



## The *Keeping Promises* Plan FY 2026 Budget Highlights

### Delivering on Promises for Education

State funding for education has increased 80 percent since Governor Little took office in 2019, and he will keep his promise to continue prioritizing education. In recent years, Idaho has significantly boosted funding for literacy and teacher pay, improved compensation for school staff, funded equitable health insurance across districts, and made the largest investment ever in school facilities.

The Governor's *Keeping Promises* plan builds on this strong foundation with the following priorities:

- **Over \$150 million toward public school funding**, including **\$50 million** for continued investments in rural school facilities, mental health and school safety, and accountability initiatives that guarantee the best outcomes in learning and literacy for our public school students.

The Governor also recommends a 5% CEC for state staff including **\$83 million** to teachers, administrators, and classified staff in public schools and **\$28 million** to ensure teachers remain at the state level of funding for teacher health insurance.

In addition to the Governor's priorities, the Governor is also recommending the State Department of Education's budget which includes **\$136 million** toward priority needs in Idaho's public schools.

- **\$50 million to support education freedom.** The recommendation is for a revenue adjustment to address additional education options for Idaho kids. Just as we expect our public schools to be fair, responsible, transparent and accountable, Governor Little will only consider a school choice proposal that meets these same standards while prioritizing the families that need it most.

## Delivering on Promises for a Strong Economy

Governor Little is leading Idaho through the most prosperous time in the state's history. With our commitment to fiscal responsibility and reducing regulatory burdens, Idaho has experienced consistent economic growth. Idaho has the highest GDP growth in the region and leads the nation in job growth and household income growth. With \$75 million invested in workforce development to expand the working class of America, the next generation of Idaho's workforce is better positioned to support Idaho's continued success.

Governor Little continues this commitment with **\$25 million** in investments that seal his promise for a strong economy and strong working class, including:

- **\$10 million for additional seats at Community and Technical colleges.** The funding will address waitlists and shortages in critical working-class professions across Idaho. The demand for students seeking these professions, specifically at Community and technical colleges, has exceeded capacity, causing large waitlists. This investment will create hundreds of additional seats for young adults and prepare them to enter the workforce. Idaho's workforce will be ready to meet the demands of Idaho's growing economy.
- **\$15 million for infrastructure to increase capacity for in-demand workforce programs.** The funding is one-time and will be used for additional classroom and laboratory space to address increased demand in technical and CTE programs that fill working class careers in Idaho's thriving business communities. This funding will be matched with contributions from the private sector. Businesses will share the cost to expand facilities across Idaho's colleges and universities to address the demand and support Idaho's workforce.

## Delivering on Promises for Improved Infrastructure and Transportation

As one of the fastest-growing states, Idaho's infrastructure needs are a top priority. Idaho has championed historic investments in roads, bridges, and airports to alleviate congestion and keep Idahoans safe – without raising taxes or fees.

Governor Little's *Keeping Promises* plan builds off these efforts and continues to make important investments in critical projects that remain unfunded:

- An additional **\$50 million in the Transportation Expansion and Congestion Mitigation (TECM) bonding program**. The final bond sale in TECM will occur in spring of 2025. In the last three years, the \$80 million annual investment has resulted in \$1.3 billion in bonding for safety and capacity on our roads. The additional \$50 million will allow the state to bond for an additional \$800 million for new infrastructure and address some of the \$10 billion unfunded projects that remain critical to support Idaho's growth. Without additional TECM investments, Idaho will have to rely on federal program funding for future highway projects, which will delay construction and increase costs and regulatory hurdles.
- **3% increase for state and local transportation projects**. The recommendation is for the Strategic Initiatives Program that funds Safety and Capacity and Road and Bridge maintenance. The increase ensures a total of \$311.8 million will continue to fund critical transportation projects while keeping up with the costs of construction inflation.

## Delivering on Promises for Natural Resources

Since he took office in 2019, Governor Little has partnered with the Idaho Legislature to invest more than \$1.5 billion across water resources, outdoor recreation, effective fire management, and agriculture.

The *Keeping Promises* plan continues to secure our future and maintain our most precious resources with the following recommendations:

- **\$100 million for fire management.** \$60 million in supplemental funding to replenish the Fire Suppression Deficiency Fund that was depleted by the 2024 fire season. The Governor also recommends \$40 million, the five-year average of fire suppression expenditures, in ongoing funding to ensure Idaho is prepared to manage and suppress fires quickly before they threaten livestock, ranches, farms, and homes. This funding drives a proactive approach to managing Idaho lands responsibly. The Governor's plan also includes wildland firefighter bonuses to ensure we can retain, recruit, and support our brave men and women who protect Idaho lives and property.
- **\$5 million for improved aviation and detection strategies to ensure early fire suppression,** building on the Governor's proactive wildfire strategy to safeguard our communities and natural resources.
- **\$30 million for critical water infrastructure.** The ongoing funding will support Idaho's main economic driver across the state – agriculture. With hundreds of millions in potential storage capacity projects, aquifer recharge needs, particularly in the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer, and innovative water efficiency tools, ongoing funding will ensure the Idaho Water Resource Board prioritizes effective recharge projects resulting in reliable water for Idaho growers.

