

CITY *of* BOISE

LEGISLATIVE SESSION REPORT

January – April 2024

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LEGISLATIVE SESSION REPORT



The 2024 Idaho Legislative Session commenced on January 8 and concluded on April 10, with a total of 94 legislative days. The City entered this year's session with an intent to focus on several key issue areas, including expanding access to housing, enhancing property tax relief to Boise residents, identifying additional opportunities for infrastructure investment, as well as fighting ongoing attempts at library censorship.

This year over 700 pieces of legislation were introduced during the 14-week session, making it one of the most active sessions in recent years. Throughout the course of the session, the City's legislative team reviewed and analyzed over 60 distinct pieces of legislation, with a focus on engaging on bills that aimed to restrict key city services for our residents. As we've seen in previous years, there remains a strong focus on restricting municipal authority on a number of topics ranging from housing, energy policy, public health & safety authority, library services, and transportation access.

Below is a list of the all the key bills the City of Boise engaged on during the 2024 session. The bills are organized by their impact on the city's key strategic priorities and includes a synopsis of the bill's context, what position the city took on the bill, and the final action taken by the Legislature and/or Governor. To review our work throughout the session, be sure to follow our Government Affairs legislative page for updates: cityofboise.org/legislative-updates

LEGISLATIVE PROCESS – How a Bill Becomes Law

- 1. IDEA** – A legislator decides, or a group of legislators decide, to sponsor a bill. Ideas may come from legislators, constituents, special interest groups, or government agencies.
- 2. BILL DRAFTED** – The idea is drafted into a bill by the Legislative Services Research & Legislation Division. It will be assigned a routing slip, or “RS” number.
- 3. BILL INTRODUCED** – A bill may be introduced in either the House or Senate by a member, a group of members, or a standing committee. When the RS is approved after a short committee hearing, it is assigned a bill number and referred to committee.
- 4. COMMITTEE HEARING** – The committee conducts a study of information about the proposed law. This may include research, public hearings, expert testimony, and statements of interested parties. A bill may be reported out of committee with the following recommendations:
 - Do pass.
 - Without recommendation.
 - To be placed on General Orders for amendment.
 - Do not pass.
 - Withdrawn with the privilege of introducing another bill (Senate only).
 - Referred to the Clerk’s office for referral by the Speaker to another standing committee.

Many bills are not reported out and “die in committee” at the discretion of the committee chair.

- 5. SECOND READING** – When a bill is reported out of committee, it is placed on the Second Reading Calendar and read again. The following legislative day, the bill is automatically placed on the Third Reading Calendar unless other action is taken.
- 6. THIRD READING** – It is at the Third Reading that the bill is ready for debate and the final vote on the passage of the bill is taken. If a bill passes one house it is transmitted to the other house where it will follow a similar path, starting with a committee hearing and relevant floor vote.
- 7. GOVERNOR** – If a bill passes both houses, it advances to the Governor. The Governor may take one of three actions:
 - Approve the bill by signing it (within 5 days after receipt or within 10 days of the close of session).
 - Allow the bill to become law without his approval by not signing it within the five days allowed.
 - Veto the bill within 5 days of receipt and return it to the house of origin.

If a bill is vetoed by the Governor, the bill returns to the floor where it can be overridden (become law) with the support of 2/3 of House members and 2/3 of Senate members.

NOTE – *As a bill is amended throughout the legislative process, the bill number will be updated to reflect where it was amended.*



As Amended



As Amended in the
Senate (for bills that
originated in the House)



As Amended in the
House (for bills that
originated in the Senate)



HB 415	GUNS IN CLASSROOMS	OPPOSE
<p>HB 415 would have authorized teachers in Idaho’s public schools to carry weapons on their person without requiring additional training or notifying law enforcement that school personnel had firearms in the classroom. HB 415 would have undermined the relationship local police departments create with their local school districts to assess safety risks and create emergency response plans. Additionally, HB 415 would have inserted untrained school personnel in the middle of an emergency response instead of local law enforcement which would create chaos in the event of a school emergency. Law enforcement needs to be able to provide a streamlined emergency response to ensure the safety and well-being of students and school employees, not determining who the actual suspect with a gun may be.</p>		
<p>BILL STATUS: Passed the House; Held in Senate State Affairs Committee</p>		

HB 493	RESTRICTIONS ON MUNICIPAL PUBLIC HEALTH AUTHORITY	OPPOSE
<p>HB 493 is a bill aimed at restricting how local governments could appropriately respond to future public health emergencies by barring them from enacting face masking requirements. HB 493 conflicts with the constitutional authority municipal governments have to enact local public health measures that aren’t addressed at the state level. These safety measures ensure that city facilities and services can remain open and accessible to the community amid an emergency situation while keeping resident safety at the forefront. Additionally, HB 493 conflicts with current city practice which ensures ongoing review of all public health measures to address community needs. As current and future safety measures are being reassessed, the City opposes restricting access to community spread mitigation efforts, such as mask requirements, which runs counter to enacting health measures that are in alignment with medical and scientific best practices.</p>		
<p>BILL STATUS: Passed the House; Held in Senate State Affairs Committee</p>		

