 enhancement budget, related to the restriction of General Fund moneys provided for firefighter bonuses.

**UNANIMOUS  
CONSENT  
REQUEST:**

**Rep. Petzke** requested unanimous consent to adopt the following language:

**LANGUAGE:**

SECTION \_\_. LIMITATIONS FOR GENERAL FUND BONUSES.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the use of General Fund appropriations for bonuses shall be limited to returning seasonal firefighters and first year seasonal firefighters and shall not be used to award bonuses to permanent employees of the Department of Lands. The Department of Lands shall provide a report to the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee and the Budget and Policy Analysis Division of the Legislative Services Office on the award of bonuses for the 2026 fire season. The report shall be submitted no later than January 5, 2027.

SECTION \_\_. CONDITIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND RESTRICTIONS.

Appropriations made pursuant to this act are subject to the conditions, limitations, and restrictions specified in this act.

**Sen. Woodward** objected.

**MOTION:**

**Rep. Petzke** made a motion, seconded by **Sen. Zuiderveld**, to accept the following language:

**LANGUAGE:**

SECTION \_\_. LIMITATIONS FOR GENERAL FUND BONUSES.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the use of General Fund appropriations for bonuses shall be limited to returning seasonal firefighters and first year seasonal firefighters and shall not be used to award bonuses to permanent employees of the Department of Lands. The Department of Lands shall provide a report to the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee and the Budget and Policy Analysis Division of the Legislative Services Office on the award of bonuses for the 2026 fire season. The report shall be submitted no later than January 5, 2027.

SECTION \_\_. CONDITIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND RESTRICTIONS.

Appropriations made pursuant to this act are subject to the conditions, limitations, and restrictions specified in this act.

**Rep. Petzke** explained this language clarified the use of General Fund moneys appropriated for firefighter bonuses. He noted it applied only to General Fund dollars, excluding dedicated funds and the Fire Suppression Deficiency Fund, and stated all General Fund moneys designated for firefighter bonuses must be used for their intended purpose.

**Sen. Woodward** explained his objection. He stated bonuses were meant for firefighters on active fires, whether full-time or seasonal. He suggested limiting General Fund bonuses to firefighters and clearly defining “firefighter” to ensure all who fight fires could receive the bonuses.

**Co-Chair Tanner (14)** put the committee at ease at 8:31 a.m.

**Co-Chair Tanner (14)** resumed the meeting at 8:37 a.m.

**UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST:** **Rep. Petzke** requested and it was granted by unanimous consent, to withdraw his motion.

**UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST:** **Rep. Petzke** requested and it was granted by unanimous consent, to accept the language below:

**LANGUAGE:** SECTION \_\_. LIMITATIONS FOR GENERAL FUND BONUSES.  
Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the use of General Fund appropriations for bonuses shall be limited to firefighters with an incident qualification card including an operational qualification. The Department of Lands shall provide a report to the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee and the Budget and Policy Analysis Division of the Legislative Services Office on the award of bonuses for the 2026 fire season. The report shall be submitted no later than January 5, 2027.

SECTION \_\_. CONDITIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND RESTRICTIONS.  
Appropriations made pursuant to this act are subject to the conditions, limitations, and restrictions specified in this act.

**UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST:** **Rep. Bruce** requested unanimous consent to reconsider the FY 2027 fire preparedness budget.

**Rep. Harris** objected.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Bruce** made a motion, seconded by **Sen. Ward-Engelking**, to reconsider the FY 2027 fire preparedness budget.

**Co-Chair Tanner (14)** put the committee at ease at 8:45 a.m.

**Co-Chair Tanner (14)** resumed the meeting at 8:49 a.m.

**ROLL CALL VOTE ON MOTION:** **Motion carried by a total vote of 13 AYES, 5 NAYS, 2 ABSENT/EXCUSED. Senators voting in favor of the motion: Grow, Woodward, Cook, Bjerke (Bjerke), Carlson, Keyser (Galloway), Ward-Engelking, Wintrow. Senators voting in opposition to the motion: Hart, Zuiderveld. Representatives voting in favor of the motion: Tanner (14), Miller, Furniss, Mitchell, Bruce. Representatives voting in opposition to the motion: Petzke, Price, Harris. Representatives Absent/Excused: Manwaring, Green.**

**Chair Tanner (14)** explained the House and Senate had not adopted Joint Rules for the session, so JFAC followed Mason's Manual, permitting a simple majority to reconsider the budget.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Bruce** made a motion, seconded by **Sen. Ward-Engelking**, for the Department of Lands, for FY 2027, the addition of \$140,300 onetime from the General Fund for the Forest and Range Protection Program for fire preparedness.