## Delivering on Promises to Idaho Children and Families

Governor Little is committed to strengthening Idaho families by improving access to healthcare, supporting foster care reforms, and addressing the physician shortage in rural areas. The Governor is also committed to ensuring families have access to quality childcare for their children, which improves success in the workplace.

The Governor's *Keeping Promises* plan will support families with the following recommendations:

- **\$9.6 million to support prevention and transformation efforts in Idaho's foster care system.** President Trump signed the Family First Prevention Act into law during his first term, helping children to remain in their homes and reducing the need for foster care and congregate care. To support the largest reform effort in foster care services in Idaho, the Governor's *Keeping Promises* plan helps recruit foster parents and improve outcomes for children in foster care.
- **Adds \$15 million** in federal funding for three years (\$45 million total) to expand access to high quality, affordable childcare for working Idaho families. This builds on recent Workforce Development Council efforts to create more than 4,000 new childcare seats throughout Idaho.
- **\$850,000 for medical residency positions.** The funding will increase the number of residency positions to help address Idaho's physician shortage, particularly in underserved areas.
- **\$500,000 for the Rural Physician Incentive Program** to incentivize doctors to practice in rural communities where healthcare access is most needed.

## A Promise for Government Efficiency and Accountability

Idaho leads the nation in cutting red tape. Idaho's economy is thriving in part because Governor Little and the Legislature have achieved historic government efficiencies. Governor Little is committed to delivering even more meaningful deregulation to support economic growth and make daily life more affordable for our families.

Like President Trump's new Department of Government Efficiency at the federal level, Governor Little's *Keeping Promises* plan continues the red tape busting initiatives that will ensure government accountability and encourage growth and prosperity.

In addition to addressing needed permitting reforms to increase housing supply and make the American Dream of owning a home within reach for more Idahoans, the Governor's *Keeping Promises* plan recommends:

- **\$480,000 for Energy and Mining Permitting Reform.** The funds will accelerate major energy and mining projects, promoting energy independence, national security, and attracting private investment while reducing unnecessary delays.

## Delivering on Promises for a Safe and Secure Idaho

Governor Little is committed to maintaining our high quality of life in Idaho. His *Keeping Promises* plan ensures the state is prepared to address modern security challenges and makes key public safety investments so Idahoans can continue to enjoy living in one of the safest states in the country.

- **\$10 million for cybersecurity.** With the increasing threat of cyberattacks, it is imperative we protect Idaho's infrastructure and Idahoans' personal data from foreign adversaries, particularly China and Russia.
- **\$85,000** for a new North Idaho prosecutor. The new Special Assistant U.S. Attorney will be stationed in Coeur d'Alene and will assist local and state law enforcement in combating drug trafficking along the I-90 corridor and along US 95. The new position adds to ongoing efforts in eastern Idaho and the Treasure Valley to fight drug related crimes in Idaho.
- **\$3.4 million for the interdiction of drones and contraband** at Idaho's state prisons and secure transportation of dangerous offenders.
- **\$500,000 for the continuation of the successful Fentanyl Takes All awareness campaign** to fight fentanyl impacts in Idaho.
- Governor Little recommends **\$37 million** in additional funds for the **State Public Defenders** Office to shore up staffing shortages and ensure a successful transition in public defense from the counties to the State of Idaho following the passage of HB735 in 2022.

## Keeping Up the Fight Against Bidenflation

Governor Little is committed to keeping Idaho affordable for working families, especially in the face of rising inflation caused by the federal government's failed policies.

His *Keeping Promises* plan delivers even more tax relief and addresses housing supply with:

- **\$100 million in additional tax relief.** Governor Little is committed to continuing Idaho's tradition of cutting taxes and putting money back in the pockets of Idahoans. Whether income tax relief, property tax relief, or grocery tax relief, Governor Little stands committed to the tradition of reducing taxes in times of continued economic prosperity. This priority investment in Governor Little's FY 2026 budget will bring the cumulative total in tax cuts to \$4.7 billion since Governor Little took office.
- **\$15 million for workforce housing.** This investment will continue the successful investments the Legislature greenlit in 2022, which will help increase the supply of affordable homes, addressing Idaho's housing shortage and making it easier for families to own a home.