SB 1227	RESTRICTIONS ON MUNICIPAL PUBLIC HEALTH AUTHORITY	OPPOSE
<p>SB 1227 would have prevented municipalities from enacting laws that fill-in the gaps left in State law, specifically around public masking requirements, vaccine requirements and/or vaccine education to respond to a future public health emergency. These safety measures ensure that City facilities and services remain open and accessible to the community, while keeping resident safety at the forefront and working to keep our local economy open.</p>		
<p>BILL STATUS: Held in Senate State Affairs Committee</p>		



HB 506	RESTRICTIONS ON SHORT-TERM RENTAL ORDINANCES	OPPOSE
<p>HB 506 attempted to preempt municipal authority to regulate short-term rentals. The legislation would have prohibited cities from regulating short-term rentals under a number of circumstances, including requiring insurance, charging a licensing fee, collecting local contact information, and requiring certain fire safety protections, among other prohibitions. In doing so, HB 506 would have nullified any meaningful protections local governments could enact to ensure health and safety requirements are met within the short-term rental market, as well as protecting the integrity of residential neighborhood. Additionally, HB 506 would have restricted how local governments could license and enforce compliance with short-term rentals by limiting revocation of a business license only upon three or more convictions on three or more separate occasions which occurred in a 12-month period.</p>		
<p>BILL STATUS: Sent to House Amending Order (killed)</p>		

HB 545	RESTRICTIONS ON MUNICIPAL TENANT PROTECTIONS	OPPOSE
<p>HB 545 aims to restrict local governments from enacting reasonable tenant protection ordinances by prohibiting cities from enacting policies regarding rent, fees, deposits, and housing voucher access. HB 545 specifically targeted several of the City’s recently enacted tenant protection ordinances, including caps on exorbitant rental application fees, ensuring the full return of security deposits when renters are being permanently displaced by demolition or substantial remodel, and prohibiting discrimination based on source-of-income (housing voucher access). Under HB 545, local governments will no longer be allowed to create a localized response to community housing needs based upon input from impacted residents and housing stakeholders. In absence of the Idaho Legislature addressing Idaho’s critical housing needs, local governments should remain empowered to respond to their resident’s housing concerns.</p>		
<p>BILL STATUS: Passed the House & Senate; Signed into law by Governor Little on April 1, 2024</p>		

SB 1327	EVICTION SHIELDING	SUPPORT
<p>SB 1327 provides a second chance for renters with previous evictions seeking housing by shielding evictions from public viewing in cases where the entire case has been dismissed, no appeal is pending for the case, or when at least three years have elapsed since the filing date of the eviction. With eviction rates rising in Boise, and across the state, this legislation strikes the appropriate balance in providing necessary information to landlords, while also recognizing the barrier to housing that eviction records create.</p>		
<p>BILL STATUS: Passed the House & Senate; Signed into law by Governor Little on April 3, 2024</p>		



A CLEAN CITY FOR EVERYONE

HB 704	LOCAL ELECTRICAL CODE PREEMPTION	OPPOSE
<p>HB 704 places into Idaho Code precise electrical code rule language which should instead be addressed comprehensively via the negotiated rule making process. This legislation also further erodes local electrical code implementation and administration by barring local governments from requiring the installation of an electric vehicle circuit as a part of any new home construction. This proposed preemption language would roll back a City of Boise electrical code amendment requiring an available higher voltage circuit and receptacle capable of charging an electric vehicle in garages of new homes and townhouses.</p>		
BILL STATUS:	Passed the House; Held in Senate Commerce & Human Resources Committee	



ENGAGING EVERYONE

HB 384	LIBRARY MATERIAL CENSORSHIP	OPPOSE
<p>HB 384 would have created a subjective civil cause of action against public libraries for dissemination of material harmful to a minor. The bill would have allowed a cause of action to be brought by a minor simply for a library having a book in their collection without a plaintiff demonstrating direct harm or that they even checked out the material in question. If found to be in violation, the library would have to pay its own costs to defend the suit, the attorney fees for the other party, and \$250 per incident from public taxpayer funds.</p>		
BILL STATUS:	Returned to the House State Affairs Committee (killed)	

HB 710AAS	LIBRARY MATERIAL CENSORSHIP	OPPOSE
<p>HB 710aaS was a revised version of HB 384, aimed at restricting access to library materials. Despite adding amendments to the bill to allow for libraries to enact policies regarding material review and extending the timeframe for library staff to conduct said reviews, HB 710aaS still mandates that a book be moved to an adult-only section without a formal review if the material in question does indeed violate the statutory definition for “material harmful to minor.” If the book is not moved, then a private right of action could be brought against the library. If found to be in violation, the library would have to pay its own costs to defend the suit, the attorney fees for the other party, and \$250 per incident at taxpayer expense.</p>		
BILL STATUS:	Passed the House & Senate; Signed into law by Governor Little on April 10, 2024	