**Rep. Bruce** explained he brought the issue back due to confusion over the language specifying which funds could or could not be used.

**ROLL CALL  
VOTE ON  
MOTION:**

**Motion carried by a total vote of 13 AYES, 5 NAYS, 2 ABSENT/EXCUSED. Senators voting in favor of the motion: Grow, Woodward, Cook, Bjerke (Bjerke), Carlson, Keyser (Galloway), Ward-Engelking, Wintrow. Senators voting in opposition to the motion: Hart, Zuiderveld. Representatives voting in favor of the motion: Tanner (14), Miller, Furniss, Mitchell, Bruce. Representatives voting in opposition to the motion: Petzke, Price, Harris. Representatives Absent/Excused: Manwaring, Green.**

**Mr. Kellen McGurkin**, Analyst, LSO Budget & Policy, presented the FY 2027 enhancement budget for the Idaho Educational Services for the Deaf and the Blind.

**ORIGINAL  
MOTION:**

**Rep. Harris** made a motion, seconded by **Sen. Carlson**, beginning with the FY 2027 JFAC Program Maintenance Budget, to add \$62,600 for the Career Ladder-Campus Staff; to add \$80,700 for the Career Ladder-Service Outreach; to add \$213,000 onetime for replacement items; and to reduce \$20,400 from the General Fund and add \$20,400 from dedicated funds for endowment fund adjustments. This motion included, for FY 2027, for the Educational Services for the Deaf and the Blind, an additional \$335,900 from the General Fund and \$20,400 from dedicated funds, for a total of \$356,300.

**SUBSTITUTE  
MOTION:**

**Sen. Ward-Engelking** made a substitute motion, seconded by **Rep. Miller**, beginning with the FY 2027 JFAC Program Maintenance Budget, to add \$62,600 for the Career Ladder-Campus Staff; to add \$80,700 for the Career Ladder-Service Outreach; to add \$108,000 for five cottage staff; to add \$213,000 onetime for replacement items; and to reduce \$20,400 from the General Fund and add \$20,400 from dedicated funds for endowment fund adjustments. This motion included, for FY 2027, for the Educational Services for the Deaf and the Blind, an additional \$443,900 from the General Fund and \$20,400 from dedicated funds, for a total of \$464,300.

**Sen. Ward-Engelking** stated in 2024 the Legislature approved \$6M to build an 18-bed dormitory for high school students at the School for the Deaf and Blind. She indicated the building would be finished by February 2027 but could sit empty for several months without \$108,000 to fund the five staff members needed for 24-hour care. **Sen. Ward-Engelking** noted the budget had already been reduced by eliminating funding for a Braille embosser and a second van and by drawing on endowment funds.

**Rep. Harris** stated the original motion reflected the agreement reached by the workgroup.

**Rep. Petzke** explained his support for the original motion. He noted this was the only budget presented with a list of General Fund requests, as other agencies were not allowed to submit similar requests. Although IESDB was exempt from budget cuts as part of K-12 education, most other K-12 requests were withdrawn, making this the only budget of its kind. He acknowledged agency needs but stressed other agencies also had unmet needs. He added the budget still included a 4% year-over-year increase in General Fund support, higher than any other budget considered.

**Rep. Miller** stated the van was a safety need for transporting students, so the Governor and Superintendent kept the funding request. He urged careful consideration of how the funds were used and who benefited.

**ROLL CALL VOTE ON SUBSTITUTE MOTION:** **Substitute motion failed by a total vote of 8 AYES, 10 NAYS, 2 ABSENT/EXCUSED. Senators voting in favor of the motion: Grow, Woodward, Cook, Bjerke (Bjerke), Ward-Engelking, Wintrow. Senators voting in opposition to the motion: Hart, Carlson, Zuiderveld, Keyser (Galloway). Representatives voting in favor of the motion: Miller, Furniss. Representatives voting in opposition to the motion: Tanner (14), Petzke, Mitchell, Price, Bruce, Harris. Representatives Absent/Excused: Manwaring, Green.**

The majority having failed to vote in the affirmative in the House Appropriations Committee, the substitute motion failed.

**ROLL CALL VOTE ON ORIGINAL MOTION:** **Original motion carried by a total vote of 16 AYES, 2 NAYS, 2 ABSENT/EXCUSED. Senators voting in favor of the motion: Grow, Woodward, Cook, Bjerke (Bjerke), Hart, Carlson, Zuiderveld, Keyser (Galloway). Senators voting in opposition to the motion: Ward-Engelking, Wintrow. Representatives voting in favor of the motion: Tanner (14), Miller, Furniss, Petzke, Mitchell, Price, Bruce, Harris. Representatives voting in opposition to the motion: None. Representatives Absent/Excused: Manwaring, Green.**

**Mr. McGurkin** presented the FY 2027 enhancement budget for the Department of Education. He summarized four budget requests from dedicated and federal funds, all recommended by the Governor.

**ORIGINAL MOTION:** **Rep. Price** made a motion, seconded by **Sen. Bjerke (Bjerke)**, beginning with the FY 2027 JFAC Program Maintenance Budget, to add \$28,200 for the School Bus Camera Fund Ongoing Increase; \$269,600 onetime for the Farm to School Federal Grant; and \$220,000 for the Child Nutrition Tech Innovation Federal Grant. This motion included, for FY 2027, for the Department of Education, an additional \$28,200 from dedicated funds and \$489,600 from federal funds, for a total of \$517,800.

**SUBSTITUTE MOTION:** **Sen. Ward-Engelking** made a substitute motion, seconded by **Rep. Petzke**, beginning with the FY 2027 JFAC Program Maintenance Budget, to add \$28,200 for the School Bus Camera Fund Ongoing Increase; \$366,500 onetime for the Farm to School Federal Grant; and \$220,000 for the Child Nutrition Tech Innovation Federal Grant. This motion included, for FY 2027, for the Department of Education, an additional \$28,200 from dedicated funds and \$586,500 from federal funds, for a total of \$614,700.

In response to a committee question, **Mr. McGurkin** explained federal grants require a matching state-provided federal fund appropriation for the agency to access the funds. He noted the USDA had extended the timeline for the Farm-to-School grant, and the department requested additional state spending authority to ensure they could use all available federal funds. He confirmed without this authority, the additional federal funding could not be spent.

**ROLL CALL VOTE ON SUBSTITUTE MOTION:** **Substitute motion failed by a total vote of 8 AYES, 10 NAYS, 2 ABSENT/EXCUSED. Senators voting in favor of the motion: Grow, Woodward, Cook, Ward-Engelking, Wintrow. Senators voting in opposition to the motion: Bjerke (Bjerke), Hart, Carlson, Zuiderveld, Keyser (Galloway). Representatives voting in favor of the motion: Miller, Furniss, Petzke. Representatives voting in opposition to the motion: Tanner (14), Mitchell, Price, Bruce, Harris. Representatives Absent/Excused: Manwaring, Green.**

The majority having failed to vote in the affirmative in both the Senate Finance Committee and the House Appropriations Committee, the substitute motion failed.

**ROLL CALL  
VOTE ON  
ORIGINAL  
MOTION:**

**Original motion carried by a total vote of 18 AYES, 0 NAYS, 2  
ABSENT/EXCUSED. Senators voting in favor of the motion: Grow, Woodward,  
Cook, Bjerke (Bjerke), Hart, Carlson, Zuiderveld, Keyser (Galloway),  
Ward-Engelking, Wintrow. Senators voting in opposition to the motion: None.  
Representatives voting in favor of the motion: Tanner (14), Miller, Furniss,  
Petzke, Mitchell, Price, Bruce, Harris. Representatives voting in opposition to  
the motion: None. Representatives Absent/Excused: Manwaring, Green.**

**ADJOURN:**

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting  
adjourned at 9:20 a.m.

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Representative Tanner (14)  
Chair

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Alyson Jackson  
Secretary