



## Idaho State Senate

### SENATOR BERT BRACKETT

March 12, 2015

The Honorable Cliff Bayer, Co-Chair  
The Honorable John Rusche, Co-Chair  
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee (JLOC)  
**H A N D D E L I V E R E D**

RE: Proposal for Consideration Regarding Idaho's Public Health Districts

Dear Senator Bayer and Representative Rusche,

We are asking that the Office of Performance Evaluations investigate and report on the general issue of Public Health District financing and, in particular, the distribution formula for the districts' general fund appropriation.

The last outside review was in 1993 and was a result of Boise State University, University of Idaho, and Idaho State University examining the issue and making a recommendation that was adopted by the Districts' Board of Trustees. The formula was revised two years ago by the Board of Trustees without external input.

The previous formula considered a number of factors that included population, poverty level, county contribution, and public assistance (Medicaid billing). But that was revised two years ago following the Medicaid contract provider shifting from EDS to Molina. The change resulted in a very different data set (the public assistance component (or need component) was dropped) the revised formula only includes population, poverty, and County contribution.

There are also factors that may be considered in the discussion that are more direct indicators of workload placed upon the districts by expectations defined in Idaho Code, such as prevalence of communicable disease and food establishment inspections. Therefore, in addition to account balances in health districts, these other variables need to be identified, considered and reviewed.

The primary purpose of this request is to provide an in-depth, impartial review of the current distribution formula and to develop some alternatives that the Board of Trustees could consider to ensure a more equitable distribution of budgeted general funds to better serve the people of Idaho. The overall goal is to ensure adequate and equivalent resources are available to each District to deliver a core set of local public health services to meet the needs of all the people of the State of Idaho.

In addition, in light of the recent announcement of loss of federal grant funding for STD testing, it may be beneficial for the Office of Performance Evaluations to evaluate what additional demands or requirements the Legislature has placed on the public health districts in recent years.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Bert Brackett in blue ink.

Senator Bert Brackett  
Legislative District 23

Handwritten signature of Cherie Buckner-Webb in blue ink.

Senator Cherie Buckner-Webb  
Legislative District 19

Handwritten signature of Cliff Bayer in blue ink.

Senator Cliff Bayer  
Legislative District 21

Handwritten signature of Maxine Bell in blue ink.

Representative Maxine Bell  
Legislative District 25