ENGAGING EVERYONE

SB 1289	LIBRARY MATERIAL REVIEW POLICY	WATCH
<p>SB 1289 was an attempt to codify a uniform state policy for how libraries navigate the process for reviewing materials that are alleged to be “harmful to minors.” Many of the provisions of the bill provided a more legally-sound process for libraries to follow, including a more constitutional definition for “material harmful to minors,” ensuring that the required Material Review Committee and its corresponding policies remain with local leaders, and requiring a finding that the material is harmful to minors before the material is removed or relocated. However, the bill also included limited timelines for libraries to thoroughly review the materials in question and had conflicting language regarding how minors may access library materials, therefore permitting them to bring a possible private right of action against the library.</p>		
BILL STATUS:	Failed to pass the Senate	

MOVEMENT FOR EVERYONE

HB 637	RESTRUCTURING THE ADA COUNTY HIGHWAY DISTRICT COMMISSION	OPPOSE
<p>HB 637 aimed to upend the composition of the Ada County Highway District (ACHD) to make local highway district commission elections partisan. In doing so, the bill tried to increase the number of ACHD commissioners from five to seven, to adjust the commissioner election boundaries to dilute the voting representation of Boise residents, and to require the commissioners to declare a political party in order to run for office. In doing so, HB 637 would have threatened the one-person-one-vote protections of Boise voters, potentially disenfranchising urban voters. Additionally, the attempt to make ACHD elections partisan would have complicated the day-to-day conversations regarding how roads are designed and how best to protect the safety and movement needs of pedestrians and cyclists.</p>		
BILL STATUS:	Passed House Transportation Committee; Sent to House Amending Order (killed)	

ELECTED OFFICIALS CONTACT LIST 2024

FEDERAL

Representative Russ Fulcher
fulcher.house.gov

Representative Mike Simpson
simpson.house.gov

Senator Mike Crapo
crapo.senate.gov Senator

Jim Risch
risch.senate.gov/public

STATE STATE SENATORS

DISTRICT 15: James “Rick” Just
rjust@senate.idaho.gov

District 16: Alison “Ali” Rabe
arabe@senate.idaho.gov

District 17: Carrie Semmelroth
csemmelroth@senate.idaho.gov

District 18: Janie Ward-Engelking
jwardengelking@senate.idaho.gov

District 19: Melissa Wintrow
mwintrow@senate.idaho.gov

District 20: Chuck Winder
cwinder@senate.idaho.gov

District 21: Treg Bernt
tbernt@senate.idaho.gov

District 22: Lori Den Hartog
Ldenhartog@senate.idaho.gov

STATE HOUSE REPRESENTATIVES

District 15: Steve Berch
sberch@house.idaho.gov

District 15: Dori Healy
dhealy@house.idaho.gov

District 16: Soñia R. Galaviz
sgalaviz@house.idaho.gov

District 16: Colin Nash
cnash@house.idaho.gov

District 17: Sue Chew
schew@house.idaho.gov

District 17: John Gannon
jgannon@house.idaho.gov

District 18: Brooke Green
bgreen@house.idaho.gov

District 18: Ilana Rubel
irubel@house.idaho.gov

District 19: Chris Mathias
cmathias@house.idaho.gov

District 19: Lauren Necochea
lnecochea@house.idaho.gov

District 20: James Holtzclaw
jholtzclaw@house.idaho.gov

District 20: Joe Palmer
jpalmer@house.idaho.gov

District 22: Jason A. Monks
jmonks@house.idaho.gov

District 22: John Vander Woude
jvanderwoude@house.idaho.gov

LEADERSHIP CONTACT LIST 2024



SENATE

PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE:

Chuck Winder, D20
cwinder@senate.idaho.gov

MAJORITY LEADER:

Kelly Arthur Anthon, D27
kanthon@senate.idaho.gov

ASSISTANT MAJORITY LEADER:

Abby Lee, D9
alee@senate.idaho.gov

MAJORITY CAUCUS CHAIR:

Mark Harris, D35
mharris@senate.idaho.gov

MINORITY LEADER:

Melissa Wintrow, D19
mwintrow@senate.idaho.gov

ASSISTANT MINORITY LEADER:

James D. Ruchti, D29
jruchti@senate.idaho.gov

MINORITY CAUCUS CHAIR:

Janie Ward-Engelking, D18
jwardengelking@senate.idaho.gov

HOUSE

SPEAKER:

Mike Moyle, D10
mmoyle@house.idaho.gov

MAJORITY LEADER:

Megan Blanksma, D8
mblanksma@house.idaho.gov

ASSISTANT MAJORITY LEADER:

Sage G. Dixon, D1
sdixon@house.idaho.gov

MAJORITY CAUCUS CHAIR:

Dustin Manwaring, D29
dmanwaring@house.idaho.gov

MINORITY LEADER:

Ilana Rubel, D18
irubel@house.idaho.gov

ASSISTANT MINORITY LEADER:

Lauren Necochea, D19
lnecochea@house.idaho.gov

MINORITY CAUCUS CHAIR:

Ned Burns, D26
nburns@house.idaho.gov